SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 597

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE CAREER OF DR. JORJA POUND TURNIPSEED OF STARKVILLE, MISSISSIPPI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF VSA ARTS OF MISSISSIPPI, UPON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT.

WHEREAS, longtime Executive Director of VSA Arts of Mississippi, Inc. (formerly Very Special Arts of Mississippi) and Professor Emerita at Mississippi State University, Dr. Jorja Pound Turnipseed of Starkville, Mississippi, has announced her retirement after many years of dedicated service to people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, "VSA" stands for "Vision, Strength and Artistic Expression"; the national organization was founded in 1974 as an affiliate of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and is an international organization that creates learning opportunities through the arts for people with disabilities. The organization serves 4.3 million Americans by offering arts-based programs in creative writing, dance, drama, music and the visual arts implemented primarily through a vast network in 39 states, which includes VSA Arts of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Turnipseed's professional activities and dedicated service are a matter of record: for many years she taught the only teacher-training component dealing with music-based arts education for special learners in the state; member of the first Advisory Board for Very Special Arts, Washington, D.C. (1985-1988); Chairman of the Advisory Board for the Governor's Office of Handicapped Services (1981-1984); teacher-training programs listed as "Exemplary Training Program Activities/Mississippi State University" in the Arts Resource and...
Training Guide, published by the National Committee, Arts for the
Handicapped (1981); Project Director of several
research/development projects involving music-based arts education
programs and children in Grades K-4; inducted into the Educational
Hall of Fame, Starkville Area Chamber of Commerce, 1992; selected
as "Outstanding Mississippi Woman 1988-1989", Mississippi State
University (1989); honored with the "Outstanding Community Service
Award", Starkville Area Chamber of Commerce (1986); recipient of
the "Outstanding Professional Woman in Service Award", in 1981,
and the first "Outstanding Faculty Woman Award" by Mississippi
State University (1972); recipient of a Special Award for
"Dedication and Leadership in Bringing Arts to the Lives of
Disabled People", the first such award given, presented by the
National Committee, Arts for the Handicapped (1985) presented
sessions at professional meetings and conferences, including, but
not limited to, Music Educators National Conference, Music
Education for the Handicapped International Symposium, Council for
Exceptional Children International Conference, Mid-South
Educational Research Conference, Southern Arts Federation Arts
Accessibility Conference, National School Board Association
Presidents' Conference, and International President, Pilot Club
International, a worldwide classified service organization for
executives and professionals (1986-1987); and

WHEREAS, from the beginning of a child's education to the
time when he or she becomes an adult and pursues a career,
research shows that the arts enhance both personal and academic
success. For people with disabilities, the arts represent a world
of resources and opportunities for creative expression and
success, enabling these individuals to contribute to our
workplaces and communities; and

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the
contributions of this Mississippi citizen whose dedicated research
and service has broken new ground for people with disabilities
through the arts, and brought honor to her university and community and to the State of Mississippi:

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 career of Dr. Jorja Pound Turnipseed, Executive Director of VSA Arts of Mississippi (formerly Very Special Arts of Mississippi) upon the occasion of her retirement, and extend the thanks of the Legislature for her dedicated service to people with disabilities through the arts, and the best wishes to her and her family for success in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Dr. Turnipseed and be made available to the President of Mississippi State University and the Capitol Press Corps.