A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING TYLER SKELTON OF
MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI, FIRST RECIPIENT OF THE "STRAIGHT FROM THE
HEART" AWARD FROM THE PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHY MISSISSIPPI.

WHEREAS, because of his tireless efforts, Tyler Skelton, a
native of Meridian, Mississippi, and Senior at West Lauderdale
High School, received the "Straight From the Heart" Award from The
Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Attorney General Mike Moore presented the award
during The Partnership's annual community awards luncheon on
January 13, 2003; and

WHEREAS, Tyler was selected to be the first recipient of
the award because of his commitment to making change in his
community and statewide; he sets an example for others to follow
and has dedicated himself to making a difference in the lives of
all Mississippians; and

WHEREAS, Tyler is a member of the National Honor Society,
Christian Fellowship Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes,
Student Council Representative and active member of The
Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi
got across the state looking for young people who would be
interested in becoming spokespeople for tobacco prevention.
Auditions were conducted at malls around the state. One
particular 13-year-old heard the promos, and begged his Mom to
take him to audition. Tyler showed up as the auditions were
closing for the day, and he pleaded to be allowed to try out. He
shared his personal story of having lost his father to tobacco use
when Tyler was only five years old. Almost 1,000 young people
tried out that day, but this one applicant stood out above all.
He was only 13 years old, but his conviction and passion would
inspire a movement; and

WHEREAS, as a founding member of the Frontline program and
the longest-serving state board member, Tyler has played an
integral role in shaping the youth movement that is changing the
culture of health in Mississippi. He has toured the state and the
nation to share his touching story of how he lost his father to
tobacco-related lung cancer. He transforms his personal loss into
passion and empowers young people to take charge to prevent this
from happening to others. Tyler has testified before city and
state lawmakers in an effort to make important policy changes; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, Tyler took it upon himself to educate his
home county about the dangers of secondhand smoke. He petitioned
the Lauderdale County Board of Supervisors to make the County
Courthouse smoke-free. As a result of his efforts, they
implemented a smoke-free policy for all county-owned buildings and
vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Tyler has worked with The Partnership for a Healthy
Mississippi since its inception. Tyler’s passion is personal and
intense. He expects and demands that those working with him have
that same intensity; and

WHEREAS, Tyler Skelton is a young man that Mississippi is
proud to claim as its own:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
we do hereby commend and congratulate Tyler Skelton of Meridian,
Mississippi, as the first recipient of the "Straight From the
Heart" Award from The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi, and
extend to him and his family the best wishes of the Mississippi
Senate for this honor and in his future endeavors.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
Tyler Skelton and his family, be forwarded to Attorney General
Mike Moore and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.