

By: Representative Paden

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 38

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE HIGHLY RESPECTED LIFE
2 AND LEGACY OF FORMER STATE AUDITOR MR. PATRICK "PETE" JOHNSON AND
3 EXPRESSING DEEP SYMPATHY UPON HIS PASSING.

4 WHEREAS, on January 20, 2025, Mississippi lost a political
5 trailblazer, former Mississippi State Auditor and the first
6 Republican to hold statewide office in Mississippi since
7 Reconstruction, when Patrick "Pete" Johnson transitioned from
8 earthly travails to life eternal much to the sadness of his family
9 and friends; and

10 WHEREAS, born in Alexandria, Louisiana, on May 12, 1948, to
11 the joy and excitement of his parents, Mr. Patrick Hayes Johnson
12 and Wilma Pearce Johnson, Pete was raised in Jackson and graduated
13 from Murrah High School in 1966; and

14 WHEREAS, after high school, he attended the University of
15 Mississippi, where he earned a bachelors degree in business
16 administration in 1971, went on to graduate from the Louisiana
17 State University School of Banking of the South, and then earned

18 his Juris Doctor degree from the Jackson School of Law in 1974;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, after graduating from law school, he joined the Bank
21 of Clarksdale as a Senior Vice President and Trust Officer, where
22 he worked his way up the corporate and social ladder by serving as
23 President of the Young Bankers Section of the Mississippi Bankers
24 Association, and forming a successful financial planning firm; and

25 WHEREAS, his impressive business savvy garnered the attention
26 of Governor William Allain in 1984, and resulted in his
27 appointment as Chairman of the Mississippi Marketing Council, a
28 major economic development agency for the state; and

29 WHEREAS, a mere three years after leading the Mississippi
30 Marketing Council, Mr. Johnson declared his candidacy for the
31 Office of State Auditor, secured the Democratic nomination and won
32 the seat by defeating his Republican opponent; and

33 WHEREAS, during his tenure from 1988 to 1992, Pete was
34 committed to removing corruption and he was so dedicated that he
35 appointed a Committee on Reform of County Government before he
36 officially assumed his duties; and

37 WHEREAS, his strategic efforts to consolidate county
38 services, enforce uniform accounting practices and implement a
39 simple and uniform bid process that is still used today resulted
40 in millions of taxpayer dollars saved; and

41 WHEREAS, his astute financial leadership did not go
42 unnoticed, in 1992, he was appointed by President George H.W. Bush



43 as Mississippi's State Director of the Farmers Home Administration
44 where he coordinated one of the largest Farm and Rural Development
45 programs in the United States at the time; and

46 WHEREAS, a favorite of President Bush, Mr. Johnson was named
47 Federal Co-Chair of the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) by
48 President George H.W. Bush, and served from 2002 through 2011,
49 under both the Bush and Obama administrations, and has long been
50 admired for his ability to work in a bipartisan fashion to bring
51 about economic growth and opportunity to the eight states in the
52 region; and

53 WHEREAS, a dedicated community leader, he was involved in
54 many civic and economic organizations, including President of the
55 Clarksdale-Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce, Chairman of the
56 Industrial Foundation, Director of the Delta Council's Community
57 and Industrial Development Board, Trustee of the Northwest
58 Mississippi Regional Medical Center, Board member of Clarksdale
59 Presbyterian Day School, an Elder in the First Presbyterian
60 Church, where he was active in numerous other boards and
61 organizations; and

62 WHEREAS, because Pete worked hard to be fair and earnest with
63 every citizen he encountered, he was admired by many which
64 resulted in frequent awards and accolades; and

65 WHEREAS, the two awards he was most proud of were bestowed
66 upon him by the Mississippi Chapter of the NAACP in 1987, when the
67 organization awarded him the Goodman, Chaney, Schwerner Award for



68 his contributions to the improvement of political power for all
69 people, and the Dr. Aaron Henry Lifetime Service Award for
70 outstanding statewide leadership; and

71 WHEREAS, in spite of all his many professional and social
72 accolades, Pete derived the most joy from spending time with his
73 family and friends, as he was an avid outdoorsman, he enjoyed
74 hunting, fishing, flying airplanes and playing golf, countless
75 hours in his workshop and loved projects with his grandchildren,
76 nephews and friends which are conversations and lessons learned in
77 those special moments will be treasured forever; and

78 WHEREAS, to cherish his legacy, he leaves his loving wife of
79 54 years, Margaret Birdsong Johnson; daughters, Mary Margaret and
80 Anne Clark; sisters, Corinne, Marjorie and Nancy Johnson; and
81 grandchildren, Pete, Matthew, Sam, Margaret and Ellen:

82 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
83 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
84 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the life and legacy of highly
85 respected public servant, former Mississippi State Auditor, Mr.
86 Patrick "Pete" Johnson, and express deepest sympathy to his family
87 for their loss.

88 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
89 furnished to the family of Patrick "Pete" Johnson and to the
90 members of the Capitol Press Corp.

