

By: Representatives Taylor, Holland

To: Rules

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 105

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE MERITORIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS AND THE
2 MANY YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICES MR. LEO TURNER PROVIDED TO THE
3 FRIENDS OF CHILDREN OF MISSISSIPPI.

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Leo Turner has set the benchmark of excellence
5 in volunteerism and community involvement for his contributions as
6 a tirelessly devoted humanitarian to the Friends of Mississippi;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, born September 23, 1930, the eldest son of Mr.
9 Bennie Turner and the late Mrs. Freddie Gamblin of Waynesboro,
10 Mississippi, Mr. Turner, began his education at the Estes School,
11 and excelling academically throughout his years of schooling,
12 graduated from Waynesboro Vocational High School in 1951; and

13 WHEREAS, predicted to be a preacher, Mr. Turner, who had
14 plans of becoming a funeral director and insurance salesman,
15 entered the Kentucky School of Embalming in Louisville, Kentucky,
16 after graduation; and

17 WHEREAS, in October of that year, he was drafted into the
18 United States Army, where he served in the Korean Conflict,
19 completing an 18-month tour of duty, before returning to Kentucky
20 to resume his studies, ultimately graduating as Sergeant of Arms
21 of his 1954 class; and

22 WHEREAS, an avid lover of education, Mr. Turner developed an
23 interest in medicine, and even entertained the thought of
24 enrolling in school to pursue the study of medicine; and

25 WHEREAS, in 1955, Mr. Turner married his high school
26 sweetheart, Leola "Baby" McGill, and to their wedded union were
27 blessed with five children, four daughters, Mae Olia, Anita,

28 Denise and Brandice; one son, "Junior"; three grandchildren and
29 one great-grandchild; and

30 WHEREAS, after the death of his father in 1956, Mr. Turner
31 and his brother, the late Alfred Turner, took over operations of
32 the family funeral home; and

33 WHEREAS, since seizing the helm of the family business, Mr.
34 Turner, at one point in his career, oversaw the operation of five
35 funeral homes; and

36 WHEREAS, seeking a new vehicle to bring about a much needed
37 change in the Waynesboro community, Mr. Turner, along with a group
38 of neighbors, began the task of raising funds to operate a Head
39 Start Program in Wayne County; and

40 WHEREAS, since its origination, Friends of Children of
41 Mississippi sponsored numerous programs in addition to Head Start
42 in order to bring services and employment to the community, such
43 as the Summer Feeding Program, Summer Youth Program and CETA
44 Projects among others; and

45 WHEREAS, Mr. Turner was heavily involved with the Wayne
46 County Voters' League in efforts to bring about political
47 education and increased political involvement throughout the
48 county; and

49 WHEREAS, elected to replace the late Reverend W.G. Goff as
50 Chairman of the Board of Directors of Friends of Children of
51 Mississippi in 1968, Mr. Turner has demonstrated courage and
52 vision in a fight for a cause he has made his own for the past 36
53 years; and

54 WHEREAS, through his tireless devotion and visionary prowess
55 in the 1970s, Mr. Turner managed more than \$13 million that had
56 been provided in services and employment in Wayne, Greene, Clarke
57 and Humphreys Counties; and

58 WHEREAS, an active 59-year member of St. Luke Baptist Church,
59 where he is a member of the deacon board, Mr. Turner is also a
60 53-year member of the Waynesboro Masonic Lodge, where he has grown

61 from Master Mason to a 32 Degree Mason, in addition to having
62 served as Senior Warden; and

63 WHEREAS, participating in several professional associations,
64 such as the Mississippi Funeral Directors and Morticians
65 Association, the National Funeral Directors and Morticians
66 Association and the NAACP, Mr. Turner has also made his mark in
67 the political arena, having served on the Board of Alderman for
68 Waynesboro for 13 years, and serving as Mayor Pro Tempore during
69 two of his terms in office; and

70 WHEREAS, it is the policy of the House of Representatives to
71 recognize and commend excellence in such outstanding individuals
72 as Mr. Turner, whose mark on society has been truly monumental and
73 inspiring:

74 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
75 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby
76 commend and congratulate Mr. Leo Turner for his meritorious
77 contributions and the many years of dedicated services provided to
78 the Friends of Children of Mississippi and extend our heartiest
79 wishes for many more years of good health, peace, happiness and
80 success in all his future endeavors.

81 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
82 furnished to Mr. Leo Turner and to the members of the Capitol
83 Press Corps.