

By: Representatives Sykes, Clarke, Anderson, Bailey, Banks, Bell (65th), Burnett, Calhoun, Clark, Denton, Dixon, Dortch, Ellis, Faulkner, Gibbs (36th), Gibbs (72nd), Hines, Holloway, Huddleston (30th), Hudson, Hughes, Jackson, Johnson (94th), Karriem, Mickens, Middleton, Paden, Perkins, Scott, Straughter, Thomas, Walker, Watson, Williams-Barnes, Wooten, Young

To: Rules

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 6

1 A RESOLUTION URGING SUPPORT OF MISSISSIPPI'S PUBLIC
 2 HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES AND URGING ACTION TO
 3 PROTECT AND UPGRADE SUCH COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

4 WHEREAS, Mississippi has three public historically Black
 5 colleges and universities (HBCUS), Alcorn State University (ASU),
 6 Jackson State University (JSU) and Mississippi Valley State
 7 University (MVSU) that are in need of the following actions in
 8 order to protect and upgrade them by: designating JSU as
 9 Mississippi's preeminent public urban research university;
 10 reviving and passing bond dormitory legislation from the 2017
 11 Regular Session for ASU, JSU and MVSU and by passing legislation
 12 mandating permanent alumni representation for ASU, JSU and MVSU on
 13 the Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher
 14 Learning; and

15 WHEREAS, the 63rd anniversary of *Brown vs. Board of*
 16 *Education*, which was decided May 17, 1954, has the clear message:
 17 Today, education is perhaps the most important function of
 18 state and local governments. Compulsory school attendance



19 laws and the great expenditures for education both
20 demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to
21 our democratic society. It is required in the performance of
22 our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the
23 armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship.
24 Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to
25 cultural values, in preparing him for later professional
26 training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his
27 environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child
28 may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is
29 denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity,
30 where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right
31 which must be made available to all on equal terms; and

32 WHEREAS, the *Brown* litigation led to the filing of a higher
33 education desegregation lawsuit *Ayers v. Waller*, January 1975,
34 which resulted in the Jake Ayers plaintiffs prevailing in the
35 United States Supreme Court decision in *U.S. and Ayers v. Fordice*
36 in 1992; and

37 WHEREAS, the court stated, despite its decisions in *Brown I*
38 and II, Mississippi's policy of de jure segregation continued, and
39 the 1981 "Mission Statement" froze in financing facilities, land
40 grant functions, program offerings and accreditation into three
41 categories, comprehensive with the greatest existing resources and
42 program offerings where the University of Mississippi, Mississippi
43 State University and the University of Southern Mississippi, the



44 exclusively White universities, and JSU, the sole urban
45 university, was assigned more limited research and degree mission,
46 and the regional universities, Delta State, Mississippi University
47 for Women, ASU and MVSU, were assigned a more localized mission;
48 and

49 WHEREAS, the Supreme Court standard in the *U.S. and Ayers v.*
50 *Fordice* is that if a state perpetuates policies and practices
51 traceable to its prior system that continues to have segregative
52 effects - whether by influencing student enrollment decisions or
53 by fostering segregation in other facets of the university
54 system - and such policies are without sound educational
55 justifications and can be practicably eliminated, the state has
56 not satisfied its burden of proving that it has dismantled its
57 prior system. 505 U.S. 717 (1992); and

58 WHEREAS, no historically Black institution offered a
59 professional degree in programs such as law, medicine, dentistry
60 or pharmacy and the so-called programs at JSU that could lead to
61 professional degree status are being dismantled, downsized and/or
62 consolidated and are without sufficient accreditation for the
63 first class bodies that grant the same; and

64 WHEREAS, Morgan State University on May 25, 2017, was
65 designated Maryland's "preeminent public urban research
66 university" and although this upgrade is under litigation having
67 already been adjudicated liable for racial discrimination in
68 various aspects of program operation in Maryland, it is the sense



69 of the Legislature, or at least many, that reopening old wounds
70 and fighting another decade over the state system of higher
71 desegregation is not in the public interest of the State of
72 Mississippi; and

73 WHEREAS, by designating JSU as Mississippi's "preeminent
74 public urban research university" will not cost the State of
75 Mississippi any funding, however, there will be those who will
76 challenge this assertion, but the state will not be released from
77 its affirmative obligation to upgrade Southern Association of
78 Colleges and Schools (SACS), and the three young start-up programs
79 in public health, environmental technology and engineering with
80 PhD programs and other programs are essential for the fulfillment
81 of its current mission; and

82 WHEREAS, the bond dormitory legislation that was not passed
83 during the 2017 Regular Session should be revived for ASU, JSU and
84 MVSU; and

85 WHEREAS, historical disparities in funding has created an
86 accumulated deficit to the disadvantage of the public historically
87 Black institutions; and

88 WHEREAS, the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) Board that
89 was created in 1932 and consisted of 13 trustees and from 1932 to
90 1972 all such trustees were White, and the University of
91 Mississippi had the LaBuve fund seat for four years in which the
92 trustee from the university voted on matters affecting Ole Miss



93 and one month before a district court was to decide on matters
94 concerning the LaBuve seat - the seat was abolished; and

95 WHEREAS, ASU, JSU and MVSU do not have alumni on the IHL
96 Board, thus their aspirations, desires and interests have not been
97 carried out by "others," some of whom might be of the same race,
98 but their hearts, souls and minds cannot be that of a Brave, Tiger
99 or Delta Devil; and

100 WHEREAS, the status of ASU, JSU and MVSU should be upgraded
101 by mandating that alumni be selected for the IHL Board and that
102 such board become consistent with the policies and practices that
103 has never excluded the University of Mississippi or Mississippi
104 State from having a representative on the IHL Board; and

105 WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi knows the importance of
106 providing equality in funding and representation for all of its
107 public universities and colleges:

108 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
109 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby urge
110 the following: the designation of JSU as Mississippi's preeminent
111 public urban research university; the revival and passage of bond
112 dormitory legislation from the 2017 Regular Session for ASU, JSU
113 and MVSU and the passage of legislation mandating permanent alumni
114 representation for ASU, JSU and MVSU on the Board of Trustees of
115 the State Institutions of Higher Learning.

116 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
117 furnished to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

