

By: The Entire Membership

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 59

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND COMMEMORATING  
2 THE LIFE, LEGACY AND DISTINGUISHED FOOTBALL CAREER OF MR. WILLIE  
3 L. RICHARDSON, JR., AND EXPRESSING DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY  
4 AND FRIENDS UPON HIS PASSING.

5 WHEREAS, "To everything there is a season, and a time to  
6 every purpose under the Heaven," and as such, God, in his divine  
7 providence in the orchestration of our lives' destiny of faith,  
8 love and service as the grand architect of the universe, the  
9 immaculate author and finisher of our soul's destiny, has brought  
10 to a close the life of beloved friend and Jackson State football's  
11 legendary icon, Mr. Willie L. Richardson, Jr., as his mortal  
12 presence has been summoned to Heaven's court of eternal rest, upon  
13 making life's final transition from earthly travailing to heavenly  
14 reward, rendering great sorrow and loss to his family and friends;  
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Mississippi, particularly the Jackson State  
17 University football fans and alumni association, and the citizens  
18 of the City of Jackson, lost a wonderful friend, avid sportsman,



19 former NFL Pro and College Football Hall of Famer on Monday,  
20 February 8, 2016, with the untimely demise of Mr. Richardson; and

21 WHEREAS, a native of Clarksdale, who was raised in  
22 Greenville, Mr. Richardson's formal education culminated with the  
23 receipt of his high school diploma from Coleman High School,  
24 before advancing his postsecondary matriculation at Jackson State  
25 University where he established himself as a force of reckoning on  
26 the football field and was a pioneering trailblazer that drew the  
27 eye of national attention to the university's football program and  
28 exceptional caliber of players that would flow from its channels  
29 after he was selected in the 7th round of the NFL Draft in 1963 by  
30 the Baltimore Colts; and

31 WHEREAS, a sure-footed, quick-handed, versatile athlete,  
32 Willie played nine seasons of professional football as a wide  
33 receiver, eight of which were spent with his drafting team, the  
34 Colts, which was interrupted by a one-year stint with the Miami  
35 Dolphins during the 1970 season, before returning to his beloved  
36 Colts in 1971, a career that culminated with a super bowl  
37 appearance in Super Bowl III, when the Colts matched up against  
38 the New York Jets, in addition to being named First Team All-Pro  
39 in 1967, and Pro Bowl selections in 1967 and 1968; and

40 WHEREAS, a three-time hall of famer, Mr. Richardson's skill,  
41 sheer athleticism and command of the game allowed him to amass a  
42 record of statistics that would place him in a rivalry of  
43 Mississippi's native sons as the three all-time top receivers to



44 go pro, along with Lance Alworth and Jerry Rice, and allowed him  
45 to be inducted into the Jackson State University Sports Hall of  
46 Fame, Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame and the College Football  
47 Hall of Fame in the years 1978, 1979 and 2003 respectively; and

48 WHEREAS, after completing his league career, Mr. Richardson  
49 coached at Morgan State University for three years before making  
50 the ultimate decision to return home to Mississippi in 1979, upon  
51 the inquiry made of him by A.C. Butch Lambert during his  
52 Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame induction; and

53 WHEREAS, immediately upon his return, Willie went to work as  
54 a public sector employee, serving as Director of Enforcement in  
55 the Weight Division of the Mississippi State Tax Commission and  
56 reconnecting with his undergraduate alma mater through using his  
57 career in the NFL as a platform for recruiting prospective student  
58 athletes, and served as the colorful analyst for the Tigers'  
59 football games and host of the weekly hour-long show on ESPN, The  
60 Zone 105.9 FM; and

61 WHEREAS, as fate would lend itself to the building upon the  
62 blueprint divinely designed for the pattern of his life by the  
63 God-head of the Great Deity, Mr. Richardson's chivalry and  
64 affection pierced the heart of Earline O. Richardson, and the duo  
65 became bone of one another's bone and flesh of one another's flesh  
66 after exchanging the nuptials of holy matrimony more than 50 years  
67 ago, and completed their family unit with the fruitful addition of  
68 three children; and



69           WHEREAS, in Mr. Richardson's transfiguration from mortality  
70 to immortality, he now awaits in holy anticipation the wondrous  
71 event of the bridegroom's return, as it is written in the Book  
72 of Revelation 21:1-2 -- "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth:  
73 for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and  
74 there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new  
75 Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a  
76 bride adorned for her husband."; and

77           WHEREAS, though he has traversed the river of life to now  
78 stand upon the celestial shores of Heaven's grandeur, the legacy  
79 of Mr. Richardson will continue to refresh the hearts and fond  
80 memories of his beloved survivors: doting and caring wife,  
81 Earline O. Richardson; son, Willie L. Richardson III; daughters,  
82 Sonja Boyce and Shawn E. Terry; three brothers; one sister; six  
83 grandchildren; and a host of other relatives, colleagues and  
84 friends; and

85           WHEREAS, Mr. Richardson was a solemn voice of reason and  
86 beacon of inspirational hope, encompassed in the selfless  
87 humanitarianism of an individual of esteemed caliber who  
88 epitomized the highest standard of leadership, deference and  
89 fairness; and

90           WHEREAS, we encourage the family to find solace from the  
91 overwhelming sadness created by the earthly departure of their  
92 beloved family member in Revelation 21:4, wherein is recorded,  
93 "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there



94 shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither  
95 shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed  
96 away" and renewed in their faith that Mr. Richardson fulfilled  
97 the commandment of II Timothy 4:7 by having fought a good fight,  
98 finishing his course and keeping the faith until the hour of his  
99 departure was at hand; and

100 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to commend the  
101 outstanding life and legacy of such an exceptional athlete and son  
102 of Mississippi who has left a lasting impression upon the hearts  
103 of his family, friends and community:

104 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
105 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING  
106 THEREIN, That we do hereby mourn the loss and commemorate the  
107 life, legacy and distinguished career of Mr. Willie L. Richardson,  
108 Jr., to whose family we express sincere and deepest sympathy upon  
109 the occasion of his passing.

110 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
111 furnished to the family of Mr. Willie L. Richardson, Jr., and to  
112 the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

