

By: Representative Paden

To: Rules

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 112

1 A RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND
2 LEGACY OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVE LEONARD HENDERSON AND EXPRESSING
3 DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS UPON HIS PASSING.

4 WHEREAS, it is written in II Corinthians 4:17-18, "For our
5 light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far
6 more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and as such, the
7 immaculate author and finisher of our soul's destiny summoned the
8 mortal presence of former Representative Leonard Henderson to rest
9 eternally, on Saturday, March 4, 2023; and

10 WHEREAS, the Clarksdale Community of Coahoma County,
11 Mississippi, lost a devoted public servant, revered educator,
12 community activist and friend with the passing of Representative
13 Henderson, born on September 15, 1944, in Clarksdale, to the late
14 Ms. Bessie Henderson and Mr. Leonard Price, and raised by his late
15 grandparents, Mrs. Georgia Hall-Coleman and Mr. Floyd Coleman, and
16 there is now a hush in our hearts as we come together to pay our
17 respects to the memory of one who has been called to join that
18 innumerable heavenly caravan; and



19 WHEREAS, reared on the important tenets of educational
20 success, spiritual fellowship and service to mankind,
21 Representative Henderson received his formal education at W.A.
22 Higgins High School, graduating with the class of 1963, and
23 subsequently matriculating through his postsecondary education
24 curricula at: Coahoma Community College, earning an associate of
25 arts degree in health education in 1965; Jackson State University,
26 earning a bachelor of science degree in physical education in
27 1967; Tennessee State University, earning a masters of education
28 degree in health in 1972; and completing his postgraduate studies
29 at Jackson State University, earning an education specialist
30 degree in educational administration and supervision in 1980; and

31 WHEREAS, in fulfillment of the principles of service innately
32 embedded in his lineal fabric, Representative Henderson's
33 inaugural immersion into public service entailed his 1967
34 assumption of the role of athletic director and head basketball
35 coach at Coahoma Agricultural High School, wherein during his
36 three-year tenure, he amassed a 60-10 record before transitioning
37 to recreation director for the City of Nashville's Metro Parks and
38 Recreation Department in 1970, while simultaneously serving as a
39 graduate assistant during his master's program at Tennessee State
40 University until 1971; and

41 WHEREAS, Representative Henderson returned to his beloved
42 Clarksdale in 1971 to once again serve Coahoma Agricultural High
43 School, but this time as assistant principal and head basketball



44 coach until 1974, building upon his proven record of athletic
45 success with an additional 49-15 record before sharing his
46 instructional and coaching acumen at the postsecondary educational
47 level as assistant head basketball coach and assistant professor
48 of physical education at Mississippi Valley State University until
49 1979, where his collegiate coaching statistics consisted of a
50 75-56 record over the course of five seasons; and

51 WHEREAS, before making a 14-year return to elementary and
52 secondary education as principal of Clarksdale's Riverton
53 Elementary School in 1982, Representative Henderson undertook
54 several intermittent assignments at the postsecondary level,
55 including serving as a graduate assistant and media specialist for
56 the Crossover Project in the Office of Continuing Education at
57 Jackson State University, and as director of special services at
58 East Central Junior College; and

59 WHEREAS, fate would lend itself to being built in accordance
60 with the blueprint divinely designed for the pattern of his life
61 by the Great Deity and grand architect of our lives' destiny, when
62 his love, chivalry and affection pierced the heart of the former
63 Miss Cal Couthern, and the duo became bone of one another's bone
64 and flesh of one another's flesh after exchanging the nuptials of
65 holy matrimony, building a lifetime of memories, and blessed with
66 the fruitful addition of a son and daughter, into whose lineal
67 fabric the embedded moral tenets of love, honor, integrity and the
68 bountiful blessings of God's amazing grace and tender mercies,



69 which was further shared with their progeny of four grandchildren
70 and one great-grandchild; and

71 WHEREAS, in 1995, Representative Henderson, sought to expand
72 his reach of public service by engaging in the rigorous process of
73 seeking political office, which proved to be a timely and seamless
74 transition upon the conclusion of his educational career with his
75 successful bid for election to the Mississippi House of
76 Representatives as State Representative of District 26,
77 encompassing Coahoma County, and wherein he served for one term
78 from 1996 through 2000, lending his intrepid leadership,
79 analytical voice and methodical approach to state service on the
80 House Committees on Agriculture, Education and Interstate
81 Cooperation, while also managing the responsibilities as the City
82 of Clarksdale's Director of Personnel/Safety from 1998 through
83 2000; and

84 WHEREAS, upon the conclusion of his brief yet effective
85 career as an elected state official, Representative Henderson
86 would conclude his career of public service in 2006 as a security
87 specialist with the Department of Homeland Security before
88 officially entering into retirement; and

89 WHEREAS, a God-fearing Christian before all other roles he
90 assumed, Representative Henderson followed very closely in the
91 fulfillment of his responsibilities as a loving husband and doting
92 father, the standard-bearer of generosity, whose banner of
93 excellence was attached to modesty and humble humility, was the



94 living embodiment of a man who lived his life seeking the very
95 heart of God by being of service to mankind as a member of Chapel
96 Hill Missionary Baptist Church; and

97 WHEREAS, deeply entrenched in his commitment to activism
98 through political, social and civic engagement, Representative
99 Henderson's professional and civic affiliations include: the
100 Mississippi Legislative Black Caucus; National Black Caucus of
101 State Legislators; Mississippi Association of School
102 Administrators; National Education Association, Clarksdale
103 Association of Education; Commander of American Legion Post #203;
104 Master Mason of M.W. Stringer Grand Lodge, Elks Lodge 556
105 I.P.B.O.E.W. of Clarksdale; board of trustees for Northwest
106 Mississippi Regional Medical Center; vice president of the Coahoma
107 County Chapter and member of the Board of Directors of the Jackson
108 State University National Alumni Association; and president of the
109 Greenville Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Alumni
110 Association; and

111 WHEREAS, though he has traversed life's river to reunite in
112 glorious fanfare with his parents and grandparents, who
113 transitioned to eternity before him, the legacy of Representative
114 Henderson's indelible imprint will continue to refresh fond
115 memories of his beloved survivors: devoted and loving wife, Cal
116 Couthern Henderson; children, Brian James and Leonette Henderson;
117 grandchildren, Khari Owens, Jessica James, Brianna James and



118 Cameron Chatman; great-granddaughter, Uri Rose James; and a host
119 of relatives and friends; and

120 WHEREAS, we encourage the family to find solace from the
121 overwhelming sadness created by the earthly departure of their
122 beloved family member and be renewed in their faith that
123 Representative Henderson fulfilled the purpose of his appointed
124 time in adherence to the commandment of II Timothy 4:7, by having
125 "fought a good fight, finishing his course and keeping the faith
126 until the hour of his departure was at hand"; and

127 WHEREAS, it is appropriate to honor the life of a genuine and
128 devoted public servant such as Representative Henderson, whose
129 life's light illuminated the path of hope for all he encountered
130 along this earthly sojourn:

131 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
132 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby
133 mourn the loss and commemorate the life and legacy of former
134 Representative Leonard Henderson, to whose family we express
135 sincere and deepest sympathy upon his passing.

136 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
137 furnished to the family of former Representative Leonard Henderson
138 and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

