

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

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 3

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE, LEGACY AND CIVIC
2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF CIVIL RIGHTS PIONEER JUNE E. JOHNSON OF
3 GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI, AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE SENATE.

4 WHEREAS, Mississippi Civil Rights Pioneer and the first
5 African-American woman candidate for the Leflore County Board of
6 Supervisors passed away on April 13, 2007; and

7 WHEREAS, June E. Johnson was born in Greenwood, Mississippi,
8 to the late Theoda and Lula Bell Johnson, Sr. on December 31,
9 1947. Her parents hosted visiting SNCC (Student Non-Violent
10 Coordinating Committee) workers for many years. June was raised
11 by her maternal grandmother Emily Johnson Holt who also preceded
12 her in death; and

13 WHEREAS, June began attending SNCC meetings in her early
14 teens after seeing a flyer about a mass meeting at one of the
15 local churches. Robert (Bob) Moses convinced her parents to allow
16 June to attend the meeting and subsequent voter registration
17 workshops; and

18 WHEREAS, in June 1963, after attending a voter registration
19 workshop, June was arrested and beaten in jail in Winona,
20 Mississippi, along with Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, Euvester Simpson,
21 Annelle Ponder, James West and others; and

22 WHEREAS, June worked as a paralegal for North Mississippi
23 Rural Legal Services (1972-1973). Throughout the 1970s, she was
24 actively involved in lawsuits aimed at stopping racist practices
25 in the City of Greenwood and Leflore County governments as named
26 plaintiff and as paralegal investigator; and

27 WHEREAS, with Marion Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense
28 Fund, June drew attention to failures of Mississippi antipoverty
29 agencies and investigated Mississippi prison conditions; and

30 WHEREAS, June moved to Washington, D.C., in 1982, worked in
31 city government for the Office of Paternity and Child Support
32 Enforcement (1983-1986), and as a home hospital teacher. From
33 1995 until September 2006, (after health began to fail her) June
34 was the program monitor in the Office of Early Childhood
35 Development and served as first Vice President of the Washington,
36 D.C., Ward 6 Democrats; and

37 WHEREAS, she was a research consultant for the film *Freedom*
38 *Song* (2000) about Mississippi SNCC workers and lead consultant for
39 the documentary *Standing on My Sisters Shoulders*, a film
40 documenting her civil rights activism, along with fellow activists
41 Dorie Ladner, Fannie Lou Hamer, Victoria Gray Adams, Annie Devine,
42 Lawrence Guyot and others. Additionally, she is featured in a
43 documentary produced by American Public Radio entitled *Mississippi*
44 *Becomes A Democracy*; and

45 WHEREAS, she continued her work with various organizations
46 and institutions right up to the time of her death. June provided
47 information that few spoke of or cared to share. She never
48 stopped planning how to get accurate information out about the
49 Civil Rights Movement. She often recalled "Mrs. Hamer called me
50 to her bedside when she was dying and told me all about her
51 unfinished business"; and

52 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of this
53 citizen who was a respected leader of the Civil Rights Movement in
54 Mississippi and the United States:

55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
56 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend the life, legacy and civic
57 contributions of Civil Rights Pioneer June E. Johnson of
58 Greenwood, Mississippi, and express to her surviving family the
59 sympathy of the Mississippi Senate on her passing.

60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
61 the surviving family of June E. Johnson and be made available to
62 members of the Capitol Press Corps.