SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 17

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE DEDICATED MILITARY AND PUBLIC SERVICE CAREER OF COLONEL RICHARD G. WILKINSON, RET'D., OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI.

WHEREAS, the Community of Jackson and the State of Mississippi is indeed fortunate to have received the public service of Richard Gaddis Wilkinson, Colonel, United States Air Force, Retired, and Sigma Alpha Epsilon Distinguished Brother; and

WHEREAS, following his retirement from active duty with the United States Air Force in 1970 at the rank of Colonel and as Chief of Staff, 15th AF, March AFB, California, Colonel Wilkinson returned to Jackson, Mississippi, where he organized the Central Mississippi Alumni Association of Sigma Alpha Epsilon and has served in a leadership role in that organization ever since serving as President of the Central Mississippi Alumni Association of Sigma Alpha Epsilon now in excess of 32 years; and

WHEREAS, he is an initiate of the Mississippi Gamma Chapter of Sigma Alpha Epsilon at the University of Mississippi, Class of 1940. He served the Chapter as Pledge Trainer and Eminent Archon (President). He is an SAE Leadership School graduate; and

WHEREAS, he received the SAE Province Theta Merit Key Award (highest Province Award) in recognition of meritorious service to the Fraternity from his Province consisting of all SAE Chapters and Alumni Associations in Mississippi, Louisiana and West Tennessee, which he served as Province Alumni Secretary and Honorary Province Archon; and

WHEREAS, he served for many years as President of the Mississippi Gamma House Corporation of the Ole Miss SAE Chapter.
and raised 90% of the funds for construction of the existing SAE Chapter House on the Ole Miss campus; and

WHEREAS, he was instrumental in the organization and chartering of the SAE Chapter at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi, Mississippi Delta Chapter, and has served since the chartering of the Chapter as the House Corporation President for the SAE Chapter at Millsaps College. He raised 95% of the necessary funds for construction of the existing SAE Chapter House on the Millsaps College campus, which is dedicated by the Chapter to Colonel Wilkinson in his honor; and

WHEREAS, in 1989 he was presented with the SAE Fraternity Distinguished Service Award at the Fraternity's Cincinnati, Ohio, convention for his many and consistent years of service at the Chapter level, in the Greater Jackson, Mississippi, area in Province Theta and SAE nationally; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 he was further honored by the National Fraternity upon his election as Honorary Eminent Supreme Archon (Honorary National President of SAE) at the New Orleans convention. He served as Honorary SAE of Sigma Alpha Epsilon from 1993 to 1995; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Wilkinson is a major donor to the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Foundation, supporting fraternity undergraduate academic scholarships and leadership programming, having obtained the giving levels of Century Member, Mosley Member, Levere Member, Phoenix Society Member, Bunting Society Member, Nippert Society Member and Devotie Society Member for his many years of financial support for SAE Foundation academic and educational scholarship and programming for undergraduate members; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Wilkinson is SAE Keeper of the Tower Number 1 for the Endowment Fund which supports the maintenance of The Levere Memorial Temple of Sigma Alpha Epsilon in Evanston, Illinois, the Fraternity National Headquarters, which includes one
of the largest collections of Louis Tiffany stained glass windows, including the Peace Window in the Chapel of the building; and

WHEREAS, he has attended numerous SAE national conventions where he has actively participated in working to secure the future of the Fraternity with positive Chapter programming and personal growth and development for undergraduate members and the increased involvement of Alumni in fraternity programming and operations; and

WHEREAS, in 2000 he was honored by the Central Mississippi (Greater Jackson area) Alumni Association of Sigma Alpha Epsilon with funds raised in his honor to create the Colonel Richard G. Wilkinson Leadership School Endowment Fund of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Foundation which funds in perpetuity SAE Leadership School scholarships for undergraduate delegates from the four Mississippi SAE Chapters at Ole Miss, Mississippi State, University of Southern and Millsaps College; and

WHEREAS, he is the donor of the Richard G. Wilkinson Carillon Fund of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Foundation for perpetual maintenance of the operation of the SAE Bell Tower chimes in the Bell Tower of The Levere Memorial Temple of Sigma Alpha Epsilon in Evanston, Illinois. One of the tunes played daily by the SAE Bell Tower chimes at the Fraternity Headquarters in Evanston, Illinois, in his honor is the Ole Miss fight song; and

WHEREAS, through his service as President of the Central Mississippi Alumni Association of Sigma Alpha Epsilon (Greater Jackson area) he has single-handedly seen to it that every 50-year member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon from a Mississippi SAE Chapter and every 50-year member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon who resides in Mississippi who graduated from any other SAE Chapter, has received his 50-Year Member Certificate as a Golden Son Of Minerva of SAE. To date, in excess of 645 50-Year Member Certificates have been presented to brothers from 58 different SAE Chapters; and
WHEREAS, he is a recipient of the Order of the Lion Award from Mississippi Sigma Chapter of SAE at University of Southern Mississippi for his Alumni service benefiting that Chapter; and
WHEREAS, his commitment to excellence and to supporting and enhancing the undergraduate college experience for his undergraduate fraternity brothers is exemplary. His service to his alumni brothers in the Fraternity through the many SAE Founders Day events sponsored by the Central Mississippi Alumni Association in March of each year, through his fund-raising efforts for SAE Chapter Houses at Ole Miss and Millsaps, through his fund-raising and his generosity and his contributions to the SAE Foundation for academic scholarships and SAE Leadership School scholarships and for maintenance of The Levere Memorial Temple is unmatched by any other member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon from the State of Mississippi. Colonel Richard Gaddis Wilkinson is a great American, a great Mississippian, a great Jacksonian and a great SAE:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend the dedicated military and public service career of Colonel Richard G. Wilkinson, Ret'd., of Jackson, Mississippi, and extend to Colonel Wilkinson and his family the thanks of the Mississippi Senate for his many contributions to our community, our state and our nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Colonel Wilkinson and his family and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.