

By: Senator(s) Butler, Barnett, Branning,
Brumfield, Frazier, Horhn, Johnson, McCaughn,
Michel, Thomas, McLendon

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 504

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE PASSING OF FORMER
2 NATCHEZ MAYOR AND MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LARRY LYNN "BUTCH" BROWN, SR., AND RECOGNIZING
4 HIS EFFECTIVE TENURE OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF SOUTH
5 MISSISSIPPI.

6 WHEREAS, we join the citizens of Natchez, Mississippi, and
7 South Mississippi in mourning the passing of longtime
8 transportation leader Larry Lynn "Butch" Brown, Sr., 79, who
9 passed away on April 25, 2023; and

10 WHEREAS, Butch, as he was known, was born on June 10, 1943,
11 in Natchez, Mississippi, the son of Coyle Hansel Brown and Deloris
12 Givens. He graduated from Natchez High School and from The
13 University of Southern Mississippi with a degree in Business
14 Management. He became an ad hoc instructor at the Resident Center
15 of The University of Southern Mississippi; and

16 WHEREAS, he married Shields Godfrey in Natchez on March 25,
17 1972, and was the father of three children, Larry Lynn Brown, Jr.,
18 Coyle Sessions Brown and Caroline Shields Brown; and



19 WHEREAS, his business education and entrepreneurial spirit
20 served him well and he founded The Brown Lumber Company, a highly
21 respected venture and later Riverside Central Services, a
22 full-service warehouse operation in the Natchez Port. In the
23 1970s his interests turned to public service, and he was
24 instrumental in the establishment of a Natchez Campus of Copiah
25 Lincoln Community College and served for many years on its Board
26 of Trustees; and

27 WHEREAS, during this time, he helped establish the
28 Mississippi - Louisiana Interstate Bridge Compact on which he
29 served as a Commission Member, serving as a catalyst for the
30 eventual funding and construction of a new four-lane bridge
31 between the two states; and

32 WHEREAS, in 1992, he was elected Mayor of the City of Natchez
33 and re-elected in 1996. His tenure as Mayor was marked by
34 progressive ordinances and policies addressing new programs. Of
35 special note was his lead in securing federal funding for the
36 Natchez Bluff, which was recognized nationally as a significant
37 engineering project and which has been enjoyed for many years by
38 the citizens of Natchez and by visitors for its scenic beauty.
39 This accomplishment coupled with the acquisition of the Natchez
40 Pecan Factory Site and its use as a green space and an event venue
41 has greatly enhanced Natchez as a Tourism Destination nationwide.
42 Also, during this time, he helped secure funding for a new Visitor



Center and convinced the U.S. Congress to help fund and locate the Federal Courthouse in Natchez; and

WHEREAS, he boldly took on the task of building a state-of-the-art Convention Center, bringing thousands of new visitors to Natchez. Through his efforts, the city acquired the Old Post Office on Main Street and repurposed it into a historic museum known as the Natchez Association for the Preservation of African American Culture. Butch was also a major player in the construction of the terminus of the Natchez Trace Parkway on Liberty Road. A new Council Chamber was acquired, and the city updated water and sewer services, and moved the Police Department into a new facility; and

WHEREAS, Butch was always careful to give the city employees credit for these many successes and emphasized the achievements came about because he saw to the employment of good managers, department heads and staff and solicited and listened to their suggestions and ideas. He loved the City of Natchez and its people, and that was his lodestar in everything he did as a public servant; and

WHEREAS, in 2001 he was appointed by the Mississippi Transportation Commission as Executive Director of the Mississippi Transportation Department where he served until 2011. In this capacity the state was able to four lane and improve thousands of miles of roads and bridges across the state. He took special pride in the role he and former Governor Haley Barbour took in



68 rebuilding of the roads and bridges on the Gulf Coast after the
69 devastation of Hurricane Katrina; and

70 WHEREAS, after leaving the Department of Transportation, he
71 returned home to Natchez and was elected to a third term as Mayor
72 in 2012 where he continued to oversee more improvements to the
73 city's infrastructure and services. During this time he presided
74 over the 300 Year Anniversary of the city's founding in 1716, a
75 yearlong series of events depicting and telling the stories of the
76 history and people who made Natchez such a wonderful and historic
77 city; and

78 WHEREAS, Butch was a man of vision and that and his undaunted
79 energy brought about many great changes to Natchez. One only
80 needs to ride around the city and see the many landmarks noting
81 these successes. To fully understand this complex man of many
82 talents, in his reelection campaign in 1996, he noted his many
83 successes as Mayor and his slogan was "I may not be perfect, but I
84 get things done." And so he did; and

85 WHEREAS, Butch was preceded in death by his parents; son,
86 Coyle Sessions Brown; daughter, Caroline Shields Brown; sister,
87 Billie Brown Smith; and brother, Dwyane Brown. Left to cherish
88 his memory are his wife, Shields Godfrey Brown; son, Larry Lynn
89 Brown Jr. (Mattie); grandchildren: Ansley Elizabeth Brown, Larry
90 Lynn Brown III, William Barrett Brown, Caston Coyle Brown,
91 Sessions Hite Brown and Shields Hutchinson Brown; niece, Kim Smith
92 Clement (Michael); and nephew, William Edward Godfrey IV; and



93 WHEREAS, we recognize and give thanks for the legacy and
94 devoted public service of an effective leader, and express to his
95 surviving family our admiration, respect and deepest gratitude for
96 his service to his community and the State of Mississippi:

97 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
98 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
99 we do hereby mourn the passing of former Natchez Mayor and
100 Mississippi Department of Transportation Executive Director Larry
101 Lynn "Butch" Brown, Sr., and recognize his effective tenure of
102 public service to the citizens of South Mississippi.

103 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
104 the surviving family of Butch Brown, forwarded to the Mayor and
105 City Council of Natchez, the Mississippi Transportation
106 Commission, the Executive Director of MDOT and be made available
107 to the Capitol Press Corps.

