

By: Senator(s) Moran, Carter, DeLano, England, Seymour, Thompson, Wiggins, Barnett, Butler (38th), Chassaniol, DeBar, Hill, Horhn, Jackson, Kirby, McCaughn

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 516

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING, CONGRATULATING, AND
2 THANKING MYRTIS FRANKE FOR HER LIFETIME OF SERVICE TO THE STATE OF
3 MISSISSIPPI.

4 WHEREAS, Myrtis Franke, a Louisiana native, has resided in
5 Gulfport, Mississippi, for 53 years. During that time, she has
6 made, and continues to make, a remarkable difference in the lives
7 of many Mississippians; and

8 WHEREAS, while attending Louisiana State University and
9 working in Baton Rouge, she met Paul Franke, Jr., a Gulfport,
10 Mississippi native, who was in the process of moving back to
11 Mississippi to attend law school. They dated long distance for
12 more than a year, and then married and resided in Mississippi. In
13 1969, Myrtis and Paul Franke, Jr., were living in Jackson,
14 Mississippi, when Paul accepted a job with a law firm in his
15 hometown of Gulfport. They were scheduled to move during the same
16 week that Hurricane Camille devastated the Mississippi Gulf Coast;
17 and



18 WHEREAS, undeterred, Myrtis and Paul kept their plans and
19 moved to Gulfport. Upon arrival, Myrtis immediately rolled up her
20 sleeves and got to work on relief efforts through her volunteer
21 work and employment at the Small Business Administration.
22 Gradually, the Mississippi Coast recovered, and Myrtis went on to
23 serve and engage in many civic organizations, as well as to
24 achieve numerous professional and personal honors; and

25 WHEREAS, for more than 25 years, Myrtis has served as a
26 congressional staffer on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. She has had
27 the honor of working as the Southern District Director for both
28 United States Senators Trent Lott and Thad Cochran. Ms. Franke
29 currently serves as the District Director for United States
30 Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith. Her position has provided her with the
31 resources to pursue her true passion of helping others; and

32 WHEREAS, although most of Ms. Franke's time is spent
33 relentlessly advocating for constituents needing federal
34 assistance, she is well-known in Mississippi as the "go-to" person
35 for anyone who needs help, especially those who have exhausted all
36 other available resources; and

37 WHEREAS, when two dozen Air Force Generals from bases across
38 the country convened at Keesler in May of 2021 for a visit called
39 the "Gathering of the Torch," Biloxi's Mayor Andrew "Fofo" Gilich,
40 Jr., presented his own welcoming party of the local top brass,
41 which included Brigadier General Rich Moss, Lieutenant General
42 Mike Peterson, Lieutenant General Clark Griffith, and Myrtis



43 Franke, whom, to her embarrassment, he referred to as "the
44 power-behind-the-throne"; and

45 WHEREAS, Ms. Franke has served on numerous boards that
46 contribute to medical care in Mississippi, including the
47 Mississippi State Board of Health, Governor Fordice's Medicaid
48 Committee, and the Fisher House of Keesler. She also served on
49 the Board of Trustees of Memorial Hospital of Gulfport for 20
50 years, 18 of which she served as Chairman of the Board. During
51 her service to Memorial Hospital, she helped to establish 14
52 school health clinics that are operated by Memorial Hospital; and

53 WHEREAS, among her other volunteer work, Myrtis also served
54 on the Board of the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center, the Mid-South
55 Housing Foundation Advisory Board, and as President of the Spanish
56 Trail Heritage Foundation, the organization which oversees the
57 preservation and restoration of the historic Grass Lawn home in
58 Gulfport; and

59 WHEREAS, among her other achievements, Myrtis was the
60 recipient of the Donald Sutter Award for Community Service, an
61 award for Superior Public Service to the Navy Meteorology and
62 Oceanographic Command, and an award in Support of Operation
63 Enduring Freedom from the Forward Operations Base, in Shank,
64 Afghanistan. Ms. Franke has been recognized by the Navy Seals
65 Unit, NAVSCIATTS, for her support in helping NAVSCIATTS develop
66 and maintain strategic relationships with their diverse partner
67 forces and increasing their capabilities and capacity to advance



68 the interest of the United States and our allies. Myrtis was the
69 recipient of the Mississippi Woman "Power of One" Award, presented
70 by Governor Kirk Fordice, for leading change in the areas of
71 youth, community and mental health. Ms. Franke also received an
72 award for her work on the recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast
73 after Hurricane Katrina; and

74 WHEREAS, as one colleague stated, "Myrtis is a
75 problem-solver, and she knows how to get to a yes." Her tenacity
76 and determination, as well as her heart for serving others, has
77 allowed her to touch the lives of many Mississippians, and has
78 made her the successful person who she is today:

79 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
80 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, that
81 we do hereby commend and congratulate and thank Myrtis Franke for
82 her lifetime of service to the State of Mississippi. We extend to
83 Ms. Franke our gratitude, and our best wishes for her future
84 endeavors and successes.

85 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be presented to
86 Myrtis Franke and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

