

By: Senator(s) Michel, Blackwell, Butler
(38th), Boyd, Hopson, McDaniel

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 555

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE PASSING AND COMMENDING
2 THE LIFE AND CIVIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF BUSINESSMAN WIRT ADAMS YERGER,
3 JR., OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, AND RECOGNIZING HIS LEADERSHIP IN
4 THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF OUR STATE.

5 WHEREAS, we extend the deep and heartfelt sympathy of the
6 Legislature on the passing of Wirt Adams Yerger, Jr., of Jackson,
7 Mississippi, on May 2, 2022; and

8 WHEREAS, a native of Jackson, Wirt was born on March 18,
9 1930, the son of the late Rivers Applewhite Yerger and Wirt Adams
10 Yerger. He was educated in the Jackson Public Schools and became
11 an Eagle Scout at age fifteen. Wirt received a Bachelor of
12 Business Administration Degree from the University of Mississippi,
13 where he was a member of Kappa Alpha fraternity; and

14 WHEREAS, from 1952 to 1954 he served as First Lieutenant in
15 the United States Air Force's Strategic Air Command. In 1956, he
16 married Mary Polk Montague of Hattiesburg; and

17 WHEREAS, in 1954 Wirt joined Ross & Yerger, Inc.,
18 Mississippi's first insurance agency, founded in 1860. During his
19 forty-eight years of leadership, the agency grew from three to



20 fifty-three employees. In February 2002, Ross & Yerger became
21 employee-owned, and Wirt continued to serve as Chairman Emeritus;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, he was the first insurance agent in Mississippi to
24 hold both the CPCU and CLU designations and was the first
25 Mississippian invited to be an Underwriting Name at Lloyd's of
26 London. He also served as President of the Mississippi
27 Association of Insurance Agents; and

28 WHEREAS, Wirt gave unselfishly and generously to his
29 community. He was a past President of Metropolitan Boys Club,
30 Metropolitan YMCA and Jackson Rotary Club; and

31 WHEREAS, he received the Jackson Junior Chamber of Commerce
32 Distinguished Service Award in 1956 and 1960. He founded both the
33 Metropolitan Crime Commission and Fondren Renaissance Foundation;
34 and

35 WHEREAS, he was a former Director of the Jackson Chamber of
36 Commerce, the Mississippi Insurance Council, and the Community
37 Foundation for Mississippi, establishing one of their first donor
38 advised funds; and

39 WHEREAS, he was a founding trustee of Jackson Preparatory
40 School and a member of First Presbyterian Church, where he served
41 as a Deacon; and

42 WHEREAS, Wirt was the leader in establishing the Republican
43 Party in Mississippi, serving as State Chairman of the Mississippi



44 Republican Party from 1956 until 1966. He was also Chairman of
45 the Southern Association of Republican State Chairmen; and

46 WHEREAS, in May of 2009 he was honored as Mississippi
47 Republican Party Chairman Emeritus for his work in building a
48 two-party political system in Mississippi. He ended his speech
49 with these words, "The best advice I give to you is always choose
50 principles over pragmatism and power. Standing on principles is
51 not easy, you get tired and discouraged, but the satisfaction of
52 accomplishing all you can for a better nation is worth it all";
53 and

54 WHEREAS, Wirt's greatest reward was being a husband, father,
55 grandfather, great-grandfather and brother. He built special and
56 everlasting relationships with each member of his family
57 throughout their lives. Wirt unselfishly gave of his time,
58 talents, resources and love, not only to his family, but to many
59 friends in all walks of life; and

60 WHEREAS, he is survived by his wife Mary Montague Yerger of
61 Jackson, Mississippi; son Wirt Adams Yerger, III, (Linda Biggers
62 Yerger); daughter, Mary Yerger Dunbar (Thomas Tarver Dunbar); son,
63 Frank Montague Yerger (Jane Prater Yerger); granddaughters, Mary
64 Montague Dunbar and Sarah Jane Rivers Yerger; grandsons: Wirt
65 Adams Yerger, IV, (Jordan Jones Yerger), James David Yerger
66 (Natalie Sink Yerger), Richard Montague Yerger (Rachael Hardin
67 Yerger), John Taylor Yerger (Lauren Meyer Yerger), Thomas Yerger
68 Dunbar, Wirt Yerger Dunbar, Frank Montague Yerger, Jr., and Harlan



69 Prater Yerger; great-grandchildren: Jane Ellen Yerger, Anny
70 Elizabeth Yerger, Mary Adams Yerger, Richard Montague Yerger, Jr.,
71 William Hardin Yerger, John Taylor Yerger, Jr., Anna Gray Yerger
72 and Ellen Gray Yerger; brothers, William Swan Yerger (Gingia
73 Palmer Yerger) and Ivan Bass Yerger (Sandra Pate Yerger); sister,
74 Rivers Yerger Lurate; and several nieces and nephews; and

75 WHEREAS, we pay tribute and cherish fondly the memory of this
76 most public spirited citizen of Mississippi whose enormous civic
77 energy is a record of achievement and legacy of leadership in the
78 state he loved:

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 mourn the passing and commend the life and civic
82 contributions of businessman Wirt Adams Yerger, Jr., of Jackson,
83 Mississippi, and recognize his leadership in the political history
84 of our state.

85 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented on
86 this day to the surviving family of Wirt Yerger, forwarded to the
87 Mississippi Association of Insurance Agents, the Jackson Chamber
88 of Commerce and the Jackson Rotary Club and be made available to
89 the Capitol Press Corps.

