

**Adopted  
COMMITTEE AMENDMENT NO 1 PROPOSED TO**

**House Concurrent Resolution No. 55**

**BY: Committee**

**Amend by striking all after the title and inserting in lieu thereof the following:**

6           WHEREAS, on February 16, 1993, the University of Southern  
7           Mississippi dedicated its Student Services Building in honor of  
8           two African-Americans who played significant roles in the  
9           university's history; and

10           WHEREAS, the dedication of Kennard-Washington Hall during a  
11           special afternoon convocation paid tribute to the late Clyde  
12           Kennard, a decorated Korean War veteran and farmer, who  
13           unsuccessfully attempted to become the first African-American to  
14           enroll at USM in 1959; (and to Alcorn State University President  
15           Walter Washington, the first black to receive a doctorate from USM  
16           in 1969); and

17           WHEREAS, "we are saying to the world that we apologize for  
18           the indignities he (Kennard) suffered," USM President Aubrey K.  
19           Lucas said during the dedication, which was a part of the  
20           university's "Celebration of Diversity" and African-American  
21           History Month activities on the Hattiesburg campus. Twenty-two  
22           past and present black students, faculty and staff who achieved  
23           "firsts" at USM over the years were recognized during that  
24           ceremony, which included a special tribute to the memory of Clyde

25 Kennard from the Reverend John Webb, who was his brother-in-law;  
26 and

27 WHEREAS, born in 1927, Kennard's early life foreshadowed a  
28 grim future; at the age of 4, his father died. He grew up helping  
29 his mother run the family farm. In 1950, Kennard began attending  
30 college in Fayetteville, North Carolina, during the Korean War.  
31 Kennard served as a paratrooper and rose to the rank of sergeant,  
32 receiving three medals including the Bronze Star; and

33 WHEREAS, after the Korean War, he came home to run the family  
34 farm in Mississippi, and the 28-year old joined the NAACP.  
35 Kennard served as President of the local NAACP youth chapter and  
36 he served on the local school board and was outraged the area's  
37 125 black students had to travel 11 miles past the all-white  
38 school to attend classes. He circulated an unsuccessful petition  
39 to have children attend the closest school; and

40 WHEREAS, Kennard wanted to finish college and in 1956, he  
41 approached President William D. McCain at the then segregated  
42 Mississippi Southern College, but was denied. By the time he  
43 tried to enroll again in 1958, he enjoyed the support of Medgar  
44 Evers, Field Secretary for the Mississippi NAACP. When his  
45 intention to attend college was made public, the state's  
46 segregationist spy agency, the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission,  
47 compiled an extensive dossier on the small-framed farmer; and

48 WHEREAS, when Clyde Kennard refused to give up his quest to  
49 become the first black student to enroll at the University of  
50 Southern Mississippi, authorities sent him to state prison in 1960  
51 for seven years based upon a conviction for burglary; and

52 WHEREAS, on March 6, 1961, the Mississippi Supreme Court  
53 ordered a new trial on reckless driving and liquor charges for  
54 Kennard, but it did him little good. He remained behind bars,  
55 where he'd been since his September 1960 burglary arrest. Less

56 than a month later, the same justices upheld Kennard's conviction,  
57 sending him to the State Penitentiary at Parchman; and

58 WHEREAS, Clyde Kennard wrote a letter to the *Hattiesburg*  
59 *American* in 1958 challenging the idea of separate but equal.  
60 Kennard suggested people work together to build up one another:  
61 "When merit replaces race as a factor in character evaluation, the  
62 most heckling social problem of modern times will have been  
63 solved"; and

64 WHEREAS, in March 1962, he underwent colon cancer surgery at  
65 the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Kennard died July  
66 4, 1963, the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence that  
67 promised, "All men are created equal"; and

68 WHEREAS, *The Chicago Tribune* Editorial Board stated that the  
69 1993 ceremony at USM renaming the Student Services Building after  
70 Clyde Kennard was a significant event in the history of the civil  
71 rights movement. "This institutional apology was delivered--not  
72 out of a sense of guilt but out of a sense of  
73 obligation"--representing a great breakthrough and healing process  
74 for the United States of America and the State of Mississippi:

75 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
76 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
77 we do hereby remember the legacy of the late Clyde Kennard, the  
78 first black student to apply for admittance at the University of  
79 Southern Mississippi, for his significant role in the history of  
80 the university and for his significant role in the history of the  
81 civil rights movement in Mississippi.

82 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution shall be  
83 presented to the surviving family members of Clyde Kennard and be  
84 made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

**Further, amend by striking the title in its entirety and  
inserting in lieu thereof the following:**

1           A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REMEMBERING THE LEGACY OF THE LATE  
2 CLYDE KENNARD, THE FIRST BLACK STUDENT TO APPLY FOR ADMITTANCE AT  
3 THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI, FOR HIS SIGNIFICANT ROLE  
4 IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY AND FOR HIS SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN  
5 THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN MISSISSIPPI.