

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.