SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 84

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING ROBERT GEORGE CLARK FOR HIS OUTSTANDING LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI.

WHEREAS, House Speaker Pro Tempore Robert George Clark, the first African-American elected to the Mississippi Legislature since Reconstruction, is completing 35 years of outstanding, dedicated service as a member of the Mississippi House of Representatives from District 47 (Attala, Holmes and Yazoo Counties); and

WHEREAS, he is completing a third 4-year term as Speaker Pro Tempore of the House of Representative, of which he was elected to the second top leadership post in 1992. As Speaker Pro Tempore, he presides in the absence of the Speaker and serves as ex officio Chairman of the House Management Committee and ex officio member of the House Rules Committee; and

WHEREAS, Robert George Clark, a Democrat from Ebenezer, Mississippi, was elected in 1967 during a time of racial unrest in the South, arriving at the State House of Representatives two years after passage of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965. His 35-year tenure in the Mississippi House of Representatives symbolized the fight for change and a better society for all Mississippians; and

WHEREAS, over the years since his election to the House of Representatives, Robert George Clark has gained stature in the Mississippi Legislature, rising from a freshman lawmaker to House Education Committee Chairman, handling and authoring the historic Education Reform Act of 1982; and
WHEREAS, Robert George Clark's leadership with the members of the Mississippi Legislature in the passage of education reform legislation was outstanding, especially regarding the sales tax increase issue, where he exhibited a "great deal of determination in a very subtle, inoffensive manner" according to longtime friend and colleague Representative Jim Simpson; and

WHEREAS, he was born on October 3, 1928, in Ebenezer, Mississippi; educated at Durant Training School, Jackson State University, Mississippi Valley State University, Florida A&M University and Michigan State University; he was a teacher, coach, businessman and rancher; he is a faithful member of the Baptist Church and the Elks; he is a member of the Mississippi Action for Community Education, the Holmes County Union for Progress and the Holmes County 21st Century Commission; he is married to the former Jo Ann Ross, and they have three children: Bryant Wandrick, La Leche Seay and Robert George III; and

WHEREAS, he is the subject of a new book, Robert G. Clark's Journey to the House: A Black Politician's Story, by Will D. Campbell which fuses Clark's family history with his political career, and the continued influence of his work on contemporary Mississippi politics and culture; and

WHEREAS, Robert George Clark's journey to the House of Representatives unites one of Mississippi's foremost citizens of the Twentieth Century and one of the state's most notable literary voices; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Robert George Clark has been praised for his vision and ability to sit down and work things out, and has provided constructive leadership, coupled with a keen understanding of the issues facing Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Senate express their sincere appreciation to The Honorable Robert George Clark, Speaker Pro Tempore, for his outstanding accomplishments and dedicated public
service to the citizens of Mississippi upon the occasion of his
retirement at the expiration of his term:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend our friend, colleague and
leader, The Honorable Robert George Clark, Speaker Pro Tempore,
for his unmatched contributions to the Mississippi Legislature and
the citizens of the State of Mississippi.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
Speaker Pro Tempore Robert George Clark and be made available to
the Capitol Press Corps.