

By: Senator(s) Butler, Simmons, Jackson  
(11th), Frazier, Walls, Harden, Thomas,  
Jackson (32nd), Jordan, Dawkins, Horhn

To: Rules

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 580

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND CIVIC  
2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF L. J. MARTIN, SR., OF MCCOMB, MISSISSIPPI, THE  
3 FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN IN THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI SINCE THE  
4 RECONSTRUCTION ERA TO QUALIFY AND RUN FOR MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT  
5 OFFICE.

6 WHEREAS, on Wednesday, February 24, 1965, the seven announced  
7 candidates for vacancies on the McComb Board of Selectmen included  
8 the first African-American to announce and qualify for municipal  
9 office in the State of Mississippi since the Reconstruction Era,  
10 so far as history reveals; and

11 WHEREAS, L. J. Martin, Sr., of the Beartown Community, filed  
12 his petition to be included in the April 5, 1965, special election  
13 which bore 64 signatures and went through the routine check to  
14 determine if 50 of them were by valid, qualified city voters which  
15 was verified by the McComb Election Commission. Mr. Martin  
16 qualified as the candidate of the Freedom Democratic Party and was  
17 accompanied to City Hall by a veteran staff member of the Council  
18 of Federated Organizations (COFO) when filing his petition; and

19 WHEREAS, during the Civil Rights movement, "Deacon" Martin  
20 was an active member of the NAACP and a Watchman for the community  
21 with 24-hour availability to contact Attorney General Robert  
22 Kennedy. He was visited by Drew Pearson, Stokley Carmichael,  
23 Cleveland Sellers, Fannie Lou Hamer, Victoria Gray and Annie  
24 Devine. He was the Director of the Head Start Program in  
25 Beartown; and

26 WHEREAS, L. J. Martin, Sr., passed away on December 27, 2001,  
27 at the age of eighty-nine-years-old. He was born August 25, 1912,  
28 in the Holmesville Community of Pike County, Mississippi, to the

29 late Mrs. Mary Otis Stevenson and the late Mr. Joseph Martin. He  
30 was a member and deacon of fifty-three years at Society Hill M. B.  
31 Church, serving until failing health. His favorite hymn was "Old  
32 Ship of Zion"; and

33 WHEREAS, Deacon Martin attended Beartown High School in  
34 McComb, Mississippi. He worked at the American Box Company,  
35 retiring after forty-three years of service. He was an expert  
36 cabinet builder and carpenter; and

37 WHEREAS, L. J. Martin, Sr., was married to Mrs. Leola Causey  
38 Martin for 68 years and to their union were eleven children; and

39 WHEREAS, it is with great humility that we acknowledge the  
40 historical civic contributions of this Mississippi citizen whose  
41 name will not be forgotten:

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
43 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
44 we do hereby commend the life and civic contributions of L. J.  
45 Martin, Sr., of McComb, Mississippi, the first African-American  
46 since the Reconstruction Era to qualify and run for municipal  
47 government office in the State of Mississippi, and we extend our  
48 respect to the surviving family of L. J. Martin, Sr.

49 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
50 the surviving family of L. J. Martin, Sr., and be forwarded to the  
51 Mayor of McComb, Mississippi, and be made available to the Capitol  
52 Press Corps.