

By: Representative Stringer

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 110

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF
2 CHESTER A. THIGPEN, FORMER NATIONAL AND MISSISSIPPI OUTSTANDING
3 TREE FARMER OF THE YEAR, AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE
4 LEGISLATURE.

5 WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi has lost a leading
6 spokesman for the tree-farming community with the passing of
7 Chester A. Thigpen, 95, of Bay Springs, Mississippi, formerly of
8 Montrose, on January 8, 2007; and

9 WHEREAS, spokesman, pioneer and community-minded describe the
10 philosophy of this outstanding Mississippi citizen; and

11 WHEREAS, on March 21, 1996, the Mississippi Legislature
12 honored Chester and Rosett Thigpen as National Outstanding Tree
13 Farmers of the Year with a resolution; and

14 WHEREAS, after receiving the resolution, Chester Thigpen
15 spoke before both houses and entertained members with stories of
16 his 30 years of tree farming because he considered himself an
17 ambassador for forestry in Mississippi, and spent a lifetime
18 practicing and promoting forestry; and

19 WHEREAS, the Thigpens were Mississippi's 1994 Outstanding
20 Tree Farmers of the Year and after facing stiff competition from
21 73,000 other tree farmers across the nation, they received the
22 national award November 4, 1995, at the National Tree Farmer
23 Convention in St. Louis, Missouri; and

24 WHEREAS, as National Outstanding Tree Farmer, Chester Thigpen
25 served for two years on the National Tree Farm Operating
26 Committee, which oversees the tree farm program, served as a
27 spokesman for the American Tree Farm System and served on the
28 Editorial Board of *Tree Farmer Magazine*; and

29 WHEREAS, both Chester and Rosett Thigpen were born on
30 portions of the land that now make up the tree farm; and

31 WHEREAS, with the help of their county forester, they
32 developed a written forestry land management plan when they became
33 tree farmers, and the land remained under a written land
34 management plan for 45 years; and

35 WHEREAS, the tree farm income provided college educations for
36 the five Thigpen children; and

37 WHEREAS, Chester Thigpen served on the Mississippi Forestry
38 Commission, on the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Forestry
39 Association, as President of the Jasper County Forestry
40 Association and he traveled to Washington, D.C., in February 1995
41 to testify before the United States House of Representatives Ways
42 and Means Committee in support of estate tax reform; and

43 WHEREAS, promoting forestry field days and county forestry
44 associations allowed Thigpen to share his knowledge of good
45 stewardship with his community; and

46 WHEREAS, in 1966, Chester Thigpen served on the Mississippi
47 Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service's Advisory
48 Committee which took him to Washington, D.C., where he advised the
49 national organization on erosion control and cost-share programs;
50 and

51 WHEREAS, Thigpen was appointed by Governor Winter to serve a
52 seven-year term on the Mississippi Forestry Commission before
53 being entered into the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry
54 Museum's Hall of Fame; and

55 WHEREAS, he was also instrumental in organizing the Jasper
56 County Forestry Association; and

57 WHEREAS, Chester Thigpen was always philosophical when
58 speaking about the long-term benefits of tree farming and was
59 quoted as saying, "It could reduce crime and welfare. It helps
60 keep your mind off things"; and

61 WHEREAS, he also recommended tree farming for those getting
62 on in years. "If you can't handle the cattle and hay anymore,
63 move over to trees totally. The trees grow while I sleep"; and

64 WHEREAS, he was preceded in death by his wife, Rosett
65 Thigpen; daughter, Inez Pride; father, Frank Thigpen; and mother,
66 Pinkie Tenort Thigpen; and is survived by two sons, Roy (Julia)
67 Thigpen and Lonnie (Doris) Thigpen, all of Montrose; two
68 daughters, Doris Williams of Irvine, California, and Hester
69 (Phield III) Parish of Greenville, Louisiana; 15 grandchildren;
70 and a host of great-grandchildren; and

71 WHEREAS, Chester Thigpen and his late wife, Rosett,
72 represented what is best about forestry in Mississippi, and the
73 forestry community and the State of Mississippi are very proud of
74 them and will miss their service and their friendship:

75 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
76 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
77 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the life and legacy, to the
78 forestry community of our state, of Chester A. Thigpen of Bay
79 Springs, Mississippi, former National and Mississippi Outstanding
80 Tree Farmer of the Year, and express deepest sympathy to his
81 family and friends upon his passing.

82 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
83 furnished to the family of Chester Thigpen, the Mississippi
84 Forestry Association and to the members of the Capitol Press
85 Corps.