

By: Senator(s) Gollott, Hewes, Gordon,
Frazier, Moffatt, Lee (47th), Dickerson,
Jackson (11th), Fillingane, Watson, Baria,
Montgomery

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 532

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND RECOGNIZING
2 THE CIVIC AND CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JEREMIAH JOSEPH (JODY)
3 O'KEEFE IV OF OCEAN SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI, RESPECTED FORMER MEMBER
4 OF THE MISSISSIPPI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

5 WHEREAS, Jeremiah Joseph (Jody) O'Keefe IV, 61, of Ocean
6 Springs, Mississippi, former respected member of the Mississippi
7 House of Representatives, passed away on December 3, 2007; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. O'Keefe was born in Biloxi, Mississippi, on May
9 21, 1946, into a family that eventually grew to 12 siblings. He
10 attended Notre Dame High School in Biloxi, Mississippi, through
11 1964 and then served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1964-1967. He
12 married Annette Longeway in 1966 while stationed in California;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. O'Keefe graduated from the University of
15 Southern Mississippi in 1970, earning a Political Science degree
16 and receiving a regional scholarship to Tulane Law School. He was
17 excelling at Tulane Law School in 1972 when he resigned to run for
18 a seat in the Mississippi Legislature; and

19 WHEREAS, he was elected Outstanding Freshman Legislator,
20 1971, for his skill and accomplishments. He represented Harrison
21 County in the Mississippi House of Representatives from 1971-1979;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, while in the Legislature, he cast a notable,
24 courageous vote regarding civil rights and was the only white
25 legislator to join with the newly formed black caucus; and

26 WHEREAS, after his legislative service, Mr. O'Keefe worked as
27 a Land Man negotiating oil and gas drilling rights in Louisiana,
28 and later captained his own shrimp boat, the Shannon-Toiresa,



29 named after two of his daughters. In one memorable episode, he
30 was swept overboard in the Gulf of Mexico, had to climb back onto
31 his unmanned boat and then stitch the wound in his forehead
32 without a painkiller. He later turned to less risky pursuits,
33 operating a restaurant in Florida where he practiced his flair for
34 cooking. Many of his famous recipes live on through his children
35 and on the pages of the O'Keefe's family cookbook, *Cooking on the*
36 *Coast*; and

37 WHEREAS, he married Helen Granberry on June 11, 1999. His
38 passion for his Irish heritage and love for Celtic culture
39 culminated into two trips to Ireland with his wife, Helen. He was
40 the Founding President of The O'Keefe Foundation and shepherded
41 into life the innovative New Hope Center (aimed at helping
42 handicapped youth integrate with their peers) and negotiated
43 contracts that secured its well-being. He was still involved with
44 the foundation at the time of his death. His family and friends
45 cherish his generosity, sense of humor, quick wit and the kindness
46 he unflinchingly showed to those in need. He always opened his
47 heart and hands, helping a wide range of people, from a Vietnamese
48 merchant who needed aid navigating City Hall to a family needing
49 funds to bury a loved one, to helping others without enough food
50 to restock their refrigerators. He was a master of kindness; and

51 WHEREAS, Mr. O'Keefe is survived by his four children:
52 Toiresa (Tess) Talley and her husband, David; Shannon O'Keefe,
53 Jeremiah Joseph (Jeremy) O'Keefe and Erin O'Keefe; his former
54 wife, Annette Longeway O'Keefe; his father, Jeremiah J. O'Keefe
55 III and his wife, Martha O'Keefe; as well as siblings, Maureen,
56 Cecilia, Kathryn, Virginia, Susan, Mary, Mercedes, James, John,
57 Jeffrey, Justin and Joseph; and many close friends; and

58 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of this
59 former colleague who brought joy and civic pride to his community
60 and to the State of Mississippi:



61 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
62 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
63 we do hereby commend the life and recognize the civic and
64 charitable contributions of Jeremiah Joseph (Jody) O'Keefe IV of
65 Ocean Springs, Mississippi, respected former member of the
66 Mississippi House of Representatives, and express to his surviving
67 family the sympathy of the Legislature on his passing.

68 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
69 the surviving family of Representative O'Keefe and be made
70 available to the Capitol Press Corps.

