

By: Senator(s) McLendon, McMahan, Blackwell, To: Rules  
Parker, England, Barrett, Moran, Parks,  
Sparks, Whaley, Thomas, Butler (38th),  
Frazier, Barnett, Branning, Kirby, McCaughn,  
Polk, Younger, Caughman, Simmons (13th)

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 547

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND LEGACY OF  
2 WORLD WAR II HERO AND POW OLIN PICKENS OF NESBIT, MISSISSIPPI, AND  
3 EXTEND THE BEST WISHES OF THE LEGISLATURE ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY.

4 WHEREAS, we join the citizens of DeSoto County in celebrating  
5 the 100th Birthday of a local World War II Hero; and

6 WHEREAS, not many people have the opportunity to celebrate  
7 100 years of life, especially when that 100 years includes Olin  
8 Pickens' heroism and sacrifice. Nesbit resident and WWII Hero,  
9 Olin Pickens, will celebrate his birthday on December 31st; and

10 WHEREAS, during his time as a soldier in World War II,  
11 Pickens spent 28 months as a prisoner of war (POW). He said his  
12 time as a POW taught him valuable life lessons. "My advice to  
13 anyone would be to accept the situation you're in," Pickens said.  
14 "That's how I got through my time of being a prisoner. If you  
15 can't accept the situation, you can't fix it." Pickens was only  
16 20 years old when he left for the war. Before he left, he made a  
17 promise to his parents that he intended to keep. "I was 20 years  
18 old in 1942 when I left home," Pickens said. "I told my mother



19 and daddy that I would be home when the war was over and I meant  
20 that." Soon, Pickens found himself training to be sent overseas  
21 with the 805th Tank Destroyer Battalion. Reflecting on the  
22 mission that would soon land him as a POW, Pickens said he knew  
23 there were only two ways out, to be dead or to be captured. "They  
24 told us it was a suicide mission," he explained. "We lost 75 men  
25 in just a few minutes of that battle. I heard the bullets go by,  
26 but I was never struck." Although Pickens was lucky enough to  
27 survive the battle, he would soon be questioning his luck.  
28 Pickens did not die that day, January 26, 1943, in North Africa,  
29 but he did lose his freedom. After Pickens was captured, it would  
30 be over two years before he was a free man again. During his time  
31 as a POW, Pickens said food was scarce and work days were long  
32 digging canals and hauling rocks; and

33 WHEREAS, Olin Pickens escaped with one of his comrades and  
34 fled to Czechoslovakia, but they were recaptured. He was  
35 eventually freed for good on April 27, 1945, when the Russians  
36 liberated the camp. "One of the best days of my life was getting  
37 my freedom back," Pickens said. "Before I was free, I was ready  
38 to give up, but I remembered the promise that I had made to my  
39 parents. I would be back when the war was over"; and

40 WHEREAS, Pickens' son, Larry, said he has been extremely  
41 lucky to have his father around for so many years. Larry said his  
42 father has been a blessing to him, and he's looking forward to  
43 celebrating his 100th Birthday with him. "I am so fortunate to be



44 able to spend time with him now," Larry said. "His age is a  
45 blessing and we're excited to celebrate it"; and

46 WHEREAS, Olin Pickens' legacy is a strong and free America,  
47 and for this and for his selfless heroic military service, a  
48 grateful Nation and State thank him:

49 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
50 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
51 we do hereby recognize the service and legacy of World War II Hero  
52 and POW Olin Pickens of Nesbit, Mississippi, and extend the best  
53 wishes of the Legislature on his 100th Birthday.

54 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
55 Olin Pickens and his family, forwarded to Mississippi's  
56 Congressional delegation, and be made available to the Capitol  
57 Press Corps.

