

By: Senator(s) Gordon, Nunnelee

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 586

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE OF LEE COUNTY
2 BUSINESS AND CIVIC LEADER FELIX BLACK AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY
3 OF THE LEGISLATURE ON HIS PASSING.

4 WHEREAS, Felix N. Black, a businessman at the vanguard of Lee
5 County's rise to post-World War II prosperity, passed away on
6 February 25, 2003; and

7 WHEREAS, returning from war as a medical unit sergeant, he
8 opened Black's Department Store in 1946 in downtown Tupelo, which
9 would remain a Tupelo institution for 55 years, and all the while,
10 he led by example and service in civic endeavors that touched
11 every part of Tupelo life, from the Boy Scouts of America to the
12 Community Development Foundation to hospice and retirement home
13 care; and

14 WHEREAS, he was born in 1917 in the Carolina community near
15 Nettleton to the late Bunyan and Estelle Shumpert Black. He
16 graduated from Itawamba Agricultural High School in Fulton,
17 Mississippi, in 1937, then moved to Tupelo. A Veteran of World
18 War II, he served in the Army Medical Corps in the European
19 Theater and participated in the Battle of the Bulge. After
20 serving his country, he returned to Tupelo and opened his
21 business. An active community leader, he supported the Boy Scouts
22 of America and CREATE, Inc. In the early 1970s, he served on the
23 community's biracial committee and served as Chairman of the
24 Tupelo Housing Authority. He was Chairman of the Community
25 Development Foundation, Chairman of the Board of the North
26 Mississippi Medical Center and, most recently, Chairman of the
27 fund-raising committee for the Sanctuary Hospice House. He was a



28 past member of the Board of Directors of Rust College in Holly
29 Springs, Mississippi. A charter member of St. Luke United
30 Methodist Church, he was actively involved in church activities
31 throughout his life. He was a member of the Tupelo Rotary Club
32 and a Paul Harris Fellow. He had recently received his 50-year
33 pin with the Tupelo Masonic Lodge; and

34 WHEREAS, his wife, Ruth Hussey Black, preceded him in death
35 on September 20, 2001. Survivors include a daughter, Ellen Black
36 Bailey, and husband, Harold, of Michigan City; a son, Lynn M.
37 "Mike" Black, and wife, Betty, of Tupelo; and

38 WHEREAS, Black's effectiveness as a leader sprang from his
39 extraordinary integrity and his guide that business competition
40 never interfered with friendship or progress; and

41 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of this
42 model citizen whose business, civic and charitable commitment has
43 put Lee County and Northeast Mississippi on the business map:

44 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
45 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
46 we do hereby commend the life of Lee County business and civic
47 leader, Felix Black, whose contributions to the civic projects of
48 Tupelo and Lee County knew no boundaries, and express to his
49 surviving family the sympathy of the Legislature on his passing.

50 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
51 the surviving family of Mr. Black and be made available to the
52 Tupelo Daily Journal and the Capitol Press Corps.

