

By: Senator(s) Michel

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 94

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE OF STUART C. IRBY, JR.,  
2 JACKSON BUSINESS LEADER AND PHILANTHROPIST, AND EXPRESSING THE  
3 SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE.

4 WHEREAS, remembered as a thinker who sought to help the city  
5 he loved, Jackson business leader and philanthropist, Stuart C.  
6 Irby, Jr., passed away on Friday, February 21, 2003; and

7 WHEREAS, the former Chairman and President of Irby  
8 Construction Company and Stuart C. Irby Company, an electrical  
9 supply company that literally provided power transmission lines to  
10 every corner of the globe, Stuart Irby used his talents to benefit  
11 others; and

12 WHEREAS, in 1993, Governor Fordice appointed him as the first  
13 Chairman of the Mississippi Gaming Commission, representing  
14 financially independent businessmen, and Stuart took a personal  
15 interest in ensuring that this important new industry was  
16 regulated under a free market system of gaming; and

17 WHEREAS, a Jackson native, Stuart C. Irby, Jr., graduated  
18 from Louisiana State University in 1948 with a degree in business  
19 administration, and continued his studies at the Graduate  
20 Institute of International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland, from  
21 1953-1954; he had served three years in the Army during World War  
22 II, his unit landed at Normandy six days after D-Day, and he spent  
23 two years in the European Theater; and

24 WHEREAS, he took over as President and Chairman of Irby  
25 Construction Company in 1955, a family business his father had  
26 founded in 1926, and Stuart built it up from a small local power  
27 line contractor to one of the largest power line contractors in



28 the world, building power lines in 42 states and 12 international  
29 projects in Asia, Africa and Central America; the Stuart C. Irby  
30 Company grew to 38 branches in nine states; and

31 WHEREAS, his business success served as a springboard for his  
32 civic and charitable activities; he gave 10% of his company's  
33 earnings to community activities, supporting everything from the  
34 Jackson Symphony Orchestra to human service agencies, by issuing a  
35 challenge or matching requirement to his funding in order to  
36 require the community recipients to have a vested interest in the  
37 activity; and

38 WHEREAS, he believed in getting to the facts, practicing  
39 solid logical reasoning and having a person's actions mirror his  
40 words; his personal philanthropy was widely known but quietly  
41 practiced; and

42 WHEREAS, Irby had many varied interests: he was an investor  
43 in the *State Times* Newspaper; an active investor and board member  
44 of Deposit Guaranty Bank; a long-time Chairman of French Camp  
45 Academy; a founding member of Covenant Presbyterian Church; a  
46 founding member of the River Hills Club; a founding member of the  
47 Metropolitan Dance/Supper Club; he initiated the first corporate  
48 health and fitness programs in Jackson; he founded the Jackson  
49 Enterprise Center for new businesses; he donated the former Kress  
50 Building to Mississippi State University for its School of  
51 Architecture; he was inducted into the Mississippi Business Hall  
52 of Fame in 1992; he loved all things English and owned a castle in  
53 England; he contributed financially to Belhaven College, where the  
54 classroom building called the Irby Complex is named in honor of  
55 his family; he was a major supporter of the Jackson (Mississippi)  
56 Symphony Orchestra; the Centennial Exhibition at the Mississippi  
57 Museum of Art was sponsored by the Irby family where a wing is  
58 named in memory of Bitsy Irby; he was a supporter of the Capitol  
59 City Stage Band because he loved to dance to the music of his  
60 generation; and he contributed to many organizations anonymously,



61 and the fact that his family continues to be active in many of the  
62 same organizations demonstrates the extent of his civic duty and  
63 philanthropy; and

64 WHEREAS, Irby is survived by his wife, Debbie West Irby;  
65 sister, Beth Milam; five children, Margaret, Stuart M., Charles,  
66 Joe and Richard; and ten grandchildren; and

67 WHEREAS, it is with sadness and humility that we recognize  
68 the passing of this remarkable citizen whose business leadership  
69 and generous spirit instilled total commitment to his community  
70 and to the State of Mississippi:

71 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
72 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend the life of Stuart C. Irby,  
73 Jr., Jackson business leader and philanthropist, for his  
74 commitment to his community and state, and express to his family  
75 the sympathy of the Senate on his passing.

76 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
77 Stuart's surviving family and be made available to the Capitol  
78 Press Corps.

