

By: Senator(s) Horhn, Burton,
Blount, Dearing, Frazier, Jackson
(32nd), Michel, Stone

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1

1 A RESOLUTION PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE CAREER AND CONTRIBUTIONS
2 OF WARD EMLING, THE LONGEST-SERVING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL
3 FILM COMMISSIONER, UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AFTER 30
4 YEARS AS DIRECTOR OF THE MISSISSIPPI FILM OFFICE.

5 WHEREAS, the Mississippi Film Office was established in 1973,
6 the second film commission in the world. Since that time,
7 hundreds of films, television projects, documentaries and
8 commercials have filmed in every corner and county of the state
9 and Mississippi has built a solid foundation in the film industry
10 by focusing on its greatest attributes: people, place and an
11 unparalleled storytelling heritage; and

12 WHEREAS, for 30 years Ward Emling has served as Director of
13 the Mississippi Film Office (1980-1983, 1990-2017). He is the
14 longest-serving Film Commissioner ever, anywhere in the world, and
15 is one of the longest-serving industrial developers in Mississippi
16 history; and

17 WHEREAS, Ward Emling was born in New Orleans and raised in
18 Jackson, Mississippi. He was educated in the Jackson Public
19 Schools and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from



20 Millsaps College. He then studied two years at the Guildhall
21 School of Music & Drama in London, England; and

22 WHEREAS, during Ward Emling's 30 years, film production
23 touched every county in Mississippi, creating opportunities for
24 tens of thousands of Mississippians and lifelong careers in the
25 film industry for hundreds. During those years, over 320 films
26 and documentaries, and countless commercials were produced in
27 Mississippi. The total production budgets for the film and
28 television projects were almost \$500 Million, with a financial
29 impact of well over \$1 Billion, and incalculable PR and community
30 development. Between 2012 and 2016, Mississippians working on
31 Mississippi films rose from just over \$600,000.00 to \$6.6 Million;
32 and

33 WHEREAS, Ward has guided in-state film productions, including
34 "Huck Finn," "A Time To Kill," "The Chamber," "Ghosts of
35 Mississippi," "My Dog Skip," "Cookie's Fortune," "O Brother, Where
36 Apart Thou?," "The Ponder Heart," "Big Bad Love," "Ballast," "The
37 Help," "Get On Up," and "Dixieland," in addition to many short
38 films, documentaries and commercials; and

39 WHEREAS, Ward is a two-term past President of the Association
40 of Film Commissioners International (AFCI), the 300-member
41 organization of film commissions from around the world, and the
42 recipient of the 2008 Arthur Lowe Crystal Vision Award for
43 Outstanding Service to the AFCI. He has represented Mississippi



44 film and culture around the world, on four continents (North
45 America, Asia, Australia and Europe); and

46 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize a
47 Mississippian who is a respected member of his profession and has
48 maintained a competitive business environment for filmmaking in
49 Mississippi:

50 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
51 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby pay tribute to the career and
52 contributions of Ward Emling, the longest-serving National and
53 International Film Commissioner, upon the occasion of his
54 retirement after 30 years as Director of the Mississippi Film
55 Office, and extend our best wishes to Ward for future successes.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
57 Ward Emling, forwarded to the Executive Director of the
58 Mississippi Development Authority and the Governor, and made
59 available to the Capitol Press Corps.

