

By: Representative Lamar

To: Rules

## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 123

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE HEROIC  
2 AND INSPIRATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF PATRICK HARDISON WHILE IN THE  
3 LINE OF DUTY AND DURING THE MOST EXTENSIVE FACE TRANSPLANT SURGERY  
4 PERFORMED TO DATE.

5 WHEREAS, Patrick Hardison, a 41-year-old volunteer  
6 firefighter from Senatobia, Mississippi, embodies all of the  
7 characteristics of a true hero -- intrepidity, valor, prowess,  
8 gallantry, bravery, courage and fortitude -- characteristics that  
9 he possessed before the fateful day in 2001 that stole his essence  
10 and before he endured the 26-hour surgery on August 14, 2015, to  
11 attempt to return a bit of normalcy to his life; and

12 WHEREAS, as a firefighter, Patrick faced dangerous, deadly  
13 situations that demanded he put his life on the line every time  
14 the bell rang, and September 5, 2001, was no different as he  
15 fearlessly and bravely rushed into a scorching house consumed with  
16 flames that reached broiling temperatures to rescue a trapped  
17 woman, but only moments after courageously entering, the roof  
18 suddenly collapsed, knocking off his helmet and melting the mask  
19 that protected his face; and



20 WHEREAS, miraculously, the doctors were able to save his  
21 life, but not his face, as his eyelids, ears, lips, most of his  
22 nose, most of his vision and his hair became victims of the torrid  
23 inferno, which also caused disfiguring third-degree burns across  
24 his entire head, neck and upper torso, changing not only his  
25 outward appearance but his entire life; and

26 WHEREAS, the 27-year-old father of three returned home to  
27 Senatobia after a 63-day stay in a burn center in Memphis,  
28 Tennessee, and while he tried to return to the regular hustle and  
29 bustle of his pre-accident life, he realized that was an  
30 impossible feat, as he could not look in a mirror without  
31 grimacing or attend a baseball game or other social gathering  
32 without becoming the object of everyone's stares; and

33 WHEREAS, despite having a face that was "one huge scar,"  
34 Patrick tried to remain in good spirits, playfully explaining to  
35 curious children that he was injured in a fight with a bear, but  
36 even his best efforts at acceptance could not prevent the dark  
37 times he endured for 14 years, as more than 70 surgeries involving  
38 multiple skin grafts from his leg to his face were unable to  
39 return any "semblance of normal anatomy" to the otherwise normal  
40 man, who hid behind sunglasses and a baseball cap whenever he  
41 ventured outdoors; and

42 WHEREAS, resigned to the fact that his face would forever be  
43 the focus of concern, questions and ogles, a church friend would  
44 not accept that future for Patrick and contacted Dr. Eduardo



45 Rodriguez, an internationally recognized plastic surgeon who had  
46 performed a face transplant surgery in 2012, and after examining  
47 Patrick, Dr. Rodriguez realized that the traits that make a  
48 perfect candidate for a face transplant, which are courage,  
49 commitment and responsibility, exuded from Patrick's core, so he  
50 made him his patient and placed him on the face transplant waiting  
51 list in August 2014; and

52 WHEREAS, once Patrick was on the waiting list, Dr. Rodriguez  
53 began looking for the ideal candidate, someone who matched  
54 Patrick's biological traits to minimize the risk that his body  
55 would reject the new tissue as well as similarities in skin, hair  
56 color, weight and size, and after the tragic death of  
57 free-spirited, 26-year-old, Brooklyn artist and bicycle enthusiast  
58 David P. Rodebaugh, the doctor knew the time had come for Patrick  
59 to begin a new normal with a new face; and

60 WHEREAS, Rodebaugh was an organ donor, and his mother,  
61 remembering that her son had always wanted to be a firefighter,  
62 gave permission for the doctors to use her baby boy's face to  
63 complete the groundbreaking surgery, which required Patrick to  
64 undergo a multitude of physical and psychological tests before  
65 participating in an experimental surgery that only touted a  
66 survival rate of 50 percent; and

67 WHEREAS, on August 14, 2015, a team of nearly 100 medical  
68 professionals with Dr. Rodriguez at the helm began the most  
69 extensive face transplant surgery ever by removing David's scalp



70 and face, including his eyelids, and attaching them to Patrick's  
71 face, connecting the blood vessels, shaping the nose and chin and  
72 replacing Patrick's eyelids and the muscles within that control  
73 blinking, and as Patrick's new face, particularly his new lips and  
74 ears, became robust with color as he laid on the operating table,  
75 Dr. Rodriguez knew the surgery would be successful; and

76 WHEREAS, the world's most extensive face transplant surgery  
77 lasted 26 hours and cost between \$850,000 and \$1,000,000, but the  
78 unforgettable feeling the firefighter and father of five  
79 experienced when not a single person gave him a second glance when  
80 he left his hospital room in New York to go shopping at Macy's was  
81 absolutely priceless, causing both doctor and patient to be  
82 overcome with a flood of emotions upon the realization that the  
83 surgery was a huge success, Patrick would become an average Joe  
84 again, and Dr. Rodriguez now had the wherewithal and experience to  
85 help dozens of other similarly situated individuals enjoy life  
86 anew; and

87 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to pay tribute  
88 to fine, heroic Mississippians such as Patrick Hardison, whose  
89 dauntless fortitude and unwavering courage remain steadfast  
90 despite life's obstacles, motivating and inspiring the Senatobia  
91 community and the people of the great State of Mississippi:

92 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
93 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING  
94 THEREIN, That we do hereby recognize and commend the heroic and



95 inspirational achievements of Patrick Hardison while in the line  
96 of duty and during the most extensive face transplant surgery to  
97 date, and extend our most sincere wishes for continued success in  
98 all of his future endeavors.

99 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
100 furnished to Patrick Hardison and to the members of the Capitol  
101 Press Corps.

