

By: Senator(s) Norwood, Frazier, Blount,  
Horhn, Simmons (12th), Barnett, Butler,  
Caughman, Chism, Hopson, Thomas, Turner-Ford,  
Williams, Witherspoon, Jackson (32nd),  
Simmons (13th)

To: Rules

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 509

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY OF THE  
2 MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY OF FORMER JACKSON  
3 STATE UNIVERSITY HALL OF FAME COACH WILLIAM C. "W.C." GORDEN AND  
4 EXPRESSING OUR CONDOLENCES TO THE JACKSON STATE ADMINISTRATION AND  
5 FOOTBALL ALUMNI ON HIS PASSING.

6 WHEREAS, we join the students, faculty, administration and  
7 football alumni of Jackson State University in mourning the  
8 passing of former Jackson State University College Football Hall  
9 of Fame Coach "W.C." Gorden, the winningest Coach in Jackson State  
10 football history, who passed away on October 23, 2020, at the age  
11 of 90; and

12 WHEREAS, during Gorden's tenure at Jackson State over 15  
13 seasons, he led the Tigers to a share of eight Southwestern  
14 Athletic Conference (SWAC) Championships and nine National  
15 Collegiate Athletic Association Football Championship Subdivision  
16 (NCAA FCS) playoff appearances and a Black College Football  
17 National Championship; and

18 WHEREAS, in the mid-80s, the Blue Bengals enjoyed historic  
19 success, winning a school record 28 consecutive SWAC Conference



Games from 1985 to 1989. The Tennessee State alum finished with a 76-17 SWAC record and 43-31-5 nonconference record en route to an impressive 119-47-5 overall record; and

WHEREAS, Gorden was inducted into the SWAC Hall of Fame in 1994; the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame in 1997; the College Football Hall of Fame in 2008 and the Black College Football Hall of Fame in 2015; and

WHEREAS, William C. Gorden began his coaching career in 1957 at Magnolia, Mississippi, where he served as Athletic Director and Head Football, Baseball, Basketball and Track Coach at the now defunct Eva Gordon High School. In 1966, William C. Gorden departed Magnolia, Mississippi, and was named Head Football Coach and Athletic Director at Temple High School in Vicksburg, Mississippi, leading Temple to the prestigious Big 8 Conference State Football Crown in 1966 when his football team racked up a perfect 11-0 record. Coach Gorden arrived at Jackson State University in 1971 when he was selected as Defensive Coordinator and Head Baseball Coach. Coach Gorden was named Jackson State Head Football Coach in 1977 and remained in that position until 1991; and

WHEREAS, his vast list of community service work and memberships is incredible, including Boy Scouts of America; Phi Delta Kappa; American Association for Physical Educators; Charter Member of the Opera South Guild; Central United Methodist Church; Free Football Clinic in Prichard, Alabama; WLBT TV Easter Seal



45 Telethon; Summer Youth Program in Baton Rouge, Louisiana;  
46 Mississippi Mental Health Club; Jackson Noon Optimist Club;  
47 Volunteer Assistant in Partners for Education; Key Communicator  
48 for Jackson Public Schools; Jackson Touchdown Club; SWAC Alumni  
49 Association Charter Member and Chairman of the Constitution and  
50 Laws Committee; Board of Directors, Pearl River Valley Water  
51 Supply District; Enterprise Community Governance Structure  
52 Citizens Advisory Board; Jackson City Planning Board;  
53 Jackson-Hinds Comprehensive Health Center Central Mississippi;  
54 Town Creek Tributary Number 4 Drainage Improvement for Georgetown  
55 Community; Chairman of the 1997 Transition Team Task Force on  
56 Parks and Recreation in the City of Jackson; Board Member for the  
57 Algebra Project at Lanier High School; Chairman, Central United  
58 Methodist Church Courtesy Committee; lifetime member, Mississippi  
59 Sports Hall of Fame and Sports Foundation; volunteer for  
60 Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame Museum; Chairman of Committee for  
61 Dedication of the Health and Physical Education Complex at Lather  
62 High School; and Board Member of "Make a Wish" Foundation; and  
63 WHEREAS, Gorden, a native of Nashville, Tennessee, is  
64 survived by his wife, Vivian Howard Gorden, two sons and five  
65 grandchildren; and

66 WHEREAS, we pay tribute and cherish fondly the memory of a  
67 Mississippi sports icon. The tradition and excellence W.C. Gorden  
68 brought to JSU is unmatched and will live on through countless  
69 generations:



70           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
71   MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
72   we do hereby extend the deepest sympathy of the Mississippi Senate  
73   to the bereaved family of former Jackson State University Hall of  
74   Fame Coach William C. "W.C." Gorden and express our condolences to  
75   the Jackson State Administration and football alumni on his  
76   passing.

77           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
78   the surviving family of Coach Gorden, forwarded to the President  
79   of Jackson State University and the Board of Trustees of State  
80   Institutions of Higher Learning, and made available to the Capitol  
81   Press Corps.

