

By: Senator(s) Boyd, Suber, Whaley, Sparks,
Branning, Hopson, McCaughn, Michel

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 104

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE SINCEREST SYMPATHY OF THE
2 MISSISSIPPI SENATE TO THE SURVIVING FAMILY OF OXFORD MUNICIPAL
3 JUDGE AND FORMER PROSECUTING ATTORNEY PHILIP HALBERT "HAL" NEILSON
4 AND COMMENDING HIS SERVICE TO HIS COMMUNITY AND HIS STATE.

5 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of
6 Oxford Municipal Judge Philip Halbert "Hal" Neilson, 63, on
7 January 7, 2024, in Alligator, Mississippi, at his hunting camp;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Hal was born on December 27, 1960, in Lexington,
10 Mississippi, to the late Rosemary Icke and Edwin Tye Neilson, Jr.
11 Hal was an avid athlete who played numerous sports at Central
12 Holmes Academy and later played football at Delta State. He
13 continued his education at the University of Mississippi where he
14 was President of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, and later earned his Juris
15 Doctor from the University of Mississippi Law School; and

16 WHEREAS, Hal then moved to Washington, D.C., where he
17 launched his career with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He
18 represented the FBI for over 20 years as a legal advisor and civil
19 litigation attorney. Hal proudly started the Violent Crimes Task



20 Force. He later moved to Jackson, Mississippi, then to Oxford,
21 Mississippi, where he served as the Special Agent In Charge for
22 North Mississippi. Hal retired from the FBI in 2012; and

23 WHEREAS, Hal started his own law practice, Neilson Law
24 Office. He covered criminal defense, insurance fraud, civil
25 rights violations, and torts in federal, state and local courts.
26 He also served as prosecutor for the City of Coffeeville,
27 Mississippi. Hal thoroughly enjoyed helping others; and

28 WHEREAS, on March 29, 2018, Hal was sworn in as the Municipal
29 Judge for the City of Oxford. In June 2023, he was elected by his
30 peers as President of the Mississippi Municipal Judges
31 Association. He loved being the judge. Hal loved the people he
32 worked with and the community he served; and

33 WHEREAS, Hal was an avid outdoorsman and thoroughly enjoyed
34 deer hunting with his son and son-in-law. Hal loved cheering on
35 the Ole Miss Rebels in both football and baseball. He also
36 enjoyed spending time with his family at Rosemary Beach. He was
37 always looking forward to the annual family beach trip that he
38 took each year on July 4th; and

39 WHEREAS, Hal was an exceptional husband, father and
40 grandfather, who loved his family. Hal is survived by his wife,
41 Michelle Gebhart Neilson; daughters: Heather Neilson Nutt
42 (Grady), Rosemary Elizabeth Neilson and Marjorie Ann Neilson; son,
43 Philip Halbert Neilson, Jr.; grandson, Grady Lee Nutt, III;
44 brothers, Tye Neilson (Kimberly) and Rob Neilson (Rhonda); his



45 sisters, Melany Neilson (Fred Slabach) and Mary Beth Ahern (Tom);
46 and his mother-in-law and father-in-law, Dean and Margie Gebhart;
47 and

48 WHEREAS, Judge Neilson lectured on ethics, integrity,
49 civility, courtesy and adherence to the Golden Rule. Hal's life
50 honored both The Mississippi Bar, Lafayette County, Oxford and
51 this great state that he loved and served:

52 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
53 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the sincerest sympathy of
54 the Mississippi Senate to the surviving family of Oxford Municipal
55 Judge and former Prosecuting Attorney Philip Halbert "Hal" Neilson
56 and commend his service to his community and his state.

57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
58 the surviving family of Judge Philip Halbert "Hal" Neilson,
59 forwarded to the Mississippi Municipal Judges Association and the
60 Oxford Board of Aldermen, and made available to the Capitol Press
61 Corps.

