SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1

A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING, HONORING AND COMMENDING AN OUTSTANDING CITIZEN OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, DR. JAMES HOWARD MEREDITH, ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DESEGREGATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI, AND DESIGNATING OCTOBER 1, 2002, AS "DR. JAMES H. MEREDITH DAY."

WHEREAS, Dr. James Howard Meredith was born June 25, 1933, in Kosciusko, Mississippi, and raised on his family's 84-acre farm in rural Attala County; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Howard Meredith returned to the State of Mississippi in 1961 after graduating from St. Petersburg, Florida High School in 1951 and serving nine years in the United States Air Force earning the rank of Sergeant First Class as a Clerical Trainee Supervisor for the Tokyo Japanese civilians working at Tachikawa Air Force Base in Japan; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Howard Meredith enrolled in 1961 at Jackson State University and later enrolled at the University of Mississippi on October 1, 1962, making him the first black to enroll and graduate from an all-white state institution in the State of Mississippi on August 18, 1963; and

WHEREAS, because of the difficulties that surrounded his admission to the University of Mississippi in those days, Dr. Meredith's enrollment at the University of Mississippi should serve as a role model for generations and generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Howard Meredith attended school at the University of Nigeria and visited over 20 African governments and countries. He decided to write about his experience in Mississippi in a book titled "Three Years in Mississippi", which
is a step-by-step account of his efforts to desegregate the
University of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Howard Meredith earned his L.L.B. from
Columbia University Law School in 1968; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Meredith started a voter registration march
which was to be from Memphis to Jackson that ended up registering
over 300,000 registered voters that later became known as the
"Meredith March Against Fear." During the march, Meredith
received three shotgun blasts from a would-be assassin. After
Meredith was wounded, Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. continued the march
for Meredith which led to his stay in Mississippi for two weeks,
and Meredith, after recuperating in Canton, Mississippi, rejoined
the march and brought the march to Jackson ending on June 26,
1966; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, he celebrated the 30th year anniversary of
the "Meredith March Against Fear" by promoting and using his theme
"Black Man's March to the Library" in which Meredith visited 53
libraries and towns, meeting with parents and community leaders on
the 225-mile trek from Memphis to Jackson encouraging the use of
the library. The promotion ended with a birthday celebration on
June 25, 1996; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Howard Meredith called for a "March for
Education" in the Summer of 1998. He visited 42 towns and
counties throughout the State of Mississippi introducing his
literacy program on reading, writing and speaking proper English.
The march ended on September 20, 1998, in Oxford, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Howard Meredith continues to carry his
literacy program to communities and schools in Mississippi,
organizing educational communities throughout Mississippi for the
betterment of Mississippians; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Howard Meredith has written over 22 books
and edited over 5 videos pertaining to the State of Mississippi:
"Three Years in Mississippi," a volume of 11 books; Queen Attala:
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby recognize, honor and commend Dr.
James Howard Meredith in celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the
Historical Desegregation of the University of Mississippi, and
that October 1, 2002, the 40th Anniversary of the Desegregation of
the University of Mississippi be declared "Dr. James H. Meredith
Day" in Mississippi.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
Dr. James Meredith, be forwarded to the Governor and the Secretary
of State, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.