SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 79

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING LEGENDARY ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL COACH DAVE WHITNEY, THE WINNINGEST COACH IN SWAC HISTORY.

WHEREAS, there is no doubt that Davey L. Whitney is one of the greatest names in college basketball history. His record and success against tough competition speaks for itself; and

WHEREAS, Whitney completed 27 seasons as the Chief of the Alcorn State University Braves basketball program and has set standards which no other coach in Alcorn State or Southwestern Athletic Conference history can match; and

WHEREAS, with a career record of 565 wins and 354 losses as a collegiate head coach and a career record at Alcorn State of 510 wins and 301 losses, Whitney has spearheaded more winning seasons than any of his predecessors. He was the first SWAC Coach to lead his team to a victory in the NCAA Division 1 Basketball Championships; and

WHEREAS, in July 2002, Whitney became the first-ever recipient of the NCAA Hall of Champions Journey Award. This award was a result of his continued success and contributions to college basketball; and

WHEREAS, at Alcorn State University and around the nation, Whitney has been affectionately nicknamed the "Wiz". His teams have won twelve SWAC regular season titles, a record four consecutive titles between 1978-1982. Notably his teams have participated in twelve national post-season tournaments, have won five NAIA District Titles and placing second and third in the national tournaments during the 1970’s; and
WHEREAS, Alcorn State basketball during the Whitney era became the first historically black institution to compete in the National Invitational Tournament with a 1979 bid. In one of the most historical contests, the Braves defeated the Bulldogs of Mississippi State University, at Starkville (80-78) before falling to eventual champion Indiana University (73-69) in the second round; for an encore, a Whitney-led Alcorn State Team defeated South Alabama in 1980 (70-62) to become the first historically black institution to win in the NCAA playoffs; and

WHEREAS, on December 20, 1999, Coach Whitney reached a milestone in his storied career when he became part of a select group of Division 1 coaches to have reached the 500-win mark during their careers; and


WHEREAS, Whitney has won SWAC Coach of the Year honors nine times; among NCAA Division 1 men's basketball active coaches, he is currently ranked 43rd in career wins, 38th in all-time career victories and 60th among coaches who have won 500 career games. Whitney is also ranked among active Division 1 leaders in most seasons at current school (4th), most overall seasons (7th), most games (10th), 20-win seasons (12th), victories (12th) and winning percentage (61st); and

WHEREAS, his coaching ledger includes being a member of the United States Olympic Coaching and Trial Selection Committee at the 1984 and 1986 Olympics; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Kentucky State University, Whitney earned more athletic letters than any other athlete in Kentucky
WHEREAS, after finishing college, Whitney served in the Armed Forces and later played professional baseball with the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro Baseball League as a shortstop from 1952-1954, started his first collegiate coaching job at Texas Southern University and was also the head baseball coach at Alcorn State University; Whitney is married to the former Bernice Thomas of Lexington, Kentucky. They are the proud parents of Gail, Danita, Lisa, Doreen and Davey, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, basketball has been good to Coach Whitney, and Coach Whitney has been good for Mississippi, and it is with great pride that we recognize the career of this sportsman who coached Alcorn to SWAC dominance and brought honor to his university, his community and to the State of Mississippi:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend and congratulate legendary Alcorn State University Basketball Coach Dave Whitney, the winningest coach in SWAC history, upon the occasion of his retirement after 27 seasons at the helm, and extend to him and his family the best wishes of the Legislature in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Coach Whitney and his family, the President of Alcorn State University, be forwarded to the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.