

By: Senator(s) Harden

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 29

1 A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING DR. DAVID STUART BLACKBURN, PROFESSOR OF
2 MUSIC AT ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY, FOR HIS SERVICE IN MUSIC EDUCATION.

3 WHEREAS, Dr. David Stuart Blackburn, Professor of Music and
4 Director of Choral Activities, Alcorn State University (ASU), was
5 nominated to the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher
6 Learning for commendation in recognition of Black History Month;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackburn received his Doctor of Musical Arts
9 from the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 1971; Master of
10 Music from Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 1962; and
11 Bachelor of Music from Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New
12 Jersey, 1960; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackburn began his career in 1962 as Minister
14 of Music at Audubon Forest United Methodist Church, Atlanta,
15 Georgia, and has served as Minister of Music for several Methodist
16 churches. He has been employed as Chairman, Division of Fine and
17 Applied Arts and Chairman of the Music Department at McMurry
18 University; Chairman, Graduate Program of Church Music, Scarritt
19 College; Private Voice Studios, New York City; Visiting Voice
20 Instructor, Curtis Institute of Music/Academy of Vocal Arts;
21 General/Artistic Director of the Natchez Opera Festival; and in
22 2001 he joined the staff at Alcorn State University as Professor
23 of Music; and

24 WHEREAS, for the past 15 years, Dr. Blackburn has dedicated
25 his life to achieving a world class Opera Festival in Natchez,
26 Mississippi, that would receive national acclaim, enrich the
27 cultural life of Mississippi, inspire and enhance the life of

28 thousands of children in the Arts, and make a lasting financial
29 impact on Natchez and Adams County; and

30 WHEREAS, in 2004, dignitaries attended the Natchez Opera
31 Festival from around the world, with one delegation from Japan,
32 and the Festival has been on Japanese television. Desiring great
33 performances with only the highest quality singers, directors and
34 musical excellence, Dr. Blackburn delivers each season. He
35 designed a two-level national training program: (1) Youth
36 Artists, and (2) Artists in Residence. This is a valuable
37 training tool for outstanding young singers from around the world
38 whom Dr. Blackburn encourages and helps move on to the next level
39 of their careers; and

40 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackburn has insisted on a strong educational
41 opera outreach program, which now provides performances to over
42 15,000 children in schools throughout Mississippi. Dr. Blackburn
43 has helped many young singers to receive full scholarships in
44 colleges and universities in vocal music and countless others
45 whose lives have been enriched by music; and

46 WHEREAS, as a Distinguished Professor in Voice and Choral
47 Music at Alcorn State University, Dr. Blackburn has helped raise
48 the music standard to a new level; and

49 WHEREAS, through holiday and various other civic performances
50 in Natchez, the Ministerial Alliance stated that "Dr. Blackburn
51 had done more for race relations than has been accomplished in 30
52 years. For the past 42 years, Dr. Blackburn's life and teachings
53 have been totally committed to inspiring and fanning the flame of
54 higher goals and personal achievement in the lives of young
55 talent"; and

56 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackburn has been recognized for his work by
57 receiving the Governor's Award of Excellence for Arts in
58 Mississippi in 1998; the Governor's Award of Excellence in the
59 Arts, for Opera and Music Education in Mississippi, 2003; and the
60 Distinguished Professor at McMurry University, Abilene, Texas; and

61 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackburn's professional memberships and
62 activities include National Association of Teachers of Singing,
63 Chorister's Guild International, Opera Volunteers of America,
64 Natchez Festival of Music Guild, Chamber of Commerce Board,
65 Natchez, and Chamber of Commerce, Vidalia, Louisiana; and

66 WHEREAS, Dr. Blackburn's civic and community involvement
67 includes: performance for the Natchez Chamber of Commerce Annual
68 Dinner; annual performance at First Baptist Church in Natchez
69 during Holy Week services; annual performance of Handel's Messiah
70 with the ASU Concert Choir; organize and conduct the annual ASU
71 Concert Choir tour; guest speaker for the Natchez area chapter of
72 Phi Delta Kappa; and Director of Music for Covenant Presbyterian
73 Church in Natchez:

74 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
75 MISSISSIPPI, That we take pride in recognizing Dr. David Stuart
76 Blackburn Professor of Music at Alcorn State University, in observance
77 of Black History Month for helping talented artists achieve their
78 goals and his tireless efforts in the pursuit of excellence in
79 music education which has made a lasting impact on Natchez and
80 Mississippi artistically and financially, and in the lives of the
81 many students and professionals who have studied and worked with
82 him.

83 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
84 Dr. Blackburn in recognition of his lifelong work, be forwarded to
85 the President of Alcorn State University and be made available to
86 the Capitol Press Corps.