

By: Senator(s) Hill

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 22

1 A RESOLUTION JOINING THE CITIZENS OF COLUMBIA, MISSISSIPPI,
2 IN RECOGNIZING ITS BICENTENNIAL (200TH) CELEBRATION.

3 WHEREAS, on January 5, 2019, the south Mississippi Town of
4 Columbia, Mississippi, celebrated its Bicentennial (200th)
5 Celebration in downtown Columbia. Mississippi Lieutenant Governor
6 Tate Reeves stood atop a platform in front of the town's Christmas
7 tree and spoke to the thousands of residents who were gathered.
8 The brightly lit downtown, he said, made Columbia "a shining
9 example of what is possible when Mississippians come together";
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Columbia is the county seat of Marion County,
12 Mississippi. Marion County was created out of Amite County in
13 1811, encompassing the southwest quarter of the current State of
14 Mississippi. Before statehood in 1816, there were three
15 territorial census/poll tax records taken of what was deemed
16 Marion County at the time. The land on which the current City of
17 Columbia resides was first purchased for cash on April 18, 1820,
18 by William Lott and John Lott. Columbia was officially



19 incorporated on June 25, 1819, becoming the fourth municipality in
20 the State of Mississippi; and

21 WHEREAS, Columbia served as the temporary Capital of
22 Mississippi from November 1821, when the 5th Session of the
23 Mississippi Legislature first met there, until 1822. In that
24 year, a Special Session of the Legislature met in Columbia,
25 inaugurating Governor Walter Leake, and selecting LeFleur's Bluff
26 (now Jackson) as the permanent Capital; and

27 WHEREAS, Columbia, "The City of Charm on the River Pearl,"
28 has always been in danger of flooding, due to its bordering the
29 Pearl River. The county courthouse, with its records dating back
30 to pre-statehood, has managed to survive war, floods, tornadoes
31 and hurricanes. In its first 100 years, Columbia relied on the
32 Pearl River for transportation of goods. The river was much
33 deeper and wider than it is now. Steamboat captains, such as John
34 Black, lived in Columbia; and

35 WHEREAS, during the Civil War, United States troops under the
36 command of General Davidson camped outside Columbia, taking
37 provisions from the citizens of the Confederate States of America.
38 The courthouse was spared. The Southern Claims Commission Files
39 detail these events. In 1935, Mississippi's first rodeo was held
40 in Columbia. In 2016, the Mississippi Rodeo Hall of Fame was
41 founded and headquartered in Columbia. During the Civil Rights
42 Movement, Columbia and Marion County were the site of the most
43 peaceful demonstrations, due to the diligent insistence of



44 nonviolence by Sheriff John Homer Willoughby. The town is known
45 for its citizens ability to work together; and

46 WHEREAS, in 2005, Columbia suffered extensive damage from
47 super storm Katrina. Once again, the courthouse survived. There
48 was no looting, and citizens worked together with local churches,
49 civic officials, and law enforcement to provide for citizens
50 during the extensive power loss. Individuals immediately began
51 helping their neighbors clear roads and escape being trapped in
52 debris; and

53 WHEREAS, former Mississippi Governor and Columbia native
54 Hugh L. White introduced white squirrels to the area, and they are
55 still common in Columbia City Park. His home still stands today,
56 a stately reminder of architecture of the past; and

57 WHEREAS, notable people from Columbia include:

- 58 • Gil Carmichael, businessman, transportation specialist,
59 Republican politician, born in Columbia in 1927;
- 60 • Logan Cooke, NFL punter;
- 61 • Peggy Dow (Peggy Varnadow Helmerich), film actress and
62 philanthropist;
- 63 • Jim Dunaway, NFL player for the Buffalo Bills and Miami
64 Dolphins;
- 65 • Reverend John Ford, pioneering Methodist Minister and
66 early political leader;
- 67 • Bobby Hamilton, two-time Super Bowl winner with NFL's New
68 England Patriots;



- 69 • Gerry E. Hinton (1930-2000), former member of Louisiana
70 State Senate and Slidell, Louisiana, City Council;
- 71 • Claudis James (1943-2013), NFL player;
- 72 • General Benjamin Lee, military leader and early political
73 figure;
- 74 • Sylvester Magee, reportedly the last living American
75 slave, died there in 1971;
- 76 • Joseph T. "Joe" Owens (1945-2013), NFL player;
- 77 • Eddie Payton, pro football player;
- 78 • Walter Payton (1954-1999), NFL player in Pro Football Hall
79 of Fame, born in Columbia;
- 80 • Hugh L. White, former Columbia Mayor and two-term Governor
81 of Mississippi; and

82 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we acknowledge this
83 landmark event in the history of a Mississippi community which has
84 reflected the highest credit on the State of Mississippi:

85 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
86 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby join the citizens of Columbia,
87 Mississippi, in recognizing its Bicentennial (200th) Celebration,
88 and extend the best wishes of the Mississippi Senate to the
89 citizens of Columbia on this auspicious occasion.

90 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
91 Mayor Justin McKenzie of the City of Columbia, forwarded to the
92 Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and made available
93 to the Capitol Press Corps.

