

By: Senator(s) Little

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 583

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE DEDICATED PUBLIC
2 SERVICE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF DR. J. CHARLES LEE, PRESIDENT OF
3 MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY.

4 WHEREAS, Dr. J. Charles Lee became the 17th President of
5 Mississippi State University on January 17, 2003, after serving as
6 Interim President for one year. On November 21, 2005, Dr. Lee
7 announced his intention to retire prior to the end of the
8 2005-2006 academic year; and

9 WHEREAS, Dr. Lee had been Mississippi State University's Vice
10 President for Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine since
11 September 1999 and also had been Dean of the College of
12 Agriculture and Life Sciences since July 2000. He previously
13 served at Mississippi State University from 1978-1983 as Dean of
14 the School of Forest Resources and Associate Director of the
15 Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station; and

16 WHEREAS, before returning to MSU as Vice President in 1999,
17 Dr. Lee had held administrative positions in the Texas A&M
18 University System, including four years as Vice Chancellor for
19 Research, Planning and Continuing Education. Dr. Lee also served
20 for 18 months in 1994-1995 as Interim Executive Vice President and
21 Provost for Texas A&M University, providing leadership for all
22 academic programs and related activities throughout the 42,000
23 student university; and

24 WHEREAS, Dr. Lee earned a Bachelor's Degree in Forest
25 Management and a Ph.D. in Forestry/Genetics at North Carolina
26 State University. He also has done graduate work at Duke
27 University. He spent the early years of his career as a Research

28 Forester for the Westvaco Corporation in North Carolina and West
29 Virginia and headed the Forestry Department at the University of
30 Arkansas at Monticello from 1972-1978; and

31 WHEREAS, highlights of Dr. Lee's administration at MSU since
32 January 2002 are as follows:

33 • Led a renewed commitment to the "People's University"
34 ideal, emphasizing both access and academic excellence and
35 including a restructuring of student recruitment efforts.

36 • Responded to successive declines in state funding with a
37 variety of efficiency and cost-saving measures, including a major
38 retirement incentive program in 2002.

39 • Adopted a university-wide performance-based budgeting
40 system, with associated accountability and performance measures
41 for both academic and support units.

42 • Emphasized the outreach role of MSU as a statewide,
43 land-grant institution, creating a Division of University
44 Extension and Outreach that includes the MSU Extension Service,
45 Continuing Education and a new Industrial Outreach Services
46 function.

47 • Heightened support for high-tech, high-wage industry
48 recruitment to Mississippi and expansion of the Thad Cochran
49 Research, Technology and Economic Development Park.

50 • Adopted a Campus Master Plan to guide campus development,
51 launched a major overhaul of streets, parking and other
52 infrastructure, and significantly upgraded campus landscaping
53 efforts. Major construction completed during the past three
54 years, in progress, or about to begin, includes the Center for
55 Advanced Vehicular Systems, Franklin Furniture Center, Roy Ruby
56 Residence Hall, Palmeiro Center, Agricultural and Biological
57 Engineering Building, Cullis Wade Depot (bookstore and welcome
58 center), Bryce Griffis Residence Hall and expansions of Lee Hall,
59 McCool Hall and Colvard Union.

60 • Oversaw planning and construction of the university's
61 first new residence hall in more than 35 years as the first step
62 in development of an on-campus residential village now underway.

63 • Presided over the public launch of the \$400 Million *State*
64 *of the Future* capital campaign, which has raised more than \$250
65 Million with three campaign years remaining, and strengthened
66 alignment of university alumni, fund-raising and athletic fund-
67 raising and marketing programs.

68 • Led efforts to revitalize the MSU football program,
69 including the hiring of Head Coach Sylvester Croom, the first
70 African-American Head Coach in Southeastern Conference history.

71 • Inspired a variety of initiatives designed to enhance the
72 undergraduate academic experience, including the introduction of
73 cross-disciplinary learning communities, enhancement of the
74 University Honors Program, and strengthening of academic advising;
75 and

76 WHEREAS, he has served on numerous state, regional and
77 national committees and boards and has a successful record of
78 securing grants and contracts and bringing state and federal
79 support to the institution he serves. He has been recognized in
80 numerous ways and has been cited for outstanding service in both
81 Texas and Mississippi. Dr. Lee has been honored for outstanding
82 service by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Joint Council on
83 Food and Agricultural Sciences, the Texas A&M University Board of
84 Regents, the Texas A&M College of Medicine and the Mississippi
85 Forestry Commission; and

86 WHEREAS, he and his wife, Pat, have three children and three
87 grandchildren; and

88 WHEREAS, Mississippi State University plays a vital role in
89 the life of this state, and the university's contributions through
90 education, research, economic development and outreach will be
91 more critical than ever in the years ahead; and

92 WHEREAS, the Legislature is deeply appreciative of the
93 support that Dr. Lee has received from faculty, staff, students,
94 alumni, trustees and policymakers and from the citizens of the
95 State of Mississippi:

96 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
97 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
98 we do hereby commend the public service of Dr. J. Charles Lee,
99 President of Mississippi State University, recognizing his
100 contributions to research and technology and dedication to
101 excellence in higher education in our state, and we extend to him
102 and his family the best wishes of the Legislature on his future
103 endeavors.

104 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we wish to thank the Board of
105 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning in bringing to
106 Mississippi State University a leader of the quality provided by
107 Dr. Lee, and which this institution and this state deserve.

108 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
109 Dr. Lee at appropriate campus ceremonies, be forwarded to the
110 Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and be
111 made available to the Capitol Press Corps.