SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 601

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION DESIGNATING MAY 11-17, 2003, AS "WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK IN MISSISSIPPI" TO RAISE AWARENESS ON THE PREVALENT DISEASES AFFECTING WOMEN IN OUR STATE.

WHEREAS, the 4th Annual National Women's Health Week is May 11-17, 2003, which starts on Mother's Day and ends on the following Saturday, a time when there is much attention focused on women; and

WHEREAS, National Women's Health Week is a national effort by an alliance of organizations to raise awareness about manageable steps women can take to improve their health. The focus is on the importance of incorporating simple preventative and positive health behaviors into everyday life, to encourage awareness about key health issues among all women; and

WHEREAS, National Women's Health Week begins with participation in the first ever National Women's Check-Up Day on Monday, May 12, 2003, where community health centers, hospitals and other health providers across America will encourage women to receive preventive health services, in order to educate, screen and counsel underserved women on preventive health issues and prevent the onset of targeted health conditions. Other events include health forums, walks, and women's health publication releases; and

WHEREAS, the diseases to be targeted by the National Women's Health Week initiative in Mississippi due to their prevalence are breast cancer, cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, obesity and diabetes; and
WHEREAS, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women, excluding cancers of the skin; the incidence and death rates from breast cancer increase with age and yet the percentage of women 40 and older with a recent mammogram in Mississippi is the lowest in the nation, ranging from 51.5% in Mississippi to 75.8% in Delaware, according to American Cancer Society statistics, for a recent mammogram and clinical breast examination, the percentages are even lower, ranging from 45.5% in Mississippi to 67.6% in Delaware; additionally, ethnicity is a factor in breast cancer statistics because African-American women are more likely to die from breast cancer than are white women, but after age 40, white women are more likely to be diagnosed; and

WHEREAS, cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the No. 1 killer in the United States, claiming more lives each year than the next 5 leading causes of death combined; nearly 2,600 Americans die of CVD each day, an average of 1 death every 33 seconds and the prevalence is higher for women than for men, 1 in 29 women's deaths is from breast cancer while 1 in 2.4 women's deaths is from CVD; African-American and Mexican-American women have a higher CVD risk factor than white women of comparable socioeconomic status; the number of heart disease deaths per 100,000 women in Mississippi is 298 compared to 223 nationally; additionally, coronary heart disease rates in women after menopause are 2-3 times those of women the same age before menopause; the aging of the population in Mississippi will undoubtedly result in an increase incidence of chronic diseases, including coronary artery disease, heart failure and stroke; and

WHEREAS, osteoporosis is a disease characterized by low bone mass leading to bone fragility and increases susceptibility to fractures; osteoporosis is a major public health threat, of the 10 million Americans estimated to have osteoporosis, 8 million are women (80%); women can lose up to 20% of their bone mass in the 5 to 7 years following menopause, making them more susceptible to...
osteoporosis; a national effort is needed to educate younger
generations so they will have the opportunity to achieve and
maintain optimal peak bone mass and reduce the risk of fractures
later in life; and

WHEREAS, according to the Mississippi State Department of
Health, more Mississippians are overweight and diabetic now than
ever before; the 2001 statistics show that 9.3% Mississippi adults
have diabetes compared to 7.6% in 2000 and 26.6% of the state's
adult population are obese compared to 25% in 2000; almost 190,000
adults in the state now have diabetes and an estimated 520,000
adults are obese; in middle-age and elderly African-American
women, almost two-thirds are obese and more than one-third have
diabetes, however, all age, race and gender groups are affected by
this modern-day "epidemic"; also, studies have shown that many
people in the early stages of developing diabetes do not know that
they have the disease, and better access to primary health care is
important in dealing with this disease; and

WHEREAS, women in Mississippi need to be informed to take
responsible actions to improve their own health, and the
participation in National Women's Health Week in Mississippi will
help underserved women gain access to important preventive health
care services:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
May 11-17, 2003, is hereby designated as "Women's Health Week in
Mississippi" to raise awareness of the prevalent diseases
affecting women in our state and celebrate the role of good health
practices in the lives of women.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded to
the State Board of Health, the Department of Human Services and
the University of Mississippi Medical Center for distribution to
appropriate women's groups and health organizations, businesses
and social service agencies participating in these events, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.