

By: Senator(s) Gollott, Watson, Tindell,  
Wiggins, Moran, Dawkins, Blackwell, Dearing,  
Fillingane, Simmons (13th), Jackson (11th),  
Jackson (32nd)

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 523

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO COMMEND THE CAREER AND LEGACY OF  
2 PUBLIC SERVICE OF WILLIAM F. "BILL" HOLMES, AND CONGRATULATING HIM  
3 UPON THE SPECIAL OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AS LONGTIME EXECUTIVE  
4 DIRECTOR OF THE MISSISSIPPI COAST COLISEUM COMMISSION.

5 WHEREAS, William F. Holmes, referred to as "Bill," is  
6 retiring after 38 years of employment at the Mississippi Coast  
7 Coliseum, which includes the last 30 years as the Executive  
8 Director of the Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center  
9 in Biloxi, Mississippi; and

10 WHEREAS, a native of New Jersey, Bill graduated from Ocean  
11 City High School in Ocean City, New Jersey, then served in the  
12 United States Air Force from 1964 until 1968, then in 1970  
13 received an Associate of Arts degree from Mississippi Coast  
14 Community College, then in 1972 earned his Bachelor of Science  
15 degree in Business Administration from the University of Southern  
16 Mississippi; and

17 WHEREAS, Bill and his wife, the former Sandra Toncrey,  
18 established their home in D'Iberville, Mississippi, and are the



19 proud parents of four children, the adoring grandparents of eleven  
20 grandchildren, and the loving great-grandparents of three; and

21 WHEREAS, in November 1977, Bill began his career at the  
22 Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center as the Facilities  
23 Controller and was promoted to Executive Director in 1985. He  
24 began to spearhead successful efforts to bring to the Mississippi  
25 Coast Coliseum and Convention Center the nation's most talented  
26 and popular entertainment personalities and to provide a  
27 world-class venue for organizations representing an exceptionally  
28 broad range of American political, business, educational,  
29 military, religious, and social life while maintaining expert  
30 professional management skills, spirited good humor and an  
31 unflagging commitment to making the Coast a welcoming and pleasant  
32 site for the thousands of people whose Mississippi experiences are  
33 defined by their visits to the Mississippi Coast Coliseum and  
34 Convention Center; and

35 WHEREAS, as Executive Director, Bill was very instrumental in  
36 seeing the following events come to fruition: the first facility  
37 expansion in 1997; the referendum for the second renovation of the  
38 facility and convention center expansion passed in 2004; the  
39 Mississippi Coast Fair and Exposition in 1986, which set a record  
40 of 120,000 attendees in 1992; the Elks Crawfish Festival  
41 1979-1990; the Blues Festival 1990-1997; the Mississippi Coast  
42 Gamblers 1994; the East Coast Hockey League 1996; the National  
43 Indoor Football League 1998-2000; Mississippi Beach Kings (EISL)



44 1998; Gulf Coast Bandits (WBA) 2005; the Coliseum Crawfish Music  
45 Festival, which began in 1992 and is recognized as one of the  
46 South's Top 20 Events year after year; and the Gulf Coast Boaters'  
47 Rendezvous, which was the largest boaters' rendezvous in the Gulf  
48 of Mexico; and

49 WHEREAS, he was instrumental in and vital to the success of  
50 nationally telecasted events such as the Miss USA Pageant from  
51 1979-1982, Miss Teen USA from 1990-1994, World Boxing  
52 Featherweight Championship (WBF) match in 1992, International  
53 Boxing Live Worldwide telecast, as well as 31 other nationally  
54 telecast sporting, political and concert-related events; and

55 WHEREAS, Bill invested time in the charitable organizations  
56 of the Gulf Coast Community by donating resources and time and by  
57 serving as a founding member of Cheshire Group Home, helping to  
58 raise over \$1.4 Million as Co-Chair of St. Jude Dream Home, and  
59 participating in the Biloxi Elks Special Children's Christmas  
60 Program from 1979-1987; and

61 WHEREAS, during his career, Bill has contributed to the  
62 civic, business and social aspects of the Mississippi Gulf Coast  
63 Community by promoting tourism on the Mississippi Gulf Coast  
64 through community participation and by serving on numerous boards;  
65 among these are the Mississippi Gulf Coast Regional Convention and  
66 Visitors Bureau, Destination Marketing Organization, Ohr O'Keefe  
67 Museum, Infinity Science Center, Greater Gulf Coast Arts Council,  
68 American Red Cross, Boys and Girls Club, Gulf Coast Carnival



69 Association, Les Badineurs, Les Perrots, American Cancer Society,  
70 Marine Education Center, Travel and Promotion Association, Gulf  
71 Coast Business Council, North Bay and Gulf Coast Chamber of  
72 Commerce, American Legion Commander and Keesler Air Force Base  
73 Honorary General for 2012 and 2013; and

74 WHEREAS, during his remarkable service, he has been honored  
75 with numerous well-deserved accolades, including being named  
76 Mississippi's Outstanding Community Leader in 2004, selected by  
77 *Performance Magazine* as one of the nation's Top Fifty Facilities  
78 Directors in 1998, recognized as Biloxi's Outstanding Citizen in  
79 1992, named Indoor Professional Football League Arena Manager of  
80 the Year in 1999, serving as Grand Marshal of the Hibernia St.  
81 Patrick's Day Parade in 1998, inducted into the Mississippi Gulf  
82 Coast Community College Alumni Hall of Fame in 1990, and in 2010  
83 being inducted into the Mississippi Tourism Hall of Fame; and

84 WHEREAS, during his years as one of the Mississippi Gulf  
85 Coast's most prominent and recognizable citizens, Bill has become  
86 a familiar face to thousands, an admirable and respected leader in  
87 the community and in the state that he loves, and in the industry,  
88 as well as a tireless and dedicated leader to his colleagues; and  
89 it is with great pride that we join the Mississippi Gulf Coast in  
90 honoring a Mississippian with enormous civic energy:

91 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
92 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
93 we do hereby commend the career and legacy of public service of



94 William F. "Bill" Holmes, and congratulate him upon the special  
95 occasion of his retirement as longtime Executive Director of the  
96 Mississippi Coast Coliseum Commission.

97 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
98 Bill Holmes and his family, forwarded to the Mississippi Coast  
99 Coliseum Commission, the Board of Supervisors of each Mississippi  
100 Gulf Coast County, and be made available to the Capitol Press  
101 Corps.

