

By: Senator(s) Cuevas, Robertson, Moffatt

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 504

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REMEMBERING THE GALLANT SERVICE AND
2 COMMENDING THE LIFE OF MISSISSIPPI ARMY NATIONAL GUARD 1ST
3 LIEUTENANT ROBERT C. ONETO-SIKORSKI OF BAY ST. LOUIS, MISSISSIPPI,
4 WHO WAS KILLED IN IRAQ ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2005, AND EXPRESSING
5 THE SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE.

6 WHEREAS, Mississippi Army National Guard 1st Lieutenant
7 Robert C. Oneto-Sikorski, 33, of Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, was
8 killed by a roadside bomb on Monday, October 31, 2005, while on
9 foot patrol near al Haswah, west of Baghdad; and

10 WHEREAS, Lt. Oneto-Sikorski was assigned to the 155th Brigade
11 Combat Team, which is attached to the II Marine Expeditionary
12 Force; and

13 WHEREAS, this tragic death came at a time when the National
14 Guard soldier's family was facing the overwhelming challenge of
15 Hurricane Katrina; Lt. Oneto-Sikorski's home and his mother's home
16 were flooded by the storm surge, and the family has had a
17 difficult time in securing hurricane relief and temporary trailer
18 housing from the federal government; and

19 WHEREAS, carried by a military honor guard, he came home to
20 his family and to his community which has been devastated by the
21 worst natural disaster to befall the state, and was buried on
22 November 10, 2005, with full military honors in the Biloxi
23 National Cemetery; during the funeral he was awarded the Bronze
24 Star which was given to his son, the Purple Heart and the
25 Mississippi Medal of Valor by Adjutant General Harold Cross; and

26 WHEREAS, Lt. Oneto-Sikorski became the 14th Mississippian in
27 the 155th Brigade Combat Team to die since the unit deployed from
28 Camp Shelby. He is the first officer in the unit to be killed in

29 action. The 155th Brigade Combat Team is comprised of 3,500
30 soldiers from Mississippi and other states, which is expected to
31 begin returning to Mississippi in waves in the near future. Since
32 operations began in Iraq and Afghanistan, 38 soldiers or sailors
33 with Mississippi ties have died, and Lt. Oneto-Sikorski is the
34 18th member of the Mississippi National Guard to have been killed
35 in this operation; and

36 WHEREAS, Robert was a mechanical engineer at Ingalls Ship
37 Systems Operations in Pascagoula before his deployment. He was a
38 1991 graduate of Hancock County High School and a graduate of the
39 University of South Alabama. Robert leaves two sons and one
40 daughter, ages 6, 8 and 11, whom he loved dearly. Robert and
41 Claire Rager, the mother of his children, were both stationed in
42 Iraq with the 155th Brigade Combat Team. His father, Bob Sikorski
43 of Vancleave, Mississippi, had recently helped his son rebuild a
44 dirt bike that Robert loved to ride; and

45 WHEREAS, Robert Oneto-Sikorski lived his life committed to
46 our nation's safety and security, both as an officer and
47 shipbuilder. To a country, a fallen soldier means a national
48 loss; to a community, a fallen soldier means a true hero; to a
49 parent, a fallen soldier means a son who won't be coming home.
50 Mississippians understand the costs of conflict, because we have
51 paid them in the past, and it is with great pride and humility
52 that we recognize the heroic action of this great American and
53 Mississippian, who was the guardian of civilization as we know it
54 today:

55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
56 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
57 we do hereby remember the gallant service and commend the life of
58 Mississippi Army National Guard 1st Lieutenant Robert C.
59 Oneto-Sikorski of Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, who was killed in
60 the line of duty in Iraq on Monday, October 31, 2005, and extend

61 the thoughts and prayers of the Legislature to his family and our
62 sorrow on his passing.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
64 the surviving family of Lt. Oneto-Sikorski and be made available
65 to members of the Capitol Press Corps.