

By: Senator(s) Kirby,
Jackson (15th), Clarke,
Flowers, Lee (35th),
Pickering, Ross, Dearing,
Posey, Burton, White,
Thames, Michel, Wilemon,
Gollott, Butler, Thomas,
Morgan, Carmichael, Walls,
Little, Jordan, Harden,
Davis, King, Brown, Jackson
(32nd), Frazier, Jackson
(11th), Williamson, Chaney,
Doxey, Robertson, Lee
(47th), Hyde-Smith, Huggins,
Hewes, Mettetal

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 509

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND GALLANT
2 SERVICE OF GENERAL LOUIS HUGH WILSON, JR., OF BRANDON,
3 MISSISSIPPI, FORMER MARINE CORPS COMMANDANT AND DECORATED WORLD
4 WAR II HERO.

5 WHEREAS, General Louis Hugh Wilson, Jr., 85, a native of
6 Brandon, Mississippi, who received the Medal of Honor for taking
7 and holding a key position on Guam during World War II and later
8 served as Commandant of the Marine Corps, died on June 21, 2005,
9 at his home in Birmingham, Alabama. He will be buried with
10 military honors at Arlington National Cemetery; and

11 WHEREAS, on July 1, 1975, General Wilson became the 26th
12 Commandant of the Marine Corps. He was the first commandant to
13 serve full time on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, providing the corps
14 with a greater say on defense matters; and

15 WHEREAS, during his four-year tenure, he was credited with
16 shaping a post-Vietnam corps of strong expeditionary units ready
17 for "high mobility and high-intensity combat." He made personnel
18 changes to raise morale and address disciplinary problems. He
19 increased academic enlistment standards (he wanted 75 percent of
20 recruits to have high school diplomas); ordered the discharge of
21 thousands of Marines with discipline problems; and offered tougher
22 directives on weight requirements; and

23 WHEREAS, the Mississippi native was an effective witness on
24 Capitol Hill, prepared and authoritative in this bearing.

25 Earlier, he had been a corps liaison to Congress. He was a
26 favorite of Senator John C. Stennis (D-Miss.), head of the Senate

27 Armed Services Committee, who became his advocate for full
28 membership on the Joint Chiefs of Staff in October 1978; and

29 WHEREAS, Louis Hugh Wilson, Jr. was born February 11, 1920,
30 in Brandon, Mississippi. His father was a farmer who died when
31 Louis was 5. He was raised by his mother, and her large, extended
32 family helped them through the Depression. As a young man, he
33 sold vegetables from a goat cart. He later studied economics at
34 Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi, where he played football
35 and was on the track team. A Marine Corps recruiter who came to
36 campus persuaded him to enter the service after his graduation in
37 1941; and

38 WHEREAS, he landed at Guadalcanal, Efate and Bougainville and
39 received the Medal of Honor, the military's highest award for
40 valor, while fighting Japanese forces at Fonte Hill, Guam, on July
41 25 and 26, 1944. At the time, he was a Captain and the commanding
42 officer of a rifle company. Launching a daylight attack against
43 massive machine gun resistance, he pushed his men 300 yards across
44 open terrain and captured a portion of a hill that contained the
45 enemy command post. That night, he took command of other
46 disorganized units and motorized equipment and fortified defenses
47 while risking exposure to enemy fire. Wounded three times within
48 five hours, he briefly sought treatment before volunteering to
49 return to duty to defend against counterattacks that lasted
50 through the night. He was credited with a pivotal role in the
51 victory, which included the deaths of 350 Japanese troops.
52 President Harry S. Truman presented him with the Medal of Honor on
53 October 5, 1945; and

54 WHEREAS, after World War II, he held recruiting and command
55 assignments, graduated from the National War College and served as
56 Assistant Chief of Staff to the 1st Marine Division in Vietnam
57 during the war there. He was promoted to Brigadier General in
58 1966 and, after being appointed Lieutenant General in 1972,
59 assumed command of the Marine force in the Pacific. His

60 decorations included three awards of the Legion of Merit. After
61 retiring from the military in 1979 as a Four-Star General, he
62 served on the corporate boards of such businesses as Merrill
63 Lynch, the financial services company, and Fluor Corp., an
64 engineering and construction company; and

65 WHEREAS, survivors include his wife of 61 years, Jane Clark
66 Wilson (his college sweetheart) and a daughter, Janet Taylor, both
67 of Birmingham, Alabama; and two grandsons; and

68 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of this
69 most well-known Mississippi military hero, called the "Giant of
70 the Marine Corps," whose chapter in the military history of the
71 United States brings honor to his corps and to the State of
72 Mississippi:

73 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
74 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
75 we do hereby commend the life and gallant service of General Louis
76 Hugh Wilson, Jr., a native of Brandon, Mississippi, former Marine
77 Corps Commandant and decorated World War II hero, and extend to
78 his surviving family the sympathy of the Legislature on his
79 passing.

80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
81 the surviving family of General Wilson, be forwarded to members of
82 Mississippi's congressional delegation and be made available to
83 the Capitol Press Corps.