SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 563

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY EMERGENCY SERVICES BRANCH FOR ITS OUTSTANDING RESPONSIVENESS DURING STATE ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES.

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) Emergency Services Branch responds as needed to any incident involving hazardous materials, hazardous substances, oil spills or pollutants that pose a threat or potential threat to the health, welfare and safety of the public and environment; and

WHEREAS, the Emergency Services Branch is made up of four responders and two support staff: Eric Dear, Chief of Emergency Services; Shannon Lowery, Ernie Shirley and Barry McMasters, Response Personnel; and Terry Champion and Ken Whitten, Support Staff; and

WHEREAS, since the events of 9/11 and the anthrax attacks in 2001, the Emergency Services Branch responders have served as the state's frontline defense to incidents involving any potential biological or chemical acts of terrorism; and

WHEREAS, the Emergency Services Branch, coordinating with other state agencies, has handled hundreds of responses to white powder scares and other potential biological/chemical acts of terrorism; and

WHEREAS, in addition to working closely with both state and federal agencies, the Emergency Services Branch works very closely with local governmental entities, such as county emergency management agencies, hazardous materials teams, fire departments, law enforcement and health officials; and
WHEREAS, the Emergency Services Branch is particularly known for its commitment to assist our state's industries when they are involved with accidental spills or releases of hazardous substances; and

WHEREAS, the Emergency Services Branch has developed a reputation of enforcing regulatory clean-up requirements that include a commonsense approach that is both reasonable and protective of the public and the environment; and

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the dedicated and exemplary service from these individuals whose jobs perform a vital function for the health, safety and welfare of all Mississippians:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) Emergency Services Branch for its outstanding responsiveness during state environmental emergencies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) Emergency Services Branch and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.