

By: Senator(s) Gollott

To: Rules

## SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 9

1 A RESOLUTION MOURNING THE PASSING OF MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST  
2 CIVIC AND BUSINESS LEADER ANTHONY JOSEPH TOPAZI AND COMMENDING HIS  
3 LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICE.

4 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of  
5 former Mississippi Power Company President and Mississippi Gulf  
6 Coast Civic Leader Anthony Topazi on July 6, 2018; and

7 WHEREAS, Anthony graduated from Auburn University with a  
8 degree in Electrical Engineering. He began working for Alabama  
9 Power Company in 1969 as a co-op student. This was the beginning  
10 of a successful 43 years with Southern Company. He served as  
11 President of Mississippi Power Company from 2004-2010, where he  
12 oversaw the repair of the extensive damage from Hurricane Katrina.  
13 In 2010, he was promoted to C.O.O. of Southern Company until his  
14 retirement in 2012; and

15 WHEREAS, Anthony Topazi was widely lauded for helping to  
16 restore power to South Mississippi residents in less than two  
17 weeks after Hurricane Katrina. "Every meeting, every tough  
18 decision, every priority, Anthony was in the middle of it," said



19 John Hairston, President of Hancock Whitney Bank and the Chairman  
20 of the Gulf Coast Business Council, for which Topazi was founding  
21 Chairman. "He was an inspiration to work with in the years we  
22 served together, whether business or social. His energy was  
23 boundless"; and

24 WHEREAS, Anthony was tapped in 2004 to lead Mississippi Power  
25 after working years at Alabama Power. He had experience  
26 responding to disasters such as hurricanes, tornados and ice  
27 storms, which proved invaluable when Hurricane Katrina hit on  
28 August 29, 2005. Temporary headquarters were set up at  
29 Mississippi Power's Service Center on 28th Street in Gulfport.  
30 Topazi went on television to say power would be restored in two  
31 weeks to all customers. In the months after the storm, Topazi was  
32 appointed Vice Chairman of the Governor's Commission on Recovery,  
33 Rebuilding and Renewal to help lead the Coast back to economic  
34 stability; and

35 WHEREAS, Topazi founded the Gulf Coast Business Council in  
36 the summer of 2006 to continue the long-term planning for  
37 rebuilding the Gulf Coast communities, according to Brian  
38 Sanderson, who served as the first full-time President of the  
39 Council. "He inspired many people on the Gulf Coast to work  
40 toward that vision, and what we have today is a direct result of  
41 that vision," Sanderson said. "He was able to capture the  
42 attention of business and political leaders on the Gulf Coast and  
43 in the state to get behind a unified effort for long-term



44 rebuilding and renewal. He believed it was his mission to make  
45 the Gulf Coast a better place to live. It was very personal to  
46 him because he cared very deeply about the Coast"; and

47 WHEREAS, Topazi left the area in 2010 for a job with the  
48 utility's parent company, Southern Company, in Birmingham,  
49 Alabama. Anthony Topazi left South Mississippi a different place  
50 than when he arrived. He raised millions after Hurricane Katrina,  
51 which helped build a new center that houses Gulf Coast nonprofit  
52 agencies that otherwise might not have survived the storm's  
53 devastation; and

54 WHEREAS, Anthony is survived by his wife of 45 years, Patsy;  
55 two sons, Michael Topazi and Chris Topazi (Debbie); four  
56 grandchildren: Evelyn, Anthony, Mary, and Thomas; his sister,  
57 Joyce McBee (Tom); and brother, Gerald Topazi (Shelby); and

58 WHEREAS, we pay tribute and cherish fondly the memory of this  
59 most public-spirited citizen of Mississippi whose legacy is his  
60 enormous civic energy:

61 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
62 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby mourn the passing of Mississippi  
63 Gulf Coast Civic and Business Leader Anthony Joseph Topazi, and  
64 commend his life and public service.

65 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
66 the surviving family of Anthony Topazi, forwarded to the Board of  
67 Directors of Mississippi Power Company, and made available to the  
68 Capitol Press Corps.

