

By: Senator(s) Jackson (11th), Norwood,
Barnett, Frazier, Jackson (32nd), Simmons
(12th)

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 557

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND RECOGNIZING
2 THE VISIONARY MISSISSIPPI DELTA PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY OF DR.
3 ALFIO RAUSA AND EXTENDING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE LEGISLATURE ON
4 HIS PASSING.

5 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of
6 Mississippi Delta Public Health Leader Dr. Alfio Rausa on January
7 3, 2018. Dr. Rausa will forever be remembered for his public
8 health advocacy, his love for the Delta, his devotion to his
9 grandchildren, and his boisterous personality. During his more
10 than 50 years of public health service, Dr. Rausa worked
11 tirelessly to improve the health of his community and the health
12 of his state; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. Rausa's public health career began with the
14 United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps as a
15 Lieutenant Commander from 1966-1970. His original intent was to
16 live and work in Mississippi for one year, but he ended up staying
17 a lifetime. Dr. Rausa was named Regional Public Health Officer in
18 Greenwood with the Mississippi State Department of Health in 1970
19 and was promoted to District Health Officer in 1980. He was



20 actively involved in managing a diphtheria outbreak in 1960, a
21 hepatitis A outbreak affecting 8,000 people in the late 1990s, a
22 measles outbreak at a major university in 1990, and syphilis and
23 tuberculosis outbreaks over the years; and

24 WHEREAS, Dr. Rausa received many accolades and honors
25 throughout his career, including serving as the Mississippi Public
26 Health Association President in 1992, receiving the Felix J.
27 Underwood Award for public health service in 1992, creating the
28 Alfio Rausa Medical Care Section Award, and being awarded a
29 Lifetime Membership in the Association in 2015 (one of only three
30 in MPHA history). Recently, the Mississippi State Board of Health
31 adopted a resolution in recognition and appreciation for his
32 distinguished service; and

33 WHEREAS, Dr. Rausa had been Chair of the Fannie Lou Hamer
34 Cancer Foundation Board since 2015; and

35 WHEREAS, MPHA Executive Director Buddy Daughdrill called Dr.
36 Rausa a visionary leader for public health in Mississippi. "It is
37 truly a sad day for me and public health in Mississippi. I had
38 the pleasure to work with and learn from him for the past 35
39 years. His legacy is enormous. He epitomized what it means to be
40 a strong public health advocate and the dedication it takes to
41 make a difference in the lives of Delta residents." State Health
42 Officer Dr. Mary Carrier stated, "He was a dedicated public health
43 advocate and could collaborate and develop partnerships with
44 anyone to improve the health of his community and the state. He



45 was a pioneer in realizing that health was directly related to the
46 environmental and social factors in which an individual lives."
47 Dr. Rausa's longtime colleague and Chief Nurse Laura Tucker
48 described her boss as a man of deliberation and drive to change
49 and improve health in the Delta. "He really understood that there
50 was such a strong need in the Delta and was able to see the public
51 health improvements over the decades"; and

52 WHEREAS, Dr. Rausa is survived by his wife, Silvana; his two
53 children, Vittoria Cather Rausa and Riccardo Rausa; and three
54 grandchildren: Austin Rausa, Sarah Rausa and Brook Rausa, with
55 whom he loved to travel. Dr. Rausa was well-loved and will be
56 missed by so many in the public health arena, his family and the
57 residents of the Delta where he dedicated his life, and the state
58 that he loved:

59 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
60 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
61 we do hereby commend the life and recognize the visionary
62 Mississippi Delta Public Health Advocacy of Dr. Alfio Rausa and
63 extend the condolences of the Legislature on his passing.

64 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
65 the surviving family of Dr. Rausa, forwarded to the Mississippi
66 Public Health Association and the State Board of Health, and made
67 available to the Capitol Press Corps.

