

By: Senator(s) Horhn, Simmons (13th),
Chassaniol, Jackson (32nd)

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 11

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE RECOGNITION OF THE MISSISSIPPI
2 SENATE TO MISSISSIPPI TRADITIONAL ARTISANS THE TUTWILER QUILTERS
3 AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2021 GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARD FOR ARTS IN THE
4 COMMUNITY.

5 WHEREAS, the Governor's Arts Awards Program has announced its
6 2021 recipients, which includes the Mississippi Tutwiler Quilters
7 for Arts in the Community; and

8 WHEREAS, established in 1988, Governor's Arts Awards are
9 given to individuals and organizations to recognize outstanding
10 work in the artistic disciplines, as well as arts-based community
11 development and arts patronage in Mississippi. The awards are
12 presented in partnership with the Governor's Office and signify
13 the important relationship between government and the arts; and

14 WHEREAS, the renowned Tutwiler Quilters program started at
15 the Tutwiler Community Education Center more than 30 years ago by
16 religious sisters working in the area to improve health outcomes
17 in the underserved community; and

18 WHEREAS, the quilters often take a traditional pattern and
19 improvise, based on the fabric provided to them. One Tutwiler



20 quilter says that the color or patterns of the raw fabric "speaks
21 to her," which helps determine the designs of her quilts. Owners
22 of their beautiful quilts value the artistic excellence of the
23 hand-quilted items created in the Southern African-American
24 tradition; and

25 WHEREAS, while this art form preserves traditions indigenous
26 to the region, their quilted pieces include blankets, potholders
27 and tote bags. Among other items are beautiful, marketable
28 commodities treasured by collectors around the country and the
29 world; and

30 WHEREAS, the Tutwiler Quilters program is a cottage industry.
31 Quilters work from home, at their own pace, with materials
32 provided to them by the Tutwiler Community Education Center. The
33 Tutwiler Quilters program was started by Sister Maureen Delaney
34 after she saw Mary Sue Robinson making a quilt. Ms. Robinson is
35 considered the matriarch of the program; and

36 WHEREAS, quilters are paid for each item upon completion.
37 The Tutwiler Community Education Center sells the items at the
38 center, on their website, and at quilt and craft shows across the
39 country. Through countless stitches and yards of material, more
40 than 30,000 items have been made and sold since 1988; and

41 WHEREAS, the quilters and their artworks first received a
42 national boost when CBS produced a feature on them in 1999 for the
43 program *60 Minutes*; and



44 WHEREAS, the Tutwiler Quilters organization, now under the
45 direction of Melanie Powell, is a member of the Craftsmen's Guild
46 of Mississippi. Every piece offered for sale goes through a
47 rigorous quality control system led by longtime quilter Mary Ann
48 Mackey at the Tutwiler Center. Many women from the community have
49 put their needlework and sewing skills to work for the program and
50 have enjoyed the economic benefits, along with the pride of
51 knowing their works are beloved around the world; and

52 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and
53 express appreciation for the talent of a world-class Mississippi
54 quilting group who has made Mississippi a better place and
55 exemplifies the quilting art traditions of our great state:

56 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
57 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the recognition of the
58 Mississippi Senate to the Tutwiler Quilters, the recipient of the
59 2021 Governor's Arts Award for Arts in the Community, and extend
60 our congratulations to these talented quilters on this auspicious
61 occasion.

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
63 the Tutwiler Quilters as part of the Governor's Arts Awards
64 presentation, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

