

By: Senator(s) Little, White

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 642

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST
2 CONVENTION AND THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCHES FOR PERFORMING
3 EXEMPLARY SERVICE TO THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST IN SUPPORT OF
4 REBUILDING AND RECOVERY IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE KATRINA.

5 WHEREAS, on Monday, August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina, a
6 Category Four Hurricane, crashed with unrelenting and violent
7 force onto the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast, making landfall at
8 or around Waveland, Mississippi. In one day, the worst natural
9 disaster in our history struck us a grievous blow, leaving a
10 90-mile swath of destruction along the Mississippi Gulf Coast and
11 causing severe damage throughout Central and North Mississippi;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, an estimated 925 Southern Baptist churches in the
14 three states were destroyed or severely damaged. The North
15 American Mission Board coordinated the Southern Baptist
16 Convention's relief efforts across the region. More than 5,000
17 volunteers were on site, feeding the hungry and working with other
18 relief groups to provide housing and other basic needs; and

19 WHEREAS, Southern Baptists compose a considerable portion of
20 the populations in states most impacted by the devastation, making
21 up about 34%, 33% and 18%, respectively, of the residents in
22 Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana; and

23 WHEREAS, an amazing outpouring of support has been processed
24 through the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board for disaster
25 relief ministries in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, according
26 to Barri A. Shirley, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
27 Associate Executive Director for Resource Services; and

28 WHEREAS, as of January 2006, the Mississippi Baptist
29 Convention Board received \$10,847,763.00 in cash donations. The
30 Convention is partnering with volunteers and impacted churches to
31 help repair or build 2,000 homes. These projects are in addition
32 to the 10,000 homes already worked on by Baptist volunteers; and

33 WHEREAS, the Convention worked directly with churches and
34 associations in assessing their rebuilding needs. Thus far, the
35 Convention has identified recovery and rebuilding ministries
36 totaling \$9.6 Million. These funds are in addition to the cost of
37 providing over 3.3 million hot meals during the months following
38 the storm. The remaining funds and all future recovery efforts
39 will be reinvested in the impacted communities through the local
40 Southern Baptist churches. The ultimate goal is for God to be
41 glorified through meeting the physical and spiritual needs of the
42 storm victims; and

43 WHEREAS, the spontaneous responses of local Baptist churches
44 filled in the gaps where the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
45 Disaster Relief Task Force couldn't place feeding units; and

46 WHEREAS, as Mississippi Baptist disaster relief plans shifted
47 into long-term mode across the hurricane-stricken Gulf Coast, the
48 Task Force's main feeding unit, a fully self-contained
49 tractor/trailer capable of preparing more than 10,000 meals per
50 day, was stationed at First Church, Biloxi, Mississippi, while
51 trained chainsaw crews, medical teams, cleanup groups and child
52 care units from Mississippi Baptist churches ministered in the
53 Gulf Coast area. In addition to the mass feeding unit,
54 Mississippi Baptists distributed tons of foodstuffs, diapers,
55 cleaning supplies and other items that are very much in need by
56 the victims of the hurricane. Mississippi Baptist chainsaw crews
57 completed more than 2,400 requests for help. The medical teams
58 treated people, wrote prescriptions and administered shots as
59 needed; and

60 WHEREAS, in these most trying times, both volunteers and
61 recipients have exemplified dignity and grace. Many have had
62 reconfirmed that it is truly more blessed to give than receive.
63 At the same time, those receiving help have been shining
64 testimonies of encouragement and endurance to all of the
65 volunteers. We just can't say too much about the support we got
66 from Baptists across the state:

67 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
68 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
69 we do hereby commend the executives, employees and volunteers of
70 the Mississippi Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist
71 churches for their active role in assisting the recovery and
72 rebuilding and for their exemplary service, conduct and
73 performance subsequent to Hurricane Katrina's unprecedented
74 destruction on and near the Mississippi Gulf Coast in August and
75 September 2005, and we offer our thanks to these individuals for
76 their assistance during this critical time, as we endeavor to
77 rebuild our state and restore its economy.

78 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
79 the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board for distribution to the
80 Southern Baptist churches and be made available to the Capitol
81 Press Corps.