

By: Senator(s) Jackson (11th), Simmons (12th), Simmons (13th), Frazier, Barnett, Jordan, Butler (38th), Hopson, Horhn, McLendon, Thomas, Thompson

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 517

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY OF THE
2 LEGISLATURE TO THE SURVIVING FAMILY OF FORMER MISSISSIPPI MAYOR,
3 POLITICIAN, DELTA BLUES PROMOTER, ENTREPRENEUR, ATTORNEY, PILOT,
4 NATIONAL GUARD OFFICER, DEVELOPER, PRESERVATIONIST, ACTOR, FILM
5 PRODUCER AND RESTAURANT AND NIGHTCLUB IMPRESARIO WILLIAM O. "BILL"
6 LUCKETT, JR., OF CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI.

7 WHEREAS, it is with great sadness that we note the passing of
8 William O. "Bill" Lockett, Jr., of Clarksdale, Mississippi, on
9 October 28, 2021. Bill Lockett was an attorney, small-town mayor,
10 candidate for governor, blues promoter, friend and business
11 partner of Morgan Freeman, and an irrepressible teller of tales
12 about the people and culture of his beloved Mississippi; and

13 WHEREAS, William O. "Bill" Lockett Jr., was a man with an
14 extensive and surprising list of gifts and talents. Entrepreneur,
15 attorney, pilot, Mississippi National Guard Officer, developer,
16 preservationist, actor, film producer, restaurant and nightclub
17 impresario and politician, and that is a truly pared down list of
18 Lockett's accomplished life and work; and

19 WHEREAS, Lockett was a University of Virginia graduate who
20 earned a law degree at Ole Miss. He served a decade in the



21 Mississippi National Guard. He also served as the 2005 Honorary
22 Co-chair for the Mississippi Heritage Trust. He has served on the
23 Executive Council of the Association of Defense Trial Attorneys,
24 the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Hospitality & Restaurant
25 Association, the Clarksdale-Coahoma County Planning Commission,
26 and the Clarksdale-Coahoma County Airport Board; and

27 WHEREAS, after a failed gubernatorial bid in 2011, Lockett
28 was elected Mayor of Clarksdale in 2013 and served his hometown
29 with distinction in that office. This reflected his deep love for
30 his city and county and the State of Mississippi; and

31 WHEREAS, at his request, Lockett's family held a celebration
32 of his life with free music and entertainment at Ground Zero Blues
33 Club, the joint that he, along with Academy Award-winning Actor
34 Morgan Freeman and others had owned for two decades in Clarksdale,
35 Mississippi. The club's name refers to the birthplace of the
36 blues. "Dad loved Clarksdale, its music and its people with all
37 of his heart," said his son, Oliver Lockett. He also noted: "In
38 true Bill Lockett style, one of his final requests was to forgo a
39 funeral and instead invite the community and anyone that wants to
40 come to Clarksdale for some great music at Ground Zero Blues Club,
41 on the house"; and

42 WHEREAS, Lockett leaves to cherish his memory: his wife of
43 37 years, Francine; son, Oliver Lockett; daughter, Whitney
44 Lockett; stepson, Park Dodge; and stepdaughter, Douglas Dunavant;
45 and



46 WHEREAS, Bill Lockett loved his family and friends. He loved
47 Clarksdale. He loved Mississippi. Bill loved life, and he made
48 life matter. He made it fun; and

49 WHEREAS, we pay tribute and cherish fondly the memory of this
50 most public-spirited citizen of Mississippi who had enormous civic
51 and business energy and who will be missed by all who were
52 fortunate enough to have known his special wisdom and wit:

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
54 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
55 we do hereby extend the deepest sympathy of the Legislature to the
56 surviving family of former Mississippi mayor, politician, delta
57 blues promoter, entrepreneur, attorney, pilot, National Guard
58 Officer, developer, preservationist, actor, film producer and
59 restaurant and nightclub impresario William O. "Bill" Lockett,
60 Jr., of Clarksdale, Mississippi.

61 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
62 the surviving family of Bill Lockett, the Mayor and City Council
63 of Clarksdale, Mississippi, and to Actor Morgan Freeman, and made
64 available to the Capitol Press Corps.

