

By: Senator(s) Dawkins, Gollott, Hewes

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 523

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE OF RENOWNED
2 HARRISON COUNTY TRIAL ATTORNEY WILLIAM LYMAN "WILL" DENTON OF
3 BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI, AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE
4 LEGISLATURE.

5 WHEREAS, William Lyman Denton of Biloxi, Mississippi, passed
6 away on Friday, December 3, 2004; and

7 WHEREAS, "Will" Denton was eulogized by author John Grisham
8 as a renowned trial attorney, husband and father, mentor, art
9 patron, hunter, lover of dogs, champion of the underdog, veteran,
10 wit, literary consultant, country boy from Brooklyn, Mississippi,
11 and Renaissance man; and

12 WHEREAS, Will grew up in rural Forrest County in the Brooklyn
13 community. He graduated from Forrest County Agricultural High
14 School in 1959. While there, he played football and made the
15 State All-Star football team his senior year. Will attended
16 Perkinson Junior College for two years before transferring to the
17 University of Mississippi. He graduated from law school in 1965
18 and opened a small law office in Hattiesburg. Will served in the
19 Judge Advocate General Corps of the Air Force for three years,
20 including one tour of duty in Vietnam. In March of 1969, Will
21 opened his law office in Biloxi. From his roots, he always
22 associated with the working people and spent the majority of his
23 life serving his clients. His love for the outdoors is
24 well-known. At every opportunity he could be found at his hunting
25 camp surrounded with fellow hunters or fishing in the Gulf. Will
26 loved life to the fullest and he will be remembered as a man who
27 never gave up; and

28 WHEREAS, best-selling novelist John Grisham requested
29 Denton's help on several occasions in composing his various books,
30 drawing on Will's passion for the "street lawyer" practice of a
31 small-town attorney; and

32 WHEREAS, he is survived by his wife of 34 years, Lucy; his
33 four children, who were his proudest achievements: Jack, Walt,
34 Dawn and Drew; also, his beloved daughter-in-law, Courtney; his
35 brother, Pete Denton, of Brooklyn; and two sisters: Beth Sessions
36 of Birmingham, Alabama, and Denne Howard of Rancho Mirage,
37 California; and

38 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of this
39 well-known attorney, veteran and citizen whose life serves as a
40 model for all Mississippians:

41 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
42 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
43 we do hereby commend the life of renowned Harrison County trial
44 attorney, William Lyman "Will" Denton, of Biloxi, Mississippi, and
45 express to his surviving family the sympathy of the Legislature on
46 his passing.

47 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
48 the surviving family of Will Denton and be made available to *The*
49 *Sun Herald* and to members of the Capitol Press Corps.