

By: Representatives Brown, Clarke,  
Whittington, Banks, Calhoun, Fleming,  
Robinson (63rd)

To: Rules

## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 71

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING JERRY MITCHELL UPON BEING  
2 NAMED WINNER OF THE INLAND PRESS FOUNDATION CONTEST AND THE GEORGE  
3 POLK AWARD FOR JUSTICE REPORTING.

4 WHEREAS, Jerry Mitchell, a special projects reporter for The  
5 Clarion-Ledger, recently won first place in the Inland Press  
6 Foundation contest education category for his story, *The Preacher*  
7 *and the Klansman* and named recipient of the George Polk Award for  
8 Justice Reporting, administered by Long Island University; and

9 WHEREAS, Mitchell spent six months researching, interviewing  
10 the story's characters, traveling to places described and  
11 collecting state Sovereignty Commission records and other  
12 documents to pen his award winner; and

13 WHEREAS, his research helped to reconstruct events, dialogue  
14 and details, and on October 26, 1998, at the Kennedy Center in  
15 Washington, D.C., he along with three other journalists were  
16 honored by the Anti-Defamation League for "their courage and  
17 conviction that the world must know of the brutality of hatred,  
18 injustice and inhumanity"; and

19 WHEREAS, having spent nearly two decades reporting on  
20 unpunished crimes from the civil rights era, Mr. Mitchell's work  
21 has allowed the hand of justice to prevail in cases that were once  
22 forgotten; and

23 WHEREAS, now 40 years of age, Mitchell, after having won this  
24 coveted honor, has plans underway for the publication to be  
25 offered as possible curriculum material to teachers across the  
26 nation; and

27           WHEREAS, no stranger to success, Mitchell has won numerous  
28 other awards for his work, including the Sigma Delta Chi Award for  
29 Public Service, the Sidney Hillman Award for *The Preacher and the*  
30 *Klansman* and for his stories leading to the 1998 conviction of  
31 one-time Imperial Wizard Sam Bowers and also the recipient of the  
32 Heywood Broun Award; and

33           WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to recognize  
34 and commend the literary excellence and success of one of our own  
35 great Mississippians such as Mr. Mitchell:

36           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
37 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING  
38 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate Jerry Mitchell  
39 upon winning the Inland Press Foundation contest in the education  
40 category, as well as being named recipient of the George Polk  
41 Award for Justice Reporting, administered by Long Island  
42 University, and extend our wishes for continued success in all his  
43 future endeavors.

44           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
45 furnished to Jerry Mitchell and to the members of the Capitol  
46 Press Corps.