

By: Senator(s) Frazier, Blount, Branning,
Butler (38th), England, Hopson, Horhn,
Norwood, Simmons (12th), Simmons (13th),
Sparks, Thomas

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 502

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING FORMER
2 MISSISSIPPI REPRESENTATIVE HONORABLE FRED L. BANKS, JR., ON THE
3 OCCASION OF HIS RECEIPT OF THE PRESTIGIOUS "2021 LIFETIME
4 ACHIEVEMENT AWARD" BY THE MISSISSIPPI BAR.

5 WHEREAS, we join The Mississippi Bar and the legal profession
6 in honoring former Mississippi Representative Honorable Fred L.
7 Banks, Jr., upon his receipt of the "2021 Lifetime Achievement
8 Award" by The Mississippi Bar, recognizing his stellar legal and
9 judicial career; and

10 WHEREAS, Fred Banks was born in Jackson, Mississippi, on
11 September 1, 1942. He graduated from Lanier High School in
12 Jackson in 1960. He earned his undergraduate degree in Business
13 Administration from Howard University in Washington, D.C. He also
14 attended Howard's Law School, graduating *cum laude* and second in
15 his class in 1968; and

16 WHEREAS, Fred's intrinsic sense of fairness is reflected
17 throughout his legal career. After law school, he started a
18 private practice in Jackson. The NAACP Legal Defense and



19 Education Fund hired Fred to serve as its local counsel, along
20 with Reuben Anderson, John Nichols, and Melvyn Leventhal; and

21 WHEREAS, that office became the firm Anderson, Banks, Nichols
22 and Leventhal, the first interracial law firm in Mississippi
23 history. Fred and his partners courageously fought segregation.
24 They were instrumental in integrating public schools and public
25 accommodations in Mississippi. Desegregation in Mississippi did
26 not come easily. It was hard-fought, and Fred was instrumental in
27 making it happen; and

28 WHEREAS, Fred and Reuben Anderson have been lifelong friends.
29 As Reuben put it, "We started out together in the 5th grade, were
30 baptized together, and served as altar boys together. Whatever
31 grade we were in, Fred was always the smartest person in the
32 class"; and

33 WHEREAS, throughout his career, Fred has fought injustice.
34 He served as Town Attorney in Fayette, Mississippi, from 1970 to
35 1975, consulting attorney to the Mississippi Association of
36 Educators and General Counsel to the Mississippi State Conference
37 of NAACP Branches; and

38 WHEREAS, Fred sought elective office in the mid-1970s. In
39 1975, he was elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives
40 and won reelection twice. When Fred was first elected to the
41 State House of Representatives in 1975, he joined Robert Clark as
42 the first African-American legislator since Reconstruction.
43 During his tenure, he served as Chairman of the House Ethics



44 Committee, Chairman of the House Judiciary "B" Committee, and
45 Chairman of the Legislative Black Caucus. Fred fought to preserve
46 records of the Mississippi Sovereignty Commission; and

47 WHEREAS, on September 24, 1979, President Jimmy Carter added
48 Fred to the nine-member National Advisory Council on the Education
49 of Disadvantaged Children. From 1979 - 1981, Fred served as a
50 member of the Mississippi Board of Bar Admissions; and

51 WHEREAS, Fred joined the judiciary in February 1985. He was
52 appointed Judge of the Seventh Circuit Court District, which
53 covered Hinds and Yazoo counties and won reelection twice, running
54 unopposed both times. In January 1991, Governor Ray Mabus
55 appointed Fred to fill an unexpired term on the Mississippi
56 Supreme Court. He was elected to serve the rest of that term in
57 November 1991 and reelected in November 1996; and

58 WHEREAS, Fred retired from the Mississippi Supreme Court in
59 2001. He joined the law firm of Phelps Dunbar, where he has
60 continued his civil rights advocacy. As part of his legal
61 practice, Fred has participated in school desegregation, housing
62 and employment discrimination, voting rights and other civil
63 rights cases, as well as appellate litigation, commercial
64 litigation and alternate dispute resolution. He was recognized by
65 *Mississippi Business Journal* as its inaugural "Leader in the Law"
66 in 2010; and

67 WHEREAS, Fred's community involvement is substantial. He has
68 served his state and nation in many other capacities. He is



69 Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Foundation for
70 Mississippi History. He also serves or has served on the National
71 Board of Directors of the NAACP, the Board of Visitors at
72 Mississippi College School of Law, the State Advisory Committee to
73 the Commission on Civil Rights, the Democratic National Committee
74 Commission on Presidential Elections, and on the Board of
75 Directors of the Greater Jackson Community Foundation. He is a
76 member of the American Law Institute, a Fellow in the Mississippi
77 Bar Foundation, a member and former President of American Inns of
78 Court, Charles Clark Inn, and the Mississippi, Magnolia, National
79 and District of Columbia Bar Associations. He has also served on
80 a number boards for community improvement activities, including
81 Sanderson Farms and the Capital City Convention Center Commission;
82 and

83 WHEREAS, in the fall of 1976, Fred was Co-Chairman of Jimmy
84 Carter's Presidential Campaign in Mississippi, along with Danny
85 Cupit. In a great bit of television theater, late into election
86 night, it was Mississippi that put President Carter over the top
87 in the electoral vote count. Fred crafted and nurtured the
88 winning coalition for Carter in the state that year, the last time
89 Democrats won a presidential election in Mississippi; and

90 WHEREAS, Honorable Fred Banks served as a leader and mentor.
91 Fred consistently lectured on professional standards of the
92 practice, including ethics, integrity, civility, courtesy and
93 adherence to The Golden Rule. He advised his colleagues, "One



94 only has so many points of personal privilege, use them wisely."
95 Fred Bank's career has honored The Mississippi Bar, the
96 Mississippi House of Representatives and this great state that he
97 loves and serves:

98 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
99 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
100 we do hereby commend and congratulate former Mississippi
101 Representative Honorable Fred L. Banks, Jr., on the occasion of
102 his receipt of the prestigious "2021 Lifetime Achievement Award"
103 by The Mississippi Bar and extend to him and his family our wishes
104 for future success.

105 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
106 Honorable Fred Banks, forwarded to The Mississippi Bar and the
107 Speaker of the House of Representatives and be made available to
108 the Capitol Press Corps.

