

By: Senator(s) Burton, Harkins, Barnett,
Caughman, Fillingane, Frazier, Jackson
(11th), Jackson (32nd), Jolly, Kirby,
Norwood, Simmons (12th), Stone

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 546

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE
2 DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE MISSISSIPPI
3 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES RICHARD (RICKEY) A. BERRY ON THE
4 OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT.

5 WHEREAS, the career of Mississippi Department of Human
6 Services' Executive Director Rickey Berry has been a wonderful
7 example for public servants; and

8 WHEREAS, Rickey Berry served eight years with the Mississippi
9 Employment Security Commission, there eight years in Human
10 Resources in the private sector, followed by a total of 25 years
11 with the Mississippi Department of Human Services serving in
12 various capacities including Personnel Officer, Director of the
13 JOBS Program and Director of Resources Development, and eight
14 years as Deputy Administrator for Programs, before assuming the
15 position as Executive Director; and

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Berry has stated that his greatest reward is
17 when the system works and DHS guides, assists or influences its
18 customers so that they can experience the positive elements of
19 life. Reuniting families, helping a young mother obtain her first



20 job or earn a degree, having a noncustodial parent become active
21 in their children's life all give tremendous joy. "If seeing a
22 sibling group or older child being adopted and having a real
23 family does not bring tears to your eyes, you are in the wrong
24 business. There are rewards every day that far outweigh the daily
25 hassles and bureaucracy that we all experience;" and

26 WHEREAS, Mr. Berry has been involved in many new and
27 innovative projects. Mississippi has had the highest TANF Work
28 Program Participation Rate in the nation the past two years. He
29 has been part of the team that designed the program in the early
30 nineties. It is truly a testament to the people at MDHS that a
31 state with limited resources can perform at such a high level.
32 Knowing that many of the people DHS once served are now productive
33 citizens who no longer depend on the system is a proud
34 accomplishment. Through innovation and technological advances,
35 MDHS has been able to handle an almost 50% increase in SNAP
36 caseloads without hiring any additional staff while maintaining
37 the integrity of the program. Payment accuracy rate is one of the
38 nation's best which has resulted in incentive payments from FNS
39 which are reinvested into the system to make it even more
40 productive and efficient; and

41 WHEREAS, Rickey's choice to serve our citizens in the human
42 services arena brought rewards every day. Not many people can
43 drive home from their jobs each day knowing that their



44 organization has touched the lives of one out of every four
45 citizens in our state; and

46 WHEREAS, he has developed resources to nurture and strengthen
47 families which will result in a better prepared workforce so that
48 the state can pursue the economic opportunities that are lacking
49 in some of our communities; and

50 WHEREAS, Rickey is devoted to his family and he and his wife
51 of 43 years have two children and five wonderful grandchildren of
52 whom they are extremely proud; and it is with great pride that we
53 commend this record of achievement and legacy of leadership and
54 dedication to all families and children in Mississippi:

55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
56 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
57 we do hereby recognize and commend the dedicated public service of
58 Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Human Services
59 Richard (Rickey) A. Berry on the occasion of his retirement, and
60 thank Rickey's family for sharing him with the State of
61 Mississippi for many years.

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
63 Rickey Berry and his family, forwarded to the Governor, and made
64 available to the Capitol Press Corps.

