

By: Senator(s) Tollison, Barnett, Blackwell, Chassaniol, Dearing, Fillingane, Hopson, Jackson (11th), Jackson (32nd), Parker, Watson To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 533

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND COMMENDING THE
2 CAREER OF OLE MISS AND MISSISSIPPI SPORTS LEGEND LARRY GRANTHAM
3 AND EXTENDING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE LEGISLATURE TO HIS SURVIVING
4 FAMILY.

5 WHEREAS, Ole Miss and the State of Mississippi lost a sports
6 legend on June 17, 2017, with the passing of football star Larry
7 Grantham, 78, who was also a member of the Super Bowl III Champion
8 New York Jets; and

9 WHEREAS, Grantham played linebacker and end for legendary Ole
10 Miss Coach John Vaught from 1957-1959, earning three letters, and
11 helped lead the Rebels to a 28-4-1 record, including Sugar Bowl
12 victories over Texas and LSU, and a win over Florida in the Gator
13 Bowl. He also was a letterman on Coach Tom Swayze's 1958 Ole Miss
14 baseball team; and

15 WHEREAS, the 1959 team, which finished 10-1 and earned a
16 share of the national championship, is considered one of the best
17 in Ole Miss football history. When Jeff Sagarin computed his list
18 of the all-time highest-rated college football teams from 1956 to



19 1995, the Ole Miss Rebels ranked No. 3 behind Nebraska's 1971 and
20 1995 teams; and

21 WHEREAS, Grantham played a key role as the 1959 Rebel defense
22 shutting out eight opponents, while allowing only two touchdowns
23 all season. Ole Miss outscored its opposition 329-21 that season,
24 with the only other touchdown given up being LSU great Billy
25 Cannon's 89-yard punt return on Halloween Night in Baton Rouge
26 that lifted the Tigers to a 7-3 win. Ole Miss, however, got its
27 revenge two months later in a Sugar Bowl rematch as the Rebels
28 dominated LSU, 21-0, and held the Tigers to minus-15 yards
29 rushing. Cannon was limited to eight yards as Grantham, who also
30 caught an 18-yard touchdown pass from Bobby Franklin, shadowed the
31 1959 Heisman Trophy winner throughout the contest. "Grantham hit
32 Cannon every time he moved that day," recalled Ole Miss
33 Quarterback Jake Gibbs, who had a 43-yard touchdown pass to Cowboy
34 Woodruff to give the Rebels a 7-0 second-quarter lead; and

35 WHEREAS, a member of the Ole Miss Team of the Century,
36 Grantham was inducted into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame in
37 1980 and the Ole Miss Sports Hall of Fame in 1995. He was a
38 two-time All-Southeastern Conference selection and was chosen to
39 play in the Hula Bowl All-Star Game; and

40 WHEREAS, following his Ole Miss career, Grantham was drafted
41 in 1960 by the New York Titans/Jets of the American Football
42 League and the Baltimore Colts of the National Football League.
43 Grantham chose to sign with the Titans and quickly established



44 himself as one of the key players of a Jets defense that made the
45 playoffs in 1968 and 1969, winning the AFL Championship in 1968
46 and then defeating the Baltimore Colts, 16-7, in Super Bowl III.
47 He was credited with three tackles and two pass defenses in the
48 win over the Colts, a game which Jets' Quarterback Joe Namath had
49 guaranteed a New York victory; and

50 WHEREAS, with Grantham as the starter, the New York AFL
51 franchise went from the worst team in an upstart league to World
52 Champions in nine years. Although considered small by pro
53 football linebacker standards (6-0, 210), Grantham was a five-time
54 AFL All-Star during his 13-year career (1960-1972) with the team
55 and was named to the American Football League All-Time Second
56 Team. He was inducted into the New York Jets Ring of Honor in
57 2011; and

58 WHEREAS, Grantham played in 175 AFL/NFL career games and his
59 defensive totals included 43 individual takeaways, still a
60 franchise record. He also recovered two fumbles for touchdowns.
61 Grantham played one last season in 1974 for the Florida Blazers of
62 the World Football League; and

63 WHEREAS, following his professional career, Grantham spent
64 time broadcasting Jets games on the radio and was involved in
65 business and banking. He remained close to the Ole Miss family
66 and served as Sideline Reporter on the Ole Miss Radio Football
67 Network (1980-1982); and



68 WHEREAS, born September 16, 1938, in Crystal Springs,
69 Grantham earned two letters in football, two in basketball, and
70 three in baseball while playing at Crystal Springs High School.
71 He was Captain of the 1955 Football Squad, gaining All-Star
72 Mention; and

73 WHEREAS, we pay tribute and cherish fondly the memory of a
74 Mississippi sports legend:

75 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
76 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
77 we do hereby mourn the loss and commend the career of Ole Miss and
78 Mississippi Sports Legend Larry Grantham, and extend the
79 condolences of the Legislature to his surviving family.

80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
81 the surviving family of Larry Grantham, forwarded to the Ole Miss
82 Sports Hall of Fame, and made available to the Capitol Press
83 Corps.

