

By: Senator(s) Carmichael, Burton, Horhn,  
Williamson, Chaney, Hyde-Smith, Johnson  
(19th), Little

To: Rules

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 554

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING MERIDIAN,  
2 MISSISSIPPI'S SELA WARD FOR HER NUMEROUS ACTING AWARDS AND CREDITS  
3 AND COMMENDING HER FOR SUPPORTING THE HOPE FOR CHILDREN FACILITY  
4 FOR CHILDREN AND OTHER CIVIC PROJECTS.

5 WHEREAS, Meridian, Mississippi's Sela Ward received her  
6 second Emmy Award for Best Actress in Drama for her portrayal of  
7 Lily Manning on ABC's critically acclaimed dramatic series "Once  
8 And Again," which has also garnered her two Golden Globe  
9 nominations; and

10 WHEREAS, Ward, married to a Los Angeles businessman (Howard  
11 Sherman) and a mother of two, savors her singular role  
12 representing "fortysomething" women in America, and on vacations,  
13 the whole family goes off to their 280-acre ranch near Meridian,  
14 Mississippi, where the rustic lifestyle is a perfect contrast to  
15 the family's life in California; and

16 WHEREAS, growing up in Meridian, the former cheerleader moved  
17 to Memphis to do public relations work for Pepsi, began a highly  
18 successful career as a model, and turned to acting at age 27; she  
19 moved to Los Angeles in 1983 and got her big break in the Burt  
20 Reynolds' film "The Man Who Loved Women"; and

21 WHEREAS, Ward was last seen on the big screen in Mark  
22 Christopher's "54" for Miramax; on television, Ward most recently  
23 starred in Showtime's "Rescuers Stories of Courage - Two Women";  
24 Ward won an Emmy Award for Best Actress in a Drama in 1994 for her  
25 role as Teddy, the struggling artist and recovering alcoholic, on  
26 NBC's award-winning series, "Sisters," and was nominated as  
27 "Outstanding Female Actor in a Drama Series" by the Screen Actors  
28 Guild in 1996. Ward also received unanimous acclaim for her  
29 performance in the Lifetime original film "Almost Golden: The  
30 Jessica Savitch Story," portraying the late NBC News anchorwoman;  
31 the film ranks as Lifetime's highest rated movie, and the second  
32 highest rated movie in cable history. Ward's performance earned  
33 her a Cable Ace Award for "Outstanding Actress in a Television  
34 Movie, Mini-Series or Special" in 1996. She also received a

35 Screen Actors Guild nomination for "Best Actress in a Television  
36 Movie or Mini-Series," as well as an Emmy nomination for "Best  
37 Actress Lead in a Television Movie, Mini-Series or Special"; and

38 WHEREAS, on the big screen, Ward has appeared in the Warner  
39 Brothers' blockbuster "The Fugitive" opposite Harrison Ford and  
40 Tommy Lee Jones. Other films include "My Fellow Americans" with  
41 Jack Lemmon, James Garner, Dan Ackroyd and Lauren Bacall; "Hello  
42 Again" with Shelley Long and Gabriel Byrne; Garry Marshall's  
43 "Nothing in Common" opposite Tom Hanks and Jackie Gleason;  
44 "Rustler's Rhapsody" with Tom Berenger; Ward's additional  
45 television credits include the telefilms "The Reef," "Double  
46 Jeopardy," "Killer Rules," "The Haunting of Sarah Hardy" and  
47 "Bridesmaids," the ABC mini-series "King of Love," a regular role  
48 on the CBS series "Emerald Point, N.A.S.," and appearances on  
49 "L.A. Law," "Night Court" and "Saturday Night Live," as well as a  
50 recent guest spot on the critically acclaimed situation comedy  
51 "Frasier"; and

52 WHEREAS, Sela's generosity and support for her Mississippi  
53 community is a matter of record: HOPE FOR CHILDREN: Sela has  
54 provided funding and management effort to this project, a  
55 residential facility for children with special needs; Hope for  
56 Children was able to purchase the Masonic Home due to Sela's  
57 relationship with the Entertainment Industry Foundation; this  
58 grant from the Entertainment Industry Foundation will not only  
59 purchase the property, but will pay for the renovations; Sela's  
60 guidance in this project has encouraged individuals that would not  
61 have participated without her; Sela's vision for this organization  
62 goes well beyond opening a shelter for children in Meridian, but  
63 to developing a blueprint that can be used by communities  
64 throughout the United States "Rethinking the Orphanage"; OPERA  
65 HOUSE: Sela became interested in this project years ago; she has  
66 been obsessed with this "entombed jewel box" since she first saw  
67 photos when she was doing a school project at eight years old; it  
68 has been her dream to see such an important part of Mississippi's  
69 history restored; she engaged and challenged the community to save  
70 this treasure and became the energy in this project enlisting many  
71 others including Trent Lott, Mack Portera and Chip Pickering; she  
72 has been the catalyst in this project from the very beginning;  
73 Sela has worked tirelessly on local, state and national funding,  
74 and in a few short years, Meridian will have a renovated Grand  
75 Opera House, Riley Educational Center and a 500-car downtown  
76 parking garage; DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION: Sela has participated in  
77 recapturing downtown Meridian's revitalization, not only with the  
78 Opera House, but also with private ventures that will bring an  
79 excitement to the area; she has worked tirelessly not only  
80 creating public investment but to create private investment that  
81 will bring new jobs to the downtown area; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:  
82 Sela has worked with many different projects in this area to  
83 create an energy and culture that would encourage investment in  
84 our state as well as this community; she gave instant credibility  
85 to Meridian's presentation for the Southern Arts and Entertainment  
86 Project; this effort is helping to change the image of both the  
87 state and the community; she has offered her help and assistance  
88 in attracting new economic opportunities for the future  
89 generations; and

90 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the  
91 professional achievements and civic dedication of this famous  
92 Mississippi actress, who has brought honor to her home community  
93 and to the State of Mississippi:

94           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
95   MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
96   we do hereby congratulate Meridian, Mississippi's Sela Ward for  
97   her numerous acting awards and credits, commend her for supporting  
98   the Hope for Children facility for children and other civic  
99   projects in Meridian, and wish her continued success in her  
100   professional career and in her charitable projects.

101           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be  
102   presented to Sela Ward and her family and be made available to the  
103   Capitol Press Corps.