

By: Senator(s) Frazier, Barnett, Blount,
Butler (38th), Simmons (12th)

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 99

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING WOMEN FOR PROGRESS OF MISSISSIPPI,
2 INC., FOR 45 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF THE STATE
3 OF MISSISSIPPI.

4 WHEREAS, Women for Progress of Mississippi, Inc., was
5 chartered on May 11, 1978, as a nonprofit, nonpartisan community
6 improvement organization of action-oriented, influential and
7 talented individuals. Under the leadership of Mrs. Dorothy T.
8 Stewart, founder and first president, Women For Progress's mission
9 was to become a catalyst for: Advocacy, Awareness, and Action;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Women for Progress has a reputation for being a
12 catalyst for action and helping people understand their roles as
13 citizens; and

14 WHEREAS, Women for Progress founder, the late Mrs. Dorothy
15 Thompson Stewart Samuel, taught her family, students, organization
16 members and community members, "You already have the power and
17 must see yourself having the power"; and



18 WHEREAS, the late Mrs. Dorothy Thompson Stewart Samuel was
19 born in Vicksburg, Mississippi, the only daughter of King David
20 Thompson and Mable Woods Thompson. She grew up in Clinton,
21 Mississippi, and graduated high school as her class salutatorian
22 at Holy Ghost Catholic High School in Jackson, Mississippi. She
23 went on to graduate with honors from Jackson State University.
24 She was a life-long educator teaching at Sumner Hill High School
25 in her hometown of Clinton, Mississippi, Jackson Public Schools
26 and Menlo Park High School and Thornton Alternative High School in
27 northern California. She furthered her education at Clark
28 University (Worcester, MA), Mississippi College, University of
29 Mexico-Mexico City and the University of Mississippi. She served
30 on the charter boards for the Urban League Guild of Jackson and
31 Mission Mississippi. She also served on the board of Ballet
32 Mississippi and is a Board Member Emerita for the Margaret Walker
33 Center. She was the mother of Angela Stewart, Monica Stewart
34 Wilson, and Peter Stewart, and she had seven grandchildren; and

35 WHEREAS, the major thrusts of Women for Progress of
36 Mississippi, Inc., are political action, education, economic
37 development and cultural advancement; and

38 WHEREAS, Throughout the organization's history, Women for
39 Progress of Mississippi, Inc.'s, political action has been a major
40 priority. Making the political system more responsive to the
41 needs of the citizens was the organization's first step in
42 addressing many of the issues facing our communities. Early



43 activities focused primarily on increasing the number of
44 minorities in the State Legislature as a source of empowerment and
45 access to the seats of power. Political forums were held to
46 disseminate information on the issues and the candidates. Records
47 document the organization's support of civil rights legend,
48 Senator Henry J. Kirksey, who was vital to major change in the
49 political makeup of our government. The organization hosted the
50 inaugural gala held for the newly elected state African American
51 legislators. Few early African American legislative candidates
52 were elected without their fundraising events, forums and "Get Out
53 The Vote Drives." Voter participation and voter awareness are
54 still major concerns; and

55 WHEREAS, Women for Progress has assisted students and faculty
56 in the public schools in securing books, teaching materials and
57 supplies. Many activists have served as resource speakers,
58 mentors and tutors; and

59 WHEREAS, economic development is also a major priority of
60 Women for Progress of Mississippi, Inc., as it facilitates the
61 upward mobility of minorities. Following the principle of
62 cooperative economics activists supporting minority business and
63 economic development. These activities are currently administered
64 through the Women's Business & Entrepreneur's Network; and

65 WHEREAS, cultural advancement is also a major priority of
66 Women for Progress of Mississippi, Inc. The celebration of
67 Kwanzaa became important in the promotion and celebration of the



68 greatness of their African American history and heritage in 1978.
69 Understanding cultural differences is crucial to the process of
70 racial reconciliation and the eradication of racism, sexism and
71 genderism. The current President, Mrs. Willie Jones, created a
72 weekly radio program, Women for Progress Radio WMPR 90.1 FM to
73 effectuate change and increase awareness. Sankofa Book Club and
74 the annual Kwanzaa celebration are two projects used to promote
75 cultural awareness; and

76 WHEREAS, Women for Progress of Mississippi actively seek
77 women who possess an interest in voluntarism, a commitment to
78 community service and an interest in developing potential for
79 voluntary community participation; and

80 WHEREAS, Women for Progress of Mississippi's core projects
81 include: Women for Progress Radio Network, Women for Progress
82 Lunch & Learn, Women for Progress Political & Education Forums,
83 Women for Progress "She Should Run," Engaging More Women for
84 Public Leadership, the Dorothy Stewart Samuel Scholarship Fund,
85 *Women for Progress Cookbook*, Project Aspire Youth Leadership
86 Institute – Project Aspire Soaring Eagles, Kwanzaa and Sankofa
87 Book Club, which highlights the passion and activism of the
88 membership; and

89 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the
90 accomplishments and civic energy of this influential organization:

91 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
92 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend Women for Progress of



93 Mississippi, Inc., for 45 years of public service to the citizens
94 of the State of Mississippi, and extend the best wishes of the
95 Mississippi Senate for the future prosperity of this organization.

96 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
97 the Director of Women for Progress of Mississippi, Inc., and be
98 made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

