

By: Representative Sanford

To: Rules

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 23

1 A RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MR. NORMAN
2 GOETZMANN STEVENS, JR., AND EXPRESSING DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS
3 FAMILY AND FRIENDS UPON HIS PASSING.

4 WHEREAS, it is written in Ecclesiastes 3:1 that "To
5 everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under
6 the Heaven," and as such, on April 24, 2022, the immaculate author
7 and finisher of our soul's destiny summoned the mortal presence of
8 dearly beloved, Mr. Norman Goetzmann Stevens, Jr., of Mount Olive,
9 Mississippi, to eternal rest, rendering great sorrow and loss to
10 his family, friends and community; and

11 WHEREAS, born on June 11, 1931, in Picayune, Mississippi, to
12 Mr. Norman Goetzmann Stevens, Sr., and Mrs. Fern Anderson Stevens,
13 loving parents who laid a fine foundation for a remarkable life,
14 Mr. Stevens grew up in Picayune and spoke fondly of his days there
15 as a child, including riding with the engineer in the Crosby steam
16 engine as it carried logs between the mill and the mill pond,
17 untold hours at the YMCA, where he was when news of Pearl Harbor
18 came, and fishing on the Hobolochitto with his dad; and



19 WHEREAS, Mr. Stevens became a gifted athlete at Picayune High
20 School in multiple sports, leading the football team to a state
21 championship in 1948, and because of his outstanding athleticism,
22 he was a highly recruited quarterback, and like his father before
23 him, who was Louisiana State University's last four sport
24 letterman, he became a Bengal Tiger, one of the few father-son
25 combos in LSU football history, and while there, he played the
26 seasons of 1950 through 1953, and was named the MVP his senior
27 season; and

28 WHEREAS, while at LSU, Mr. Stevens met his beloved future
29 bride, Ms. Martha Sue "Mossy" Blain, a cheerleader who rode atop
30 the tiger cage into Tiger Stadium for each home game, and they
31 married December 20, 1952; and

32 WHEREAS, upon graduation, Mr. Stevens took a position with a
33 Picayune bank, but soon received a draft notice, and the United
34 States Air Force assigned him to Keesler Air Force Base, where the
35 base commander wanted him to coach and play for the base football
36 team, and while there, he was promoted to First Lieutenant and was
37 ultimately, as a 24-year-old, in command of over 600 men training
38 as radar operators; and

39 WHEREAS, after his time in the Air Force, Mr. Stevens joined
40 his father-in-law's company, Blain Construction Company of Mount
41 Olive, Mississippi, and helped build an outstanding company that
42 endured well into a third generation; and



43 WHEREAS, Mr. Stevens had a decades long career in the highway
44 construction and materials business and was a part of building
45 many of the major highways and interstates across Mississippi and
46 bordering states; and

47 WHEREAS, Mr. Stevens was well respected by his peers, known
48 for his honest dealings and forward-thinking practices, and served
49 in leadership positions on many industry boards on a state and
50 national basis, as well as numerous local civic and philanthropic
51 boards; and

52 WHEREAS, in one of the defining moments of his life, as a
53 young father of three children, Mr. Stevens suddenly lost his
54 beloved Martha Sue in 1965, but by the grace of God, he weathered
55 this heartache, and married the second love of his life, Ms.
56 Elizabeth "Beth" Wagner, on January 11, 1969, thereby becoming
57 father to two more beloved children, and there has never been a
58 more complete melding of two families into one; and

59 WHEREAS, in a second defining moment, Beth was diagnosed with
60 advanced ovarian cancer in August 2000, and Mr. Stevens
61 immediately retired from his work and devoted the next ten years
62 to walking side-by-side with her through a long and arduous
63 chemotherapy journey, and they were married for 42 years, and he
64 loved her fiercely till the end; and

65 WHEREAS, dedicated to his faith, Mr. Stevens was a devout
66 follower of Jesus, and for decades, he daily rose before the sun
67 to extensively study his Bible and pray, leaving behind volumes of



68 daily study notes and, more importantly, leaving an example of
69 loving and living in harmony with his fellowman; and

70 WHEREAS, Mr. Stevens served as presiding elder for Mount
71 Olive Presbyterian Church and dearly loved his church family and
72 pastors, and his legacy of faith is plainly revealed by the faith
73 of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and by the
74 steadfast way in which he lived his life in moments of testing;
75 and

76 WHEREAS, though he has traversed the river of life to reunite
77 with those who answered God's summons to life eternal and now
78 beckon his arrival to the celestial shores of Heaven's grandeur,
79 such as his two wonderful and loving wives, who he often said he
80 longed to join in Heaven, as he will be laid to rest between them,
81 the legacy of Mr. Stevens' indelible imprint upon our lives will
82 continue to refresh the hearts and fond memories of his loved
83 ones, including his sister, Suzanne "Suzie" Stevens Redd;
84 daughter, Susan Stevens Shuler and husband, Conrad; son, Norman
85 Goetzmann Stevens, III, and wife, Joy; daughter, Martha Stevens
86 McIntosh and husband, Mark; daughter and faithful caregiver, Kevin
87 Stevens Lowrey, along with husband and primary caregiver, Perrin;
88 son, Robert Lee Stevens and wife, Eva; grandchildren, Conrad,
89 Stevens, Annie Kate, Sarah, Jenny, Will, John Mark, Mamie, Lizzie,
90 John Madison, Justice, Brittny, Erin, Emelie, Jed, Ben and Sam; 21
91 great-grandchildren (including two in utero); and a host of nieces



92 and nephews, great-nieces and nephews, cousins, other relatives
93 and dear friends; and

94 WHEREAS, Mr. Stevens will forever be loved, cherished and
95 missed by all who knew him, and since it is written in 2
96 Corinthians 5:8, that to be "absent from the body is to be present
97 with the Lord," his family and friends can find peace and comfort
98 during this difficult time; and

99 WHEREAS, a genuine man of exceptional character, Mr.
100 Stevens' outstanding legacy will continue for generations to come,
101 and precious memories of time spent with him will hopefully
102 continue to provide warmth, peace and comfort to his loved ones;
103 and

104 WHEREAS, it is the policy of the House of Representatives to
105 recognize and honor the lives of great Mississippians, especially
106 those such as Mr. Stevens, a man whose life's light illuminated
107 the path of hope for all he encountered along this earthly
108 sojourn:

109 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
110 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby
111 mourn the loss and honor the life and legacy of Mr. Norman
112 Goetzmann Stevens, Jr., and express deepest sympathy to his family
113 and friends upon his passing.

114 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
115 furnished to the family of Mr. Norman Goetzmann Stevens, Jr., and
116 to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

