

By: Senator(s) Seymour

To: Rules

## SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 6

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE MISSISSIPPI  
2 SENATE TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY OF GOODWILL AMBASSADOR PAUL OTT  
3 CARRUTH OF LAKE DIXIE SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI, WHO REACHED MILLIONS  
4 OF STUDENTS AND CITIZENS WITH HIS MESSAGE ABOUT WILDLIFE  
5 CONSERVATION AND FAMILY VALUES.

6 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of  
7 Mississippi Musician, Songwriter, Outdoorsman and Conservationist  
8 Paul Ott Carruth on July 1, 2018, at the age of 83. If there were  
9 an All-Mississippi Team composed of people who loved the state  
10 more than others, you would have to make a place for Paul Ott  
11 Carruth. Carruth inspired many audiences with his songs and  
12 stories about the country, dogs, the American Flag and the Old  
13 South, but particularly Mississippi; and

14 WHEREAS, the Carruths have been considered "country royalty"  
15 in Mississippi for years. Paul married former Miss Louisiana,  
16 Alberta Louise Futch, on December 27, 1959. Mary Ann Mobley, the  
17 reigning Miss America at the time, sang at the wedding. Alberta  
18 died of cancer in 1983. Carruth had all the makings of a country  
19 music star. "I urged Paul to move to Nashville," said Fred Foster



20 in a 2007 interview with *The Clarion Ledger*. Foster is a longtime  
21 Nashville Record Producer who helped launch the careers of Dolly  
22 Parton, Willie Nelson and Roy Orbison. "Paul carved himself a  
23 comfortable niche in Mississippi, so who's to say he made the  
24 wrong move"; and

25 WHEREAS, Carruth chose life in Lake Dixie Springs to live and  
26 raise his children. He made a living talking and singing about  
27 the outdoors, performing up to 100 shows a year at conventions,  
28 schools and churches across the Southeast. Paul Ott was a man who  
29 built his entire life around love for his family, the Mississippi  
30 outdoors, and the cultural arts. He was a tremendous promoter for  
31 the Southwest corner of Mississippi and the whole state; and

32 WHEREAS, Carruth became an accomplished Musician while in the  
33 Army at Fort Hood, Texas. He had always loved the outdoors. In  
34 the late 1960s, he noticed that many of the hardwood trees in  
35 Mississippi were being cut down, leaving only pines. He started  
36 writing songs about it and singing them on his TV Show in  
37 Hattiesburg. One of the tunes was named "The Trees Are Gone." He  
38 eventually met with officials of the U.S. Forestry Service and  
39 wrote them a song: "Plant a Tree." That is when he learned that  
40 you can bring industry and conservation people together through  
41 music and make a living by combining his love of music and the  
42 outdoors; and

43 WHEREAS, the Mississippi Game and Fish Commission gave Paul a  
44 weekly TV show "Mississippi Outdoors" and a radio show, which



45 changed names years later to "Listen to the Eagle," taking the  
46 name of a patriotic song that became Carruth's calling card; and

47 WHEREAS, Carruth was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2007.  
48 He joked about the odds, one in 100,000 men get breast cancer. He  
49 beat the disease and then spoke around the country, helping  
50 educate the nation that men get breast cancer, too. "God  
51 performed a miracle in me," Carruth said in 2007. "And the fact  
52 that He used breast cancer to do it is not for me to question";  
53 and

54 WHEREAS, Paul Ott was born September 25, 1934, in McComb,  
55 Mississippi. As a seven-year-old child, Paul Ott was baptized at  
56 First Baptist Church Summit where he continued to be a proud  
57 member for 76 years. After graduating from Summit High School, he  
58 attended Southwest Mississippi Community College, and The  
59 University of Mississippi. Paul completed his degree in education  
60 at the University of Southern Mississippi. After completing his  
61 education, he served his country in the United States Army. He  
62 and his young family then lived in Hattiesburg while he taught  
63 physical education and served as the Director of the YMCA; and

64 WHEREAS, his passion for music and the outdoors began to  
65 drive him, and he realized the need that America had for  
66 protecting its environment. Knowing how the economy must thrive  
67 and continue to grow, he realized there must be some kind of  
68 harmony between the two and what better place to start than  
69 educating our citizens. He returned home to Pike County where his



