

By: Representatives Denton, Harness, Ford,  
Scott, Dixon

To: Rules

## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 70

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE SERVICE AND CAREER OF  
2 MAJOR CAPTAIN BRADY TONTH, JR., IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF BECOMING THE  
3 FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN MISSISSIPPIAN TO COMPLETE THE UNITED STATES  
4 AIR FORCE PILOT TRAINING SCHOOL, AND RECOGNIZING HIM AS A  
5 MISSISSIPPI LIVING LEGEND IN OBSERVATION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN  
6 HISTORY MONTH.

7 WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi is replete with a rich and  
8 storied history of greatness and the successes of firsts, as is  
9 evidenced by the life, service and career of Vicksburg resident,  
10 Major Captain Brady Tonth, Jr., an individual of high esteem and  
11 caliber; and

12 WHEREAS, the eldest of four children born in Mound Bayou,  
13 Mississippi, and raised by his grandfather and great-grandmother  
14 in Belzoni on meager household earnings of less than \$150.00 per  
15 month, Major Tonth's humble beginning in the impoverished  
16 Mississippi Delta serves as the perfect juxtaposed backdrop for  
17 the narrative of his life of success that has continued to be a  
18 source of inspiration for all who hear it; and

19 WHEREAS, a 1969 graduate of McNair High School after  
20 completing his formal education at McNair Elementary, Major Tonth,



21 who possessed an insatiable appetite for learning, attended  
22 Mississippi Valley State University on a band scholarship, where  
23 he played drums and graduated in the top five percent of the Class  
24 of 1973 with a degree in political science and as a member of the  
25 prestigious Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; and

26 WHEREAS, poised for greatness and destined to make his mark  
27 in the world and secure his rightful place in the annals of  
28 African-American history, Major Tonth's ascent to notable  
29 recognition commenced in 1973 when he became the first ROTC pilot  
30 to be commissioned as an officer to graduate from his collegiate  
31 alma mater and, shortly thereafter, became the first  
32 African-American trainee from the State of Mississippi to complete  
33 Air Force Pilot Training School at Columbus Air Force Base in  
34 Columbus, Ohio, which afforded him his second commission as a  
35 licensed certified pilot; and

36 WHEREAS, in 1979, Major Tonth joined the Mississippi Air  
37 National Guard, becoming the first African-American pilot to fly  
38 for the guard, serving meritoriously until he was called back to  
39 active duty in 1981 and devoting more than 20 years of service to  
40 the United States Armed Forces, serving in both foreign conflicts  
41 of Desert Storm and Desert Shield, a time at which he earned the  
42 distinction of being the first African-American pilot to transport  
43 survival goods to a major war during Operation Desert Storm, which  
44 eventually enabled him to attain the rank of major; and



45 WHEREAS, after his seventh year with the United States Air  
46 Force, Major Tonth became a commercial pilot with American  
47 Airlines, after having moved up from ticket agent, flight  
48 engineer, co-pilot and finally captain in 1986, the same year he  
49 would serve as captain of the first all African-American flight  
50 crew in the company's history; and

51 WHEREAS, the modest possessor of a myriad of historical  
52 firsts, others significant to Major Captain Tonth's credit,  
53 include being the: first African-American pilot to fly a  
54 passenger jet from the Jackson-Evers International Airport; first  
55 African-American pilot to fly a private jet for actor, Morgan  
56 Freeman; first and only African-American pilot from Mississippi  
57 certified to fly 26 aircrafts, both private and commercial; first  
58 African-American pilot to achieve the highest rating any pilot can  
59 receive in the State of Mississippi; and first president of the  
60 Vicksburg-Warren County Alumni Association for Mississippi Valley  
61 State University; and

62 WHEREAS, now in the joys of retirement, surrendering his  
63 wings almost 18 years ago shortly after the 9/11 events with more  
64 than 30 years of flight service to his credit, and after having  
65 flown aircrafts like the T-37, T-38, KC-135, C-123, C-130, C-141,  
66 Boeing 727, Super 80, Boeing 757 and Boeing 767, Major Captain  
67 Tonth is the first and only African-American certified,  
68 commercial, passenger coach driver for Tougaloo College and



69 Alcorn, Jackson State and Mississippi Valley State Universities;  
70 and

71 WHEREAS, Major Captain Tonth's many accomplishments are  
72 documented proof that one's environment does not dictate the level  
73 of success one can attain in life when grounded in faith and  
74 "belief in God, effort and determination," and continue to be a  
75 driving force for his active civic and religious affiliations with  
76 such organizations as: Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; NAACP; Blacks  
77 in Government; A Hundred Black Men for Progress in Warren County;  
78 and Greater Grove Street Baptist Church, where he serves on the  
79 Deacon Board, Executive Committee and as chairman of the Black  
80 History Committee; and

81 WHEREAS, throughout every major move in his life and career,  
82 Major Captain Tonth has enjoyed the love, support and inspiration  
83 of his wife and college sweetheart, the former Fannie Woodson,  
84 whom he made his wife during their senior year at Valley, as well  
85 as their two children, Brady III and Tonya Tonth Naylor, and three  
86 grandchildren, Jazza, Randy III and Trenton; and

87 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to pay tribute  
88 to living legends of our community like Major Captain Tonth, who  
89 are the trailblazers that continue to inspire the birth of  
90 newfound success in the lives of the generations that follow:

91 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
92 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING  
93 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the service and career of Major



94 Captain Brady Tonth, Jr., in acknowledgment of becoming the first  
95 African-American Mississippian to complete the United States Air  
96 Force Pilot Training School, and recognizing him as a Mississippi  
97 living legend in observance of African-American History Month,  
98 and extend best wishes for continued health and prosperity in all  
99 the days to come.

100 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
101 furnished to Major Captain Brady Tonth, Jr., and to the members of  
102 the Capitol Press Corps.

