

By: Senator(s) McCaughn, Blackwell

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 81

1 A RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE "GOOD
2 FRIDAY AGREEMENT" (April 10, 1998-April 10, 2023) WHICH NEGOTIATED
3 A DEVOLVED INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND TO
4 EXPRESS THE SUPPORT OF THE MISSISSIPPI SENATE FOR THE CITIZENS OF
5 NORTHERN IRELAND ON THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION.

6 WHEREAS, the Good Friday Agreement, also called Belfast
7 Agreement, reached on April 10, 1998, and ratified in both Ireland
8 and Northern Ireland by popular vote on May 22, 1998, called for
9 devolved independent government in Northern Ireland. The Good
10 Friday Agreement represented a landmark breakthrough that provided
11 Ireland with a political framework to address its future; and

12 WHEREAS, the 25th Anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement
13 has been reached, and while there are still outstanding issues, it
14 has been a considerable success. There are people alive in
15 Northern Ireland and on the island of Ireland today because of the
16 continuous bipartisan support for the Good Friday Agreement over
17 the last 25 years by State Legislators, successive United States
18 Presidents, the United States Senate, United States House of
19 Representatives, and elected officials working in partnership with



20 the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of
21 Ireland; and

22 WHEREAS, the Good Friday Agreement, on this year of the 25th
23 Anniversary of its ratification, is the framework for lasting
24 peace in Northern Ireland. The Good Friday Agreement acknowledged
25 the right of differing political traditions to pursue their goals
26 of remaining part of the United Kingdom or of Irish Unity. The
27 Good Friday Agreement demonstrated democratic and peaceful means
28 of resolving differences; and

29 WHEREAS, we recognize the British and Irish Governments'
30 ongoing support and implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.
31 It is the irrevocable foundation of the peace process regardless
32 of the United Kingdom's status regarding the European Union; and

33 WHEREAS, members of both political parties in the United
34 States came together to support the Good Friday Agreement; and

35 WHEREAS, on the 17th of March during the annual celebration
36 of the Feast of Saint Patrick, the Patron Saint of Ireland, Irish
37 Americans join with men, women and children of all ethnic origins
38 and for one day become "Irish" and celebrate Saint Patrick, and
39 this year we also celebrate and give thanks for the 25th
40 Anniversary of the Good Friday Peace Agreement; and

41 WHEREAS, 2023 also marks the 175th Anniversary of the first
42 flying of the Irish Flag by Thomas Meagher who embodied the links
43 between Ireland and the United States of America. In one
44 lifetime, Thomas Meagher ran for the City Council in Waterford,



45 Ireland, led the rebellion for freedom from British rule in
46 Ireland in 1848, was sentenced to death, which was commuted to
47 life in prison in Australia, from where he escaped, and he became
48 a Brigadier General in the 69th Regiment of the famous "Fighting
49 Irish Brigade." Meagher was appointed Montana's territorial
50 Secretary of State by President Andrew Johnson, and also served as
51 acting territorial Governor; and

52 WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi has an important historical
53 connection to the culture of Ireland and Northern Ireland. While
54 some Irish settlers moved to what is today Mississippi when the
55 British ruled West Florida, the first major Irish presence in the
56 state came when the Spanish took the colony back after the
57 American War of Independence. With Roman Catholicism the
58 established religion, Irish priests came to serve in the Natchez
59 District. For the next few decades, the predominant Irish
60 presence in the state was Protestant. The advent of the Great
61 Famine pushed more than 2,000,000 people out of Ireland between
62 1845 and 1855, and many came to Mississippi. In 1860 the state
63 boasted almost 4,000 Irish citizens. Despite the harsh
64 conditions, the Irish stayed in Antebellum Mississippi thanks to
65 community institutions usually operated by Irish and
66 Irish-American nuns. More prosperous Irish immigrants founded
67 their own societies. The most active was the Hibernian Society in
68 Natchez. Middle-class Irish also took an active interest in Irish



69 and American politics, showing a particular penchant for political
70 journalism; and

71 WHEREAS, with this historical context in mind, we take great
72 pride in acknowledging the connection between the political and
73 historical past of Ireland and the State of Mississippi, and our
74 support for cultural exchange between our citizens:

75 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
76 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commemorate the 25th Anniversary of
77 the "Good Friday Agreement" (April 10, 1998-April 10, 2023), which
78 negotiated a devolved independent government in Northern Ireland
79 and express the support of the Mississippi Senate for the citizens
80 of Northern Ireland on this auspicious occasion.

81 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be transmitted
82 and presented to the appropriate Representatives of the Northern
83 Ireland Assembly and the Senate of Ireland and the Chair of the
84 American Irish State Legislators Caucus, forwarded to members of
85 Mississippi's Congressional Delegation, and be made available to
86 the Capitol Press Corps.

