

By: Senator(s) Little, Smith

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 568

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE USA  
2 INTERNATIONAL BALLET COMPETITION UPON ITS RECEIPT OF THE 2003  
3 GOVERNOR'S EXCELLENCE IN THE ARTS AWARD IN THE CATEGORY OF  
4 ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT IN DANCE.

5 WHEREAS, the USA International Ballet Competition in Jackson,  
6 Mississippi, (the first International Ballet Competition in the  
7 United States and the Western Hemisphere) is the recipient of the  
8 2003 Governor's Excellence in the Arts Award in the Category of  
9 Artistic Achievement in Dance; and

10 WHEREAS, the first International Ballet Competition (IBC)  
11 premiered in Varna, Bulgaria, in 1964. In 1975, Jackson Ballet  
12 Artistic Director Thalia Mara introduced city leaders to the idea  
13 of ballet competitions and convinced them to secure the USA  
14 International Ballet Competition for the City of Jackson; and

15 WHEREAS, in 1978, Mississippi Ballet International was  
16 incorporated to produce the first International Ballet Competition  
17 in the United States and the Western Hemisphere. Robert Joffrey,  
18 renowned artistic Director of the Joffrey Ballet, agreed to chair  
19 the first international panel of jurors. In June 1979, the first  
20 USA International Ballet Competition was held in Jackson,  
21 Mississippi; and

22 WHEREAS, success was partly due to the city's gracious  
23 hospitality and to the addition of unique features not offered at  
24 other competitions. Each participant was assigned a volunteer  
25 host family. Competitors were invited to stay at no expense after  
26 elimination, and an international dance school with a faculty of  
27 master teachers was held as a companion event. The Jackson



28 competition also required each country to have only one jury  
29 representative; and

30 WHEREAS, Jackson audiences have had the thrill of watching  
31 young medallists at the start of their careers to go on from the  
32 IBC to achieve international stardom. For example, this year Jose  
33 Manuel Carreno, the Grad Prix winner in Jackson's 1990  
34 competition, starred with three other leading dancers from  
35 American Ballet Theatre on PBS's "Great Performances"; and

36 WHEREAS, in 1980, the United Nations Educational, Scientific  
37 and Cultural Organization's International Theatre Institute Dance  
38 Committee granted official sanction to the USA International  
39 Ballet Competition, placing Jackson alongside sister competitions  
40 in Varna, Moscow and Tokyo. In 1982, the United States Congress  
41 passed a Joint Resolution designating Jackson, Mississippi, as the  
42 official home of the International Ballet Competition. Following  
43 the 1982 competition, ABC and PBS co-produced a 90-minute film "To  
44 Dance For Gold", which featured the IBC and aired around the  
45 world. Other documentaries featuring the USA International Ballet  
46 Competition have been seen on the Arts and Entertainment and Bravo  
47 networks; and

48 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the  
49 artistic and economic contributions of the staff and volunteers of  
50 this International Ballet Competition, which has brought honor and  
51 prestige to the Capitol City and to the State of Mississippi:

52 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
53 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
54 we do hereby commend and congratulate the USA International Ballet  
55 Competition held in Jackson, Mississippi, upon its receipt of the  
56 2003 Governor's Excellence in the Arts Award in the category of  
57 Artistic Achievement in Dance, and extend to the staff and  
58 volunteers of this program the thanks of the Legislature and our  
59 wish for success in their future competitions.



60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
61 the Chairman of the International Ballet Competition Committee at  
62 induction ceremonies on February 28, 2003, and be made available  
63 to the Capitol Press Corps.

