

By: Representatives Snowden, Henley

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 61

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING HOPE
2 BERRY FOR BEING NAMED THE 2015 STATE GAMES OF MISSISSIPPI "FEMALE
3 ATHLETE OF THE YEAR."

4 WHEREAS, each year, the State Games of Mississippi recognizes
5 an outstanding male and female athlete from each of the 37
6 individual sports, nominated based on their merit and
7 sportsmanship by coaches, officials, athletes, volunteers and
8 spectators, but only two athletes are chosen to receive the elite
9 honor of "Athlete of the Year"; and

10 WHEREAS, the 2015 "Female Athlete of the Year" is Hope Berry,
11 a 7th grade martial arts prodigy whose age has not stopped her
12 from accomplishing enormous feats that others merely dream about,
13 all the while personifying the ideals of the State Games movement,
14 including participation, sportsmanship, special attributes,
15 achievements, efforts and positive attitude; and

16 WHEREAS, at the age of five, Hope Berry began her martial
17 arts career only after mastering the art of walking, and after a
18 year of Taekwondo, she refocused her training on karate, learning



19 and excelling in that sport under the exceptional coaching of
20 Master Don Gober; and

21 WHEREAS, Hope extensively trained for six years every Tuesday
22 and Thursday night at the dojo before returning home to practice
23 for several more hours each night, and as she perfected each
24 punch, jab, kick and rotation, she transformed from a grasshopper
25 into a precise, skilled karate expert; and

26 WHEREAS, eleven-year-old Hope became the youngest person,
27 male or female, to ever receive the elite First Degree Black Belt,
28 an accomplishment that required over 1,300 hours of intense
29 training, patience and discipline in addition to the natural
30 flexibility and capability that she possesses; and

31 WHEREAS, Hope was named the 2010 Fall State Champion at the
32 Southern Martial Arts Championship (SMAC), the 2012 and 2014
33 Spring and Fall State Champion at SMAC, the 2013 Mississippi
34 Karate Association (MKA) State Champion in KATA and Sparring, the
35 2014 MKA State Champion in Weapons and Sparring, the 2014 Grand
36 Champion at the Battle of Mobile in Alabama and the 2015 Gold
37 Medal Winner in KATA and Weapons at the State Games of
38 Mississippi; and

39 WHEREAS, while Hope finished in the top five in three
40 different events at the State Games of America, she considers her
41 most notable accomplishment to be the honor she received when she
42 was invited to speak at the International Karate and Kick Ball



43 Hall of Fame and introduce Marcellius Gunn, a Memphian who offers
44 free karate classes to inner-city children; and

45 WHEREAS, Mr. Gunn inspires Hope daily to work extremely hard
46 to reach her goals and to use her gifts to help the less
47 fortunate, so on the one night a week she gets a break from
48 training, she still goes to the dojo and helps the lower rank
49 students learn the karate basics; and

50 WHEREAS, when most eight-year-old children are learning their
51 multiplication tables and going to the local park to play after
52 school, Hope was establishing a fundraiser called "Kick Out
53 Cancer" to raise funds for the Blair E. Batson Hospital for
54 Children in Jackson, Mississippi, ultimately raising over
55 \$12,500.00 to help children battle the atrocious disease; and

56 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to recognize
57 and commend outstanding young Mississippi athletes such as Hope
58 Berry, who has exceeded all expectations of greatness and brought
59 honor to the great Magnolia State:

60 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
61 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
62 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate Hope Berry for
63 being named the 2015 State Games of Mississippi "Female Athlete of
64 the Year" and express our best wishes for continued success in all
65 of her athletic and future endeavors.



66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
67 furnished to Hope Berry and to the members of the Capitol Press
68 Corps.

