

By: Senator(s) Wiggins, DeBar, Seymour,  
Watson

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 663

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO MEMORIALIZE AND COMMEMORATE THE  
2 BICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE EXTENSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI  
3 EASTERN BOUNDARY LINE BY ACT OF CONGRESS ON MARCH 2, 1819, TO  
4 INCLUDE PRESENT-DAY JACKSON COUNTY AND THE PORT OF PASCAGOULA.

5 WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi was established on December  
6 10, 1817, by Act of Congress as the 20th state admitted to the  
7 Union. David Holmes was chosen as the first Governor. The  
8 meandering tale of how Mississippi got its shape thus came to an  
9 end. Or at least it almost came to an end; there would be one  
10 final piece, one last addition, and it would be tacked on well  
11 past the official date of admission; and

12 WHEREAS, the eastern boundary of Mississippi on the date of  
13 admission ran south "from the northwest point of Washington County  
14 (Alabama)" which meant that not only did it leave Mobile in  
15 Alabama, it also touched the waters of the Mississippi Sound "very  
16 close to the east side of Pascagoula Bay." In other words, it  
17 left out the present-day Cities of Pascagoula and Moss Point along  
18 with a sliver of land along the new state's eastern line all the  
19 way up to the northeast corner of Wayne County; and



20           WHEREAS, there are conflicting reports on how being left out  
21 of the new state was viewed by those living in this area. When  
22 arguing over placement of the border line, some others said with  
23 confidence that it "would certainly be their wish" to be in the  
24 Mobile district, and that "settlers along the Pascagoula River  
25 were displeased over being separated from Mobile." These settlers  
26 "protested that this vertical boundary placed them in the Alabama  
27 Territory, separating them from families and businesses on the  
28 west side of Pascagoula Bay"; and

29           WHEREAS, in any event, the reaction of the Mississippi  
30 Legislature was immediate. They met on December 17, 1817, exactly  
31 one week after Madison had signed the admission papers, and  
32 protested the eastern boundary in a memorial they sent to the U.S.  
33 Congress requesting a reconfiguration of the line. Among other  
34 complaints, the memorial bemoans the eastern line as "dividing  
35 some of the eastern counties, so as to leave a part of the  
36 inhabitants on the Pascagoula unconnected with any county, and  
37 destitute of the security and benefits of either a territorial or  
38 a state government. It destroys the equality, in the partition  
39 among the southwestern states, of the seacoast acquired by the  
40 purchase of Louisiana; thereby giving to the Territory of Alabama  
41 on the left, and to the State of Louisiana on the right, the whole  
42 extent of that seacoast. It moreover leaves this state destitute  
43 of a seaport, while its two powerful neighbors, Alabama and  
44 Louisiana, will possess almost the entire seaboard from the



45 eastern to the western boundary of Louisiana" acquired under the  
46 Louisiana Purchase (Memorial, December 17, 1817); and

47 WHEREAS, evidently, the Congress found Mississippi's  
48 arguments against splitting the eastern counties and leaving the  
49 new state without a seaport to be compelling. Two years later,  
50 Section Three of the "Act for the Admission of Alabama" (the  
51 enabling act) passed by the U.S. Congress on March 2, 1819,  
52 contained the following correction: "That it shall be the duty of  
53 the surveyor of the lands of the United States to run and cut out  
54 the line of demarkation (sic) between the State of Mississippi and  
55 the state to be formed of the Alabama territory; and if so much of  
56 said line running due south, from the northwest corner of  
57 Washington county to the Gulf of Mexico, will encroach on the  
58 Counties of Wayne, Green, or Jackson, in said State of  
59 Mississippi, then the same shall be so altered as to run in a  
60 direct line from the northwest corner of Washington County to a  
61 point on the Gulf of Mexico, ten miles east of the mouth of the  
62 river Pascagoula"; and

63 WHEREAS, the surveyors then determined that Mississippi had  
64 indeed been shortchanged, so the line was shifted eastward, and on  
65 December 14, 1819, "when Alabama was admitted to the Union,  
66 Congress reunited all the Pascagoula settlers in Mississippi by  
67 relocating the bottom leg 'to run southeastward from the northwest  
68 point of Washington County to strike the Gulf at a point ten miles  
69 east of the mouth of the Pascagoula River'," thereby annexing the



70 present-day Cities of Pascagoula, Moss Point, and State Line  
71 officially and belatedly to Mississippi. Also added were portions  
72 of Buckatunna, Leakesville, and Lucedale. With these additions,  
73 two years after the official date of admission, the State of  
74 Mississippi assumed its final form, the familiar, if somewhat  
75 unusual, shape that we recognize today; and

76 WHEREAS, the importance of this Petition and the subsequent  
77 Act of Congress which moved our boundary to the east cannot be  
78 overstated, and the economic and cultural impact to Jackson County  
79 is momentous. We join the citizens of the Mississippi Gulf Coast  
80 in marking this Bicentennial Anniversary of the founding of  
81 Jackson County and the establishment of the eastern boundary of  
82 our state:

83 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
84 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
85 we do hereby memorialize and commemorate the Bicentennial  
86 Anniversary of the extension of the Mississippi eastern boundary  
87 line by Act of Congress on March 2, 1819, to include present-day  
88 Jackson County and the Port of Pascagoula and commend this  
89 historical occasion as a reason for celebration of history.

90 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be transmitted  
91 to the Board of Supervisors of Jackson, Wayne, George and Greene  
92 Counties, to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of  
93 Pascagoula and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History,  
94 and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

