

By: Senator(s) Dawkins, Williamson, Blackmon To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 594

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO DESIGNATE MARCH 10-16, 2003, AS
2 "COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK IN MISSISSIPPI."

3 WHEREAS, according to the latest Census Bureau report, there
4 where more than 41 million uninsured Americans in the year 2001,
5 up 1.4 million from the previous year. Eight out of 10 were
6 working families. In most cases, the main earners in these
7 families either had jobs that offered no health coverage or their
8 premiums were unaffordable; and

9 WHEREAS, the report shows that 870,000 Mississippians or
10 34.9% of the state's nonelderly population were uninsured.
11 Mississippi was one of nine states where more than one in three
12 people under age 65 went without health insurance during that
13 period; and

14 WHEREAS, because uninsured Americans cannot afford needed
15 medical care, they live sicker and die younger than Americans with
16 health coverage; and

17 WHEREAS, the number of uninsured Americans is rising for
18 several reasons: First, the economy has slowed and more people
19 are unemployed and without health coverage. Second, health care
20 costs are rising at double-digit annual rates, making health
21 coverage increasingly unaffordable for employers as well as
22 individual consumers. Third, as states experience fiscal
23 shortfalls, they are cutting back on public health coverage
24 programs, such as Medicaid, causing some low-income families to
25 lose health coverage. Given these trends, the problem of the
26 uninsured promises to grow worse, not better, in the coming years;
27 and



28 WHEREAS, former Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter have
29 pledged their support to a national initiative to focus attention
30 on the plight of the tens of millions of Americans who lack health
31 insurance. The former Presidents will serve as honorary cochairs
32 of "Cover the Uninsured Week," which is being organized by The
33 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and a diverse group of national
34 organizations. The week-long series of events will be held from
35 March 10 through March 16, 2003, in communities from coast to
36 coast; and

37 WHEREAS, it is unconscionable that 41 million citizens of
38 this great nation do not have basic health care coverage.
39 America's strength lies in the health and well-being of its
40 families and children. This nation cannot continue to ignore the
41 plight of the uninsured as we shape its future; and

42 WHEREAS, "Cover the Uninsured Week" will sponsor hundreds of
43 grassroots events in communities across the United States, as well
44 as a major national kick-off event in Washington, D.C. Extensive
45 paid television and print advertising will be used in conjunction
46 with these events. Activities will be held on the premises of
47 businesses, in union halls, on the campuses of major hospitals and
48 medical schools, as well as in churches, synagogues and mosques.
49 Organizers are planning health fairs for the uninsured, town hall
50 meetings where elected officials will hear from their
51 constituents, on campus educational programs, discussions between
52 employer and labor groups, community-wide interfaith events, and
53 more; and

54 WHEREAS, "Cover the Uninsured Week" is sponsored by these
55 diverse national organizations: U.S. Chamber of Commerce;
56 American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations
57 (AFL-CIO); The Business Roundtable; Service Employees
58 International Union; American Medical Association; American Nurses
59 Association; Health Insurance Association of America; Blue Cross
60 and Blue Shield Association; Healthcare Leadership Council;



61 Families USA; American Hospital Association; Federation of
62 American Hospitals; Catholic Health Association of the United
63 States; AARP; United Way of America; and The Robert Wood Johnson
64 Foundation, the nation's largest philanthropy dedicated
65 exclusively to the health and health care of all Americans:

66 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
67 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
68 the Legislature hereby designates the week of March 10-16, 2003,
69 as "Cover the Uninsured Week in Mississippi" in order to
70 participate in nationally sponsored events to focus on the problem
71 of the uninsured in the United States and particularly in
72 Mississippi.

73 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State shall
74 forward a certified copy of this resolution to the national
75 sponsors of this event and to Mississippi's congressional
76 delegation, and that this resolution shall be made available to
77 the Capitol Press Corps.

