

By: Senator(s) King, Albritton, Browning,
Carmichael, Chamberlin, Chaney, Clarke,
Dearing, Gordon, Harden, Hyde-Smith, Jackson
(15th), Jackson (32nd), Lee (35th), Little,
Nunnelee, White, Wilemon

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 545

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING OAK
2 GROVE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PAULA HAMILTON OF HATTIESBURG,
3 MISSISSIPPI, UPON HER RECEIPT OF THE 2004 PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF
4 COMMUNITY AWARD.

5 WHEREAS, Paula Hamilton, 14, a student at Oak Grove Middle
6 School in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, has been named the state's top
7 middle level youth volunteer for 2004 by receiving a Prudential
8 Spirit of Community Award; and

9 WHEREAS, this prestigious award, presented by Prudential
10 Financial in partnership with the National Association of
11 Secondary School Principals, honors young volunteers across
12 America who have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to
13 serving their communities; and

14 WHEREAS, Paula, an eighth-grader at Oak Grove Middle School,
15 is an active volunteer dedicated to helping disabled children at a
16 local Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC) Chapter. It was a
17 Special Education teacher at Paula's school who first noticed
18 Paula's special rapport with disabled students and recommended her
19 to ARC administrators. She began by volunteering during the
20 organization's six-week summer school, and then started lending
21 her energy and abilities on weekends as well. Soon after, she was
22 invited to participate in the association's Buddy Program; and

23 WHEREAS, Paula has learned about the various mental and
24 physical disabilities of the children she works with, and must be
25 constantly alert for seizures, allergic reactions, illness and
26 accidents. "I must keep the children entertained and safe," she
27 said. Thanks to Paula and other volunteers like her, the parents
28 of these disabled children are able to enjoy some respite, and the

29 children are able to simply have fun. "My volunteering allows the
30 children to interact with special kids and normal kids, and allows
31 me to see the different situations that life holds," said Paula;
32 and

33 WHEREAS, "People as caring and committed as this young
34 student are critical to the future of our neighborhoods, our
35 cities and our nation," said Arthur F. Ryan, Chairman and CEO of
36 Prudential Financial. "By recognizing this honoree, we hope to
37 encourage other young people, our future leaders, and all
38 Americans to think more about the value and importance of
39 volunteering in their communities"; and

40 WHEREAS, all public and private middle-level and high schools
41 in the country, as well as all Girl Scout councils, county 4-H
42 organizations, American Red Cross chapters, YMCA's, Camp Fire USA
43 councils and volunteer centers, were eligible to select a student
44 or member for a local Prudential Spirit of Community Award this
45 past November. Local honorees were then reviewed by state-level
46 judges, who selected State Honorees and Distinguished Finalists
47 based on criteria such as personal initiative, creativity, effort,
48 impact and personal growth; and

49 WHEREAS, on May 3, 2004, ten of the 104 State Honorees - five
50 middle-level and five high school students - will be named
51 America's top ten youth volunteers of the year by a prestigious
52 national selection committee. These National Honorees will
53 receive an additional \$5,000.00, a gold medallion and a crystal
54 trophy. In addition, the ten National Honorees will have a total
55 of \$250,000.00 in children's products donated in their names to
56 needy children in their communities by Kids in Distressed
57 Situations, Inc., the national charity of the children's apparel
58 and products industry; and

59 WHEREAS, the success of the State of Mississippi, the
60 strength of our communities and the overall vitality of American
61 society depend, in great measure, upon the dedication of young

62 people like Paula, who use their considerable talents and
63 resources to serve others:

64 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
65 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
66 we do hereby commend and congratulate Oak Grove Middle School
67 student Paula Hamilton of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, upon her
68 receipt of the 2004 Prudential Spirit of Community Award, and
69 recognize her outstanding record of volunteer service, peer
70 leadership and community spirit and extend to her and her family
71 the best wishes for success in her future endeavors.

72 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
73 Paula and her family and be made available to the Capitol Press
74 Corps.