70 love for the outdoors started and launched one of the most  
71 powerful educational programs Mississippi and other states across  
72 the country have known and grown to love over the last 50 years;  
73 and

74 WHEREAS, Paul Ott reached over one million students from  
75 kindergarten to the college level, spreading his message about  
76 wildlife conservation and his love for "God, Family and Country."  
77 He performed at all 50 state-level conventions in agriculture,  
78 wildlife and environmental conferences, and for three Presidents  
79 of the United States and six Joint Sessions of Legislature across  
80 the country. He performed at all 50 State Governor's Wildlife  
81 Conservation Awards Conventions in addition to Puerto Rico, the  
82 Virgin Islands, Guam, Canada, Mexico and South Africa. He wrote,  
83 produced and performed ten different promotions for each of the 50  
84 states, Wildlife Federations and also the National Wildlife  
85 Federation of Washington, D.C. He led the fight as President of  
86 the Mississippi Wildlife Federation to help save the last 40  
87 Mississippi Sandhill Cranes from extinction in the late 1970s.  
88 His songs, TV, radio, newspaper interviews and personal  
89 appearances carried the message. His fighting spirit continued as  
90 he spurred a Grassroots Campaign across the country for prayer at  
91 athletic events in our schools. He received numerous local, state  
92 and national awards for his dedication to wildlife conservation,  
93 God, family and country. He was chosen Honorary President of the  
94 Parent-Teacher Association for the State of Mississippi, received



95 the Arbor Day Award for his unfailing effort to preserve wildlife  
96 and natural habitat, and twice received the  
97 Conservation/Communication Award from the State of Mississippi.  
98 He received the National Garden Clubs of America Conservation  
99 Award, the Honorary Merit of Excellence Award from the Boy Scouts  
100 of America, and was the recipient of the coveted Southeast Tourism  
101 Award. He was the Chairman of the Mississippi Arts and  
102 Entertainment Center, served on the Advisory Board for the  
103 Mississippi School of the Arts, and was proclaimed the Goodwill  
104 Ambassador for the State of Mississippi by the House of  
105 Representatives. He also served on the Advisory Board at  
106 Southwest Mississippi Community College and was named Alumnus of  
107 the Year. His first album, "Message to Mankind," has been placed  
108 in the Smithsonian Institute for the message it brings to the  
109 nation concerning our environment; and

110 WHEREAS, Paul Ott Carruth was so incredibly proud of his  
111 family! Paul is survived by his wife, Lynda Newberry Carruth, of  
112 Summit; five children; 13 grandchildren; and two  
113 great-grandchildren. His children include Paul Ott Carruth, Jr.,  
114 (Lindsey); Carla Carruth Tigner (Bill); Russ Blair Carruth  
115 (Melanie); Bert Holland Carruth (Gina); and Jeff Thomas Blair  
116 Carruth (Missy). He was super proud of his grandchildren:  
117 Courtney Carruth Nix (Joel), Drew Holland Tigner, Callie Carruth  
118 Russell (Brandon), Mary Claire Carruth, Carr Tigner, Luke Davis,  
119 Allie Carruth, Cade Carruth, Hastings Carruth, Emma Grace Carruth,



120 Brewer Carruth, Davis Carruth, and Carlyle Carruth; and two  
121 great-grandchildren, Junior Nix and Mabrey Nix. He is also  
122 survived by two brothers, Benson Holland and Steve Holland; and  
123 sister, Ann Carruth Jackson. He was preceded in death by his  
124 first wife, Alberta Futch Carruth, and his parents, Mr. and Mrs.  
125 A.R. Carruth; and

126 WHEREAS, while Paul Ott Carruth received numerous accolades  
127 for his service to our city, state, and nation, he had no prouder  
128 accomplishment than having the honor of spreading the message of  
129 his Lord. Our state has lost one of its most able, loyal and  
130 estimable citizens and we pay tribute and cherish fondly the  
131 memory of this most public-spirited citizen of Mississippi:

132 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
133 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the condolences of the  
134 Mississippi Senate to the bereaved family of Goodwill Ambassador  
135 Paul Ott Carruth of Lake Dixie Springs, Mississippi, who reached  
136 millions of students and citizens with his message about wildlife  
137 conservation and family values.

138 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
139 the surviving family of Paul Ott Carruth, transmitted to the  
140 Governor of the State of Mississippi and the Department of  
141 Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, and made available to the Capitol  
142 Press Corps.

