

By: Representative Owen

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 54

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND COMMEMORATING
2 THE LIFE AND EXTRAORDINARY LEGACY OF CIRCUIT JUDGE CLAIBORNE
3 "BUDDY" MCDONALD IV.

4 WHEREAS, it is written in Ecclesiastes 3:1 that "To
5 everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under
6 the Heaven," and as such, the immaculate author and finisher of
7 our soul's destiny summoned the mortal presence of Circuit Judge
8 Claiborne "Buddy" McDonald IV of Picayune, Mississippi, on January
9 1, 2024, to rest eternally; and

10 WHEREAS, the son of Claiborne and Edith Rapp McDonald and the
11 grandson of Claiborne and Helen Camp McDonald and William and
12 Margaret Lockhart Rapp, Judge McDonald attended Picayune Public
13 Schools and earned a bachelor of arts degree in political science
14 from Mississippi State University in 1970 and a law degree from
15 the University of Alabama School of Law in 1973 and did
16 post-graduate work in criminal justice at the University of
17 Southern Mississippi; and



18 WHEREAS, Judge McDonald served in the United States Army
19 Reserve and National Guard in the Transportation Corps,
20 Quartermaster Corps, and Judge Advocate General Corps, and after
21 his heroic service, he was honorably discharged with the rank of
22 Captain; and

23 WHEREAS, the Pearl River County native served as Circuit
24 Judge of the 15th District for eight years, taking the bench in
25 January 2016, and he previously served for seven years as district
26 attorney for the 15th District, and 16 years as an assistant
27 district attorney, and the district includes Jefferson Davis,
28 Lamar, Lawrence, Marion and Pearl River counties; and

29 WHEREAS, he also previously served as Pearl River County
30 prosecuting attorney, city attorney and later municipal judge in
31 Picayune, and municipal prosecutor for the city of Poplarville,
32 and he engaged in the private practice of law in Pearl River
33 County from 1973 through 1984 and 2006 through 2016; and

34 WHEREAS, Judge McDonald was recognized at The Mississippi Bar
35 Convention in July for 50 years as a member of The Mississippi
36 Bar, and his colleagues and friends remembered him as a brilliant
37 and well-respected jurist and public servant whose death is a
38 devastating loss to the community, as numerous lawyers across
39 south Mississippi recalled him as a mentor whose counsel and
40 advice shaped their lives and legal careers; and

41 WHEREAS, Buddy, as his friends called him, spoke with a soft
42 voice, but his dry sense of humor and gift for storytelling could



43 captivate an audience, and he loved history and read widely about
44 a variety of subjects; and

45 WHEREAS, Judge McDonald was admired by all of his colleagues
46 and others who had the opportunity to work with him and experience
47 his greatness, and they all would agree that he was "a man of
48 solid integrity, a dedicated servant of the law, and a reliable
49 servant of the public; as a prosecuting attorney, he was fair and
50 he was formidable; and as a trial judge, he took his oath of
51 office seriously and served with impartiality, patience, and
52 devotion to the rule of law"; and

53 WHEREAS, several attorneys and judges throughout the State of
54 Mississippi considered Judge McDonald to be a great mentor who
55 always had time to teach and impart his wisdom to the younger
56 attorneys; and

57 WHEREAS, during his time as district attorney, Judge McDonald
58 was a leader among state prosecutors, serving as president of the
59 Mississippi Prosecutors Association and as a member of the Board
60 of Directors of the National District Attorneys Association; and

61 WHEREAS, additionally, during that time, he served as an
62 instructor in the National College of District Attorneys career
63 prosecutors course, served by appointment of the Supreme Court on
64 the Bar Complaint Tribunal and on the Supreme Court Advisory
65 Committee on Criminal Rules of Practice and Procedure, served on
66 the Mississippi State Board of Law Enforcement Standards and
67 Training, the Legislative Advisory Committee on Redrafting the



68 Mississippi Criminal Code and the Mississippi Legislative Advisory
69 Committee on Juvenile Justice; and

70 WHEREAS, Judge McDonald was president of the Pearl River
71 County Bar Association, a Commissioner of The Mississippi Bar, a
72 Fellow of the Mississippi Bar Foundation and a member of the
73 National Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys, and he was
74 admitted to practice before all state courts in Mississippi, the
75 United States District Court for the Southern District of
76 Mississippi, the Fifth United States Circuit Court of Appeals and
77 the United States Supreme Court; and

78 WHEREAS, as one of the best trial attorneys and litigators in
79 the state, the practice of law just came naturally to Judge
80 McDonald, but he was also an extremely hard worker and dedicated
81 to the profession as well as the oath he took at each step in his
82 career; and

83 WHEREAS, Judge McDonald truly believed in public service in
84 and outside the legal profession, and after Hurricane Katrina
85 ravaged Pearl River County, he provided great emergency assistance
86 to his community during the disaster and the recovery efforts as
87 his logistics experience from his military service were vital as
88 he worked in the Emergency Operations Center in Pearl River
89 County; and

90 WHEREAS, additionally, Judge McDonald quietly contributed his
91 time and efforts through civic, church and charitable activities,
92 particularly to provide assistance for underprivileged children,



93 and he was a mentor at the Boys and Girls Club of Picayune; a
94 board member of "Puttin' on the Pink" Breast Cancer Foundation; a
95 fellow of Picayune Rotary Club; director of Picayune Main Street;
96 and Post Judge Advocate of the Picayune American Legion, and he
97 was a member of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Picayune,
98 where he served on the church Finance Council; and

99 WHEREAS, few individuals have lived to match Judge McDonald's
100 long and remarkable career, which was spent honoring and upholding
101 the law and his responsibilities, and he often shared with
102 colleagues and staff that he was proud that the cornerstone of his
103 career was his service to his city, county and state, but his
104 proudest accomplishment was his family; and

105 WHEREAS, Judge McDonald's legacy will survive not only in the
106 cases, courtrooms, and with fellow jurists, but it also will
107 continue to refresh the hearts and fond memories of his beloved
108 survivors: his wife, Suzy Stockstill McDonald; children, Hugh C.
109 McDonald, Neil Sullivan Angus McDonald, Emily Nowell and Erin
110 Smith; 13 grandchildren; and a host of other relatives and
111 friends; and

112 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to acknowledge
113 the selflessness and benevolence of such a humanitarian and
114 affectionate individual of esteemed caliber as Circuit Judge
115 Claiborne "Buddy" McDonald IV:

116 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
117 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING



118 THEREIN, That we do hereby mourn the loss and commemorate the life
119 and extraordinary legacy of Circuit Judge Claiborne "Buddy"
120 McDonald IV, and extend sincere and deepest sympathy to his family
121 and friends upon his passing.

122 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
123 furnished to the family of Circuit Judge Claiborne "Buddy"
124 McDonald IV and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

