

By: Senator(s) Wiggins, Hopson, England

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 545

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING
2 JESSICA BANAHAN MCNEEL, REPRESENTING THE PASCAGOULA-GAUTIER SCHOOL
3 DISTRICT, AS THE "2024 MISSISSIPPI PARENT OF THE YEAR."

4 WHEREAS, we join the Mississippi Department of Education in
5 announcing that the "2024 Mississippi Parent of the Year" is
6 Jessica Banahan McNeel, a mother of three with two students in the
7 Pascagoula-Gautier School District; and

8 WHEREAS, Mrs. McNeel was nominated by the school district and
9 is described as a humble, dedicated advocate of public education
10 in the district and community. She consistently demonstrates a
11 passion for fostering a positive and enriching environment for
12 students and families. Because of McNeel's collaborative spirit,
13 she has impacted each school her children have attended and even
14 invests in schools they are not currently attending; and

15 WHEREAS, as a partner in the law firm Byran, Nelson,
16 Schroeder, Castigiola, & Banahan, PLLC, she allocates time to
17 invest in schools, community and children to make an attractive
18 area for the next generation. McNeel believes one of the most



19 impactful ways to benefit her children, as well as other children
20 in the community, is to be present, involved and continue to give
21 back to the district. She wants her children to always understand
22 that their parents support them and value community and the
23 diverse people and opportunities within it; and

24 WHEREAS, McNeel's goal is to raise children who are kind,
25 open-minded, intelligent and have a desire to work hard in
26 accomplishing their endeavors. She has witnessed countless
27 individuals who have made significant contributions to the
28 schools. Appreciating these contributions helped foster her
29 unwavering belief in the Pascagoula-Gautier School District, the
30 community and Mississippi; and

31 WHEREAS, drawing inspiration from her parents, who advocate
32 for public education and volunteerism, McNeel mirrored what she
33 learned as a child. She has invested countless hours in various
34 service-oriented activities and organizations serving as Parent
35 Teacher Student Organization President for three years and
36 representative for the Parent Advisory Board. McNeel chaired
37 fundraisers, organized annual campus cleanups, chaperoned field
38 trips and actively engaged in various school events such as
39 Teacher Appreciation Week and Accelerated Reading parties; and

40 WHEREAS, additionally, McNeel has annually served as a
41 community interviewer in the legal sector for the "You're Hired!"
42 mock interview program sponsored by the Jackson County Chamber and
43 served as a member of the PGSD's most recent Strategic Planning



44 Committee. She is a founding member of Pascagoula Gautier
45 Foundation for Educational Excellence (PGFEE), a nonprofit
46 dedicated to fostering connections between individuals, businesses
47 and industries to the PGSD with the goal of supporting and
48 promoting education within the community. For the past 12 years,
49 she has chaired the Rotary Club of Pascagoula's annual scholarship
50 program, which awards approximately \$40,000 to seniors from local
51 high schools; and

52 WHEREAS, research has repeatedly shown that parental
53 involvement is a critical factor in determining the academic
54 success of students. As part of the annual "Parent of the Year"
55 program, MDE asks each district to select an outstanding parent
56 who has made a significant impact on school improvement efforts in
57 the school district. The committee reviewed numerous applications
58 submitted by school districts and selected a "Parent of the Year"
59 finalist from each of the four congressional districts; and

60 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we commend a parent
61 whose dedication and civic involvement in the public school system
62 has brought honor to her family, her community and to the State of
63 Mississippi:

64 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
65 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
66 we do hereby recognize and congratulate Jessica Banahan McNeel,
67 representing the Pascagoula-Gautier School District, as the "2024
68 Mississippi Parent of the Year," and extend the best wishes of the



69 Mississippi Senate to Mrs. McNeel and all parents of the
70 Pascagoula-Gautier School District.

71 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
72 Mrs. Jessica Banahan McNeel and the Superintendent of the
73 Pascagoula-Gautier School District, forwarded to the
74 Pascagoula-Gautier School District Board of Trustees and made
75 available to the Capitol Press Corps.

