

By: Senator(s) Harvey

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 595

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING PHIL BASS ON HIS
2 OUTSTANDING CAREER OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND DEDICATION TO
3 MISSISSIPPI'S NATURAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

4 WHEREAS, Phil Bass is retiring in March 2006 as Director of
5 the Office of Pollution Control in the Department of Environmental
6 Quality after 35 years of dedicated public service; and

7 WHEREAS, Phil Bass, a native of Bassfield, Mississippi, is a
8 5th generation Mississippian and resident of the town named for
9 his great-great-grandfather. He grew up farming and learning to
10 love and appreciate the natural beauty of his home state, which
11 grew into a career in conservation and environmental protection;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Phil started his career at the Mississippi
14 Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in 1973 as an aquatic
15 biologist after graduating from the University of Southern
16 Mississippi and spending two years teaching junior high science.
17 For 35 years, Phil has worked steadily and deliberately to move
18 the course of Mississippi's ecological history; and

19 WHEREAS, after four years working in the DEQ lab, Phil served
20 as the Lab Director from 1977 to 1992. From 1992 to 2000 he was
21 the Chief of Field Services, leading the lab, three DEQ regional
22 field offices, and the Environmental Operator Training Program.
23 In 2000, he was appointed to Director of the Office of Pollution
24 Control, the office responsible for all of the agency's
25 environmental programs; and

26 WHEREAS, Phil's career at DEQ is marked by many positions of
27 notoriety and leadership. He began the state's first state-wide

28 biological monitoring program. He implemented the use of
29 biological indicators at DEQ. During his 15 year tenure as the
30 DEQ Lab Director, he conducted DEQ's first bioassay. He began the
31 state's first fish tissue monitoring program, a program that has
32 significantly contributed to major changes in the application of
33 agricultural chemicals and in the processing of paper products.
34 He developed the first laboratory Standard Operating Procedure, a
35 step that put DEQ in a better position to defend its actions to
36 conserve and protect Mississippi's public health and environment.
37 He led the effort to fund and build a modern DEQ laboratory
38 facility to raise the level of respect and the availability of
39 sound, scientific data; and

40 WHEREAS, Phil has taken many innovative and courageous
41 courses of action to address serious environmental challenges. He
42 has worked aggressively to investigate and prosecute fish-kill
43 cases. From 1988 to 1993, Phil worked on the controversial dioxin
44 issue, and in the mid-1990's, Phil secured funding to address the
45 issue of mercury in fish. In 2000, in his new role as Director of
46 the Office of Pollution Control, Phil's strong support was
47 instrumental in the development of an Index of Biological
48 Integrity, an index tailored to Mississippi's native fauna and
49 stream types, which has been nationally recognized; and

50 WHEREAS, Phil is the founding father and early President of
51 the Southeastern Water Pollution Biologists Association, an
52 organization now more than 30 years old. He has held numerous
53 positions of leadership with EPA's Gulf of Mexico Program Office.
54 He served on the Mississippi Water and Pollution Control Board of
55 Governors. He was appointed by the Governor as Mississippi's
56 representative to the National Environmental Laboratory
57 Accreditation Conference. He started and chaired the Mississippi
58 Fish Tissue Task Force. He served on the Agriculture Aviation
59 Advisory Board. He chaired the Lower Mississippi Conservation
60 Committee which includes five other state agencies; and

61 WHEREAS, for his passionate commitment to Mississippi's
62 environment, the Mississippi Wildlife Federation recognized Phil
63 Bass as the 2004 MWF Fisheries Conservationist of the Year; and

64 WHEREAS, Phil and wife, Jane, have been married for 39 years.
65 They have three children: son, Michael, and two daughters, Lauren
66 and Megan; and

67 WHEREAS, whether as a regulator, a teacher, a supervisor, or
68 a practicing scientist, Phil has improved the health of
69 Mississippi's land, air, water, and all of the inhabitants who
70 depend on these elements, and it is with great pride that we
71 recognize the career and professional commitment of this public
72 servant whose devotion to Mississippi's environment and its people
73 has brought honor to his agency and to the State of Mississippi:

74 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
75 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
76 we do hereby commend Phil Bass on his outstanding career of public
77 service and his dedication to Mississippi's natural resources and
78 public health, and we extend to him and his family the best wishes
79 of the Legislature on the occasion of his retirement after 35
80 years of service.

81 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
82 Phil Bass, be forwarded to the Commission on Environmental Quality
83 and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.