

By: Senator(s) Williamson, Burton, Gordon, Dearing, Blackmon, Jackson, Robertson, Minor, Carmichael, Browning, Jordan, Canon, Chaney, Farris, Horhn, Johnson (19th), Kirby, Little, Nunnelee, Ross

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 614

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING CHIEF PHILLIP MARTIN OF  
2 THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS FOR HIS LEADERSHIP IN  
3 CREATING VERY STRONG AND DIVERSIFIED TRIBALLY-OWNED AND OPERATED  
4 BUSINESSES AND ENTERPRISES.

5 WHEREAS, Phillip Martin is the democratically elected Tribal  
6 Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, a  
7 federally-recognized American Indian tribe of 9,100 enrolled  
8 members living on or near 30,000 acres of reservation land in East  
9 Central Mississippi; and

10 WHEREAS, Martin has a 45-year record of service and  
11 leadership in the tribal government, having served with the utmost  
12 integrity and dignity as Tribal Chief since 1979. Chief Martin is  
13 currently serving his sixth consecutive four-year term. His date  
14 of birth is March 13, 1926; and

15 WHEREAS, Chief Martin serves the Mississippi Band of Choctaw  
16 Indians on numerous Boards of Directors. During his tenure as  
17 Tribal Chief, Mr. Martin has established Tribally-owned and  
18 operated businesses and service operations, most of which are  
19 located on the Choctaw Indian Reservation, and some of which are  
20 located in Mexico and in major cities across North America. The  
21 result has been the creation of a very strong and widely  
22 diversified local economy, with the Tribe now ranking among  
23 Mississippi's five largest employers; and

24 WHEREAS, on July 1, 1994, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw  
25 Indians launched its first gaming operation, the Silver Star Hotel  
26 and Casino, organized under the authority of the Indian Gaming  
27 Regulatory Act. The largest and most profitable Choctaw Tribal  
28 enterprise to date, the Las Vegas-style Silver Star Hotel and



29 Casino is located on Tribal land in East Central Mississippi. In  
30 August 2002, the ribbon was cut for the Tribe's second casino, the  
31 Golden Moon Hotel and Casino, doubling the Tribe's entertainment,  
32 gaming, fine dining and hospitality venues. Another part of the  
33 rapidly growing Pearl River Resort complex is the Dancing Rabbit  
34 Golf Club, a 36-hole, championship golf course designed by  
35 Architect Tom Fazio and professional golfer Jerry Pate. The  
36 resort and casinos currently employ approximately 4,000 people.  
37 The Tribe is bringing Mississippi the state's first Hard Rock  
38 Cafe. It will open near Lake Pushmataha at Geysers Falls Water  
39 Theme Park in May 2003, along with the Hard Rock Beach Club, and a  
40 300-room Hard Rock Hotel is slated to open at the Pearl River  
41 Resort within three years; and

42 WHEREAS, during his tenure as Tribal Chief (uninterrupted  
43 since 1979), Phillip Martin has helped to create approximately  
44 9,000 permanent, full-time jobs on the reservation. Martin has  
45 been responsible for establishing an 80-acre industrial park, a  
46 Tribally-owned construction company, and several public service  
47 enterprises, such as the Choctaw Transit Authority, the Choctaw  
48 Utility Commission, the Choctaw Water Treatment facility, and the  
49 Choctaw Department of Public Works. Mr. Martin also developed  
50 Chahta Enterprises, now located in Mexico, which assembles  
51 automotive wiring harnesses for the Ford Motor Company, as well as  
52 Delphi Packard and Matrix Systems. Other customers have included  
53 United Technologies, Eastman Kodak, Sylvania, General Motors and  
54 Daimler-Chrysler. Further, Chief Martin began a joint venture  
55 with American Greetings, to hand-finish greeting cards for the  
56 corporation; this is the first plant built on Tribal land through  
57 use of state industrial revenue bonds. Another Tribal enterprise  
58 is the First American Printing and Direct Mail, a commercial  
59 printing and mail processing business. First American is the  
60 largest commercial printer on the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and



61           WHEREAS, nationally, Mr. Martin has served as President of  
62 National Tribal Chairmen's Association, and President of United  
63 South and Eastern Tribes, Inc., (USET), an association of 23  
64 federally-recognized Tribes in the eastern portion of the United  
65 States, Mr. Martin founded the USET organization in 1969. He was  
66 the first President of the Board of Regents of Haskell Indian  
67 Junior College, between 1970 and 1976 (now Haskell Indian Nations  
68 University). In 1992, Mr. Martin founded the United South and  
69 Eastern Tribes Gaming Association. He currently presides over the  
70 organization; and

71           WHEREAS, a strong and well-known advocate for education,  
72 Chief Martin serves on the Advisory Committee for the Division of  
73 Technology, Mississippi State University, Meridian Branch. He has  
74 also established the Choctaw Tribal Scholarships Program to ensure  
75 that all Mississippi Choctaw students can attend the colleges and  
76 universities of their choice; and

77           WHEREAS, during recent years, Phillip Martin, as the elected  
78 Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, has been the  
79 recipient of several awards. In addition to winning the United  
80 Indian Development Association's Jay Silverheels Award, Chief  
81 Martin received the Minority Supplier/Distributor of the Year  
82 Award from the Small Business Administration and the Minority  
83 Business Development Administration, the "Soar Like An Eagle"  
84 Achievement Award from the United Indian Youth Organization  
85 (UNITY), and the Economic Achievement Award from the United States  
86 Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Millsaps  
87 College in Jackson, Mississippi, awarded Chief Martin an Honorary  
88 Doctor of Laws Degree at the school's Spring 2002 commencement  
89 ceremonies on May 11, 2002, in his honor and also as a tribute to  
90 the Choctaw people of Mississippi and the nearly 9,000 employees  
91 who serve the Tribe; and

92           WHEREAS, through the years Chief Martin has dedicated his  
93 service to improving the overall livelihood of all Tribal members



94 and has garnered phenomenal achievements in economic, educational  
95 and community development. Chief Martin's business savvy and  
96 leadership skills have propelled the Tribe to the forefront of  
97 economic development in the Southeast; and

98 WHEREAS, the people of Mississippi are extremely proud of  
99 Chief Phillip Martin for his 40 years of outstanding public  
100 service as an elected official of the Choctaw Tribal government  
101 and for his major contribution to the economy of the State of  
102 Mississippi:

103 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
104 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
105 we do hereby commend Chief Phillip Martin for his many years of  
106 tireless devotion to the Choctaw Indian people and for his  
107 leadership in creating very strong and diversified tribally-owned  
108 and operated businesses and enterprises which enhance the local  
109 economy and benefit the entire State of Mississippi.

110 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
111 Chief Phillip Martin and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians  
112 and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

