

By: Senator(s) Younger, Doty, Hopson,
Jackson (15th), Michel, Seymour

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 565

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE PASSING OF RETIRED
2 MISSISSIPPI SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE LENORE LOVING PRATHER OF
3 COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI, AND COMMENDING HER CAREER AS THE FIRST
4 WOMAN TO SERVE AS A MISSISSIPPI SUPREME COURT JUSTICE.

5 WHEREAS, we join the Mississippi Supreme Court and The
6 Mississippi Bar in mourning the passing of retired Mississippi
7 Supreme Court Justice Lenore Loving Prather of Columbus,
8 Mississippi, on April 11, 2020. Justice Prather was the first
9 woman to serve as a Mississippi Supreme Court Justice; and

10 WHEREAS, Justice Prather was appointed to the nine-member
11 court in 1982 by then-Governor William Winter. She was also the
12 first woman to serve as Chief Justice, holding that role from
13 January 1998 until her retirement in January 2001; and

14 WHEREAS, Justice Prather was Interim President of Mississippi
15 University for Women from July 2001 to June 2002. She earned her
16 Bachelor's degree from the school in 1953, when it was still
17 called Mississippi State College for Women. She was one of only
18 three women in law school at the University of Mississippi when



19 she started studying there in 1953. She completed her law degree
20 in 1955; and

21 WHEREAS, Justice Prather became a city Judge in her hometown
22 of West Point in 1965. She held that post until September 1971,
23 when then-Governor John Bell Williams appointed her as a Chancery
24 Judge for Chickasaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha and Webster
25 Counties. She was the first woman to serve as a Chancery Judge.
26 Chancellors' duties include hearing land disputes, divorces and
27 child custody cases; and

28 WHEREAS, her colleague, retired Justice Bill Waller, Jr.,
29 considered Justice Prather a mentor. She played an important part
30 in the design and funding of the current Gartin Justice Building
31 in Jackson, which houses the Supreme Court and the Court of
32 Appeals; and

33 WHEREAS, Mississippi University for Women awarded Justice
34 Prather its Medal of Excellence in 1990 and the Mississippi
35 University for Women Alumni Achievement Award in 1993. The
36 University of Mississippi inducted her into its Hall of Fame in
37 1986. The University of Mississippi School of Law named her
38 Alumna of the Year in 1995, and inducted her into its Law Alumni
39 Hall of Fame in 2012. Then-Governor Haley Barbour awarded Prather
40 the Mississippi Medal of Service in 2009; and

41 WHEREAS, Chief Justice Prather served as a leader and mentor
42 and consistently lectured on professional standards of the
43 practice, including ethics, integrity, civility, courtesy and



44 adherence to the Golden Rule. Her life honored both The
45 Mississippi Bar and this great state that she loved and served:

46 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
47 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
48 we do hereby mourn the passing of retired Mississippi Supreme
49 Court Chief Justice Lenore Loving Prather of Columbus,
50 Mississippi, and commend her career as the first woman to serve as
51 a Mississippi Supreme Court Justice, and extend our condolences to
52 her surviving family.

53 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
54 the family of Chief Justice Lenore Loving Prather, forwarded to
55 the Mississippi Supreme Court, and made available to the Capitol
56 Press Corps.

