

By: Senator(s) Burton, Blount, Caughman,
Chassaniol, Clarke, DeBar, Fillingane,
Frazier, Hopson, Jackson (32nd), Jolly,
Kirby, Massey, Michel, Norwood, Simmons
(12th), Watson, Witherspoon

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 514

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE
2 LEGISLATURE TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY OF DR. BLAIR E. BATSON, THE
3 "FATHER OF ORGANIZED PEDIATRICS" IN MISSISSIPPI FOR WHOM THE
4 HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN WAS NAMED, AND COMMENDING HIS MEDICAL CAREER
5 AND CIVIC LEADERSHIP.

6 WHEREAS, we join the medical community in remembering and
7 recognizing a lifetime legacy of contributions to the health of
8 children in Mississippi. Dr. Blair E. Batson, an integral figure
9 in Mississippi Pediatrics, passed away on November 26, 2018. He
10 was 98; and

11 WHEREAS, Dr. Batson served as the first Chairman of
12 Pediatrics at the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC)
13 in Jackson; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. LouAnn Woodward, UMMC Vice-Chancellor for Health
15 Affairs and Dean of the School of Medicine, said Batson played an
16 important role in the health of children in the state. "He truly
17 was the 'Father of Organized Pediatrics' in Mississippi, and the
18 lives of countless children in our state have been touched through
19 his work," Dr. Woodward said; and



20 WHEREAS, Dr. Batson lived through the Great Depression and
21 served with the Army in World War II and in the U.S. Army Medical
22 Corps from 1946 to 1948 in Giessen, Germany, as Ward Officer for
23 Contagious Diseases and Pediatrics for the 388th Station Hospital;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, born October 24, 1920, Dr. Batson grew up in Pearl
26 River County in the sawmill Town of Orvisburg, where his
27 grandfather, Ran Batson, owned the mill and his grandmother, Mary
28 Bryan, was Principal of the three-room, eight-grade school. For
29 three years of his childhood, at the start of the Great
30 Depression, Batson's family lived in West Point, Mississippi,
31 where the local Librarian, Miss Lucy Heard, cultivated his
32 lifelong love of books and learning; and

33 WHEREAS, Dr. Batson earned his Bachelor of Arts and Doctor of
34 Medicine Degrees from Vanderbilt University and completed a
35 Residency in Pediatrics at Vanderbilt. While an undergraduate at
36 Vanderbilt, he was President of the Student Council and of his
37 fraternity, Sigma Chi. He served as Chief Resident at Vanderbilt
38 from 1949-1950 and had a faculty appointment there from 1949-1952;
39 and

40 WHEREAS, Dr. Batson completed a one-year residency at the
41 Johns Hopkins Hospital and was on the faculty of the Johns Hopkins
42 School of Public Health and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
43 from 1952-1955. He also held a Master of Public Health Degree
44 from Johns Hopkins University; and



45 WHEREAS, Dr. Batson was an Examiner for the American Board of
46 Pediatrics from 1963 until 1990, a member of the Executive Board
47 of the American Academy of Pediatrics from 1974 to 1980, and
48 President of the Pediatric section of the Southern Medical
49 Association; and

50 WHEREAS, Dr. Batson was honored often for his contributions
51 to the health of children in Mississippi. He was the recipient of
52 the 2000 Humanitarian of the Year Award from the Epilepsy
53 Foundation of Mississippi. In 1996, he was Vanderbilt's
54 Distinguished School of Medicine Alumnus of the Year. In 1995, he
55 was inducted into the University of Mississippi Alumni Hall of
56 Fame. Dr. Batson received awards for outstanding service from the
57 March of Dimes, the National Easter Seal Society, the American
58 Academy of Pediatrics, District VII, and an award for leadership
59 and devotion to child health care from the Mississippi Academy of
60 Pediatrics; and

61 WHEREAS, the children's hospital was named after Dr. Batson
62 "in recognition of his lifetime contributions of the health of
63 children in Mississippi"; and

64 WHEREAS, Dr. Batson was married twice, first to Dr. Margaret
65 Batson, a distinguished Pediatrician in her own right and member
66 of the original Pediatric faculty, and then to Blanche Batson, a
67 well-known Artist, both deceased. Survivors include Dr. Batson's
68 only brother, John O. Batson II; his six nieces and nephews: John
69 O. Batson III, Molly Batson Smith, Blair Batson, Bryan Batson



70 Jauregui, Andrew Graves Batson and Virginia Batson; and his four
71 grandnieces and grandnephews: Bryan Smith, Annie Smith, Griffin
72 Batson Grant and Tristan Batson Grant; and

73 WHEREAS, Dr. Batson leaves a lasting legacy not only in his
74 home state but throughout the nation. His passion for helping
75 children was unlike any other, and his great and good spirit and
76 remarkable intellect enriched the lives of all his students and
77 colleagues. He will truly be missed:

78 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
79 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
80 we do hereby extend the condolences of the Legislature to the
81 bereaved family of Dr. Blair E. Batson, the "Father of Organized
82 Pediatrics" in Mississippi for whom the hospital for children was
83 named, and commend his medical career and civic leadership.

84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
85 the surviving family of Dr. Batson, forwarded to the
86 Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mississippi Medical Center,
87 and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

