

By: Senator(s) Blackwell, Chassaniol, Younger, Norwood, Polk, Barnett, Branning, Butler (38th), DeBar, Frazier, Horhn, Kirby, Parker, Seymour, Simmons (12th), Sparks, Thomas, Thompson

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 525

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING JAMES A. BARBER, FORMER
2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON
3 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND EXPENDITURE REVIEW (PEER) AND HIS
4 CONTRIBUTIONS TO LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT IN MISSISSIPPI AND THE
5 FIELD OF PROGRAM EVALUATION, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT.

6 WHEREAS, James A. Barber served as Executive Director of the
7 Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and
8 Expenditure Review (PEER) from July 1, 2015, to September 30,
9 2021; and

10 WHEREAS, James A. Barber was born and raised in Columbia,
11 Mississippi, and was a 1973 graduate of Columbia High School. He
12 attended The University of Southern Mississippi where he received
13 a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in 1976 and a Master
14 of Business Administration degree in 1977; and

15 WHEREAS, upon completion of his graduate studies, he was
16 hired as a Staff Analyst with the PEER Committee in April 1978,
17 thereby beginning a long and distinguished career with PEER marked
18 with skillfully accomplished responsibilities, resulting in his
19 promotion to Executive Director in July 2015; and



20 WHEREAS, during his years with the PEER staff, James A.
21 Barber was an active participant in the programs and committees of
22 the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), serving as a
23 member of the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society's
24 Executive Committee twice, including chairing the Executive
25 Committee in 2000 and 2009. Additionally, he served as the Editor
26 of the NLPES newsletter from 2001 to 2010. Further, he also
27 served on two NCSL Committees. James A. Barber was a member of
28 the NCSL Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee from 2008 to
29 2010 and was a member of the NCSL Legislative Effectiveness
30 Committee from 2015 to 2018; and

31 WHEREAS, during his tenure as Executive Director, the PEER
32 Committee issued 70 Committee reports on various aspects of state
33 and local government operations; and

34 WHEREAS, several reports issued during his tenure as
35 Executive Director stand out as notable achievements in
36 legislative oversight and program evaluation. These reports
37 include: *An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Mississippi*
38 *Film Office* (December 15, 2015); *State Government Purchasing: A*
39 *Review of Recent Statutory Changes and Case Study* (September 19,
40 2017); *Management of Mississippi's State-Owned Vehicles, Data*
41 *Quality, The Control Environment and Recent Statutory Changes*
42 (November 11, 2017); *A Review of the Jackson Convention and*
43 *Visitors' Bureau* (November 27, 2018); and *A Statutory Review of*
44 *Mississippi's Education Savings Account Program* (December 11,



45 2018). These reports all received recognition from the NLPES as
46 having had significant impact on Mississippi's public policy; and

47 WHEREAS, during James A. Barber's directorship, PEER also
48 performed a valuable service to the Legislature in the production
49 of legislative assistance, issuing 531 legislative assistance
50 memorandums, as well as 318 background checks for the Senate.
51 Some significant legislative assistance produced by PEER was
52 extensive research and drafting assistance on the "Alyce G. Clarke
53 Mississippi Lottery Law" that was adopted in 2018; and

54 WHEREAS, James A. Barber often made himself available to
55 lecture on both public administration and the functions of PEER.
56 This included presentations to new legislators, graduate-level
57 academic lectures, and meetings of PEER at NCSL. For many years,
58 he served as a faculty member in the Certified Public Manager
59 Program administered in Mississippi through the State Personnel
60 Board, where he conducted training for aspiring public managers on
61 working with legislators and legislative committees; and

62 WHEREAS, James A. Barber was often engaged by other
63 Legislative oversight organizations to conduct in-depth PEER
64 reviews of their work product to assist them in implementing
65 evaluation practices that ensure the production of accurate,
66 high-quality reports and reviews; and

67 WHEREAS, during his years of service with PEER, James A.
68 Barber proved to be a highly capable and versatile analyst who was



69 at home dealing with issues in evaluation and auditing of all
70 levels and complexity; and

71 WHEREAS, James A. Barber was a valued co-worker, tireless
72 leader, and exceptional public servant, who served the Mississippi
73 Legislature and the State of Mississippi with dignity and
74 integrity for over 43 years:

75 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
76 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
77 we commend James A. Barber, former Executive Director of the Joint
78 Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure
79 Review (PEER), and his contributions to Legislative oversight in
80 Mississippi and the field of program evaluation, on the occasion
81 of his retirement.

82 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
83 James A. Barber and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

