

By: Senator(s) Harden, White (29th), Little, King, Burton, Cuevas, Posey, Johnson (19th), Gollott, Hewes, Dearing, Hyde-Smith, Carmichael, Dawkins, Harvey, Frazier, Mettetal, Farris, Kirby, Williamson, Nunnelee, Smith To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 587

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND CAREER OF  
2 MARK F. SMITH, LONGTIME EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE COALITION FOR  
3 CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES, AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE  
4 LEGISLATURE.

5 WHEREAS, longtime Executive Director of the Mississippi  
6 Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities Mark F. Smith passed away  
7 on Monday, February 25, 2002; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith was the Executive Director of the  
9 Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities since 1992. Under his  
10 leadership, disability groups throughout Mississippi were  
11 organized to push for improvements to service systems and to  
12 provide additional opportunities in health care, home- and  
13 community-based services, housing, education, transportation and  
14 employment; and

15 WHEREAS, prior to his work with the Coalition, Mr. Smith was  
16 employed by the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services  
17 as Director of the Office of Special Services for Individuals with  
18 Disabilities, Program Director of Special Projects, Program  
19 Coordinator of Grants and Program Development, Facility Manager of  
20 Allied Enterprises of Rankin County, and Vocational Evaluator for  
21 the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. He was a graduate of the  
22 University of Southern Mississippi and received a Master's Degree  
23 from Mississippi State University; and

24 WHEREAS, Mark Smith was a gifted grants writer and was  
25 responsible for bringing millions of dollars into Mississippi for  
26 the establishment and expansion of programs of service for people  
27 with disabilities. He was instrumental in establishing a system  
28 of independent living centers, Living Independence For Everyone



29 (LIFE) of Mississippi, and served as the Project Director of this  
30 program for many years; and

31 WHEREAS, he developed and administered many innovative  
32 programs employing and assisting people with disabilities  
33 including AmeriCorps MPOWERS (Mississippians Promoting  
34 Opportunities for Work, Equality, and Renewal) with the  
35 Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Services; Healthy Futures;  
36 Adolescent Transition in Mississippi; and Mississippi ADA  
37 (Americans with Disabilities Act) Network affiliated with the  
38 Southeast Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center; and

39 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith was particularly proud of his work with  
40 youth with disabilities as a sponsor and coach for the Challenger  
41 League. In recent years, under his leadership, the Coalition  
42 hosted the Spirit of the ADA Torch Relay providing over 140  
43 individuals with disabilities the opportunity to "carry the torch"  
44 for employment; conducted a series of Job Fairs for people with  
45 disabilities; and hosted two highly successful Youth Leadership  
46 Conferences for adolescents with disabilities and their families;  
47 and

48 WHEREAS, he was the National Truth Team Coordinator for  
49 Justice For All, a national advocacy organization. During the  
50 11th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act on July  
51 26, 2001, Mr. Smith was awarded the national "Justice For All  
52 Disability Rights Award." He was one of the only grassroots  
53 leaders being recognized along with other honorees, former Senator  
54 Bob Dole, Senator Tom Harkin, Senator Orrin Hatch and Senator Ted  
55 Kennedy; and

56 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith served on a number of national and state  
57 boards for disability organizations. He was a tireless worker and  
58 received many other honors and awards; and

59 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith's legacy will be the thousands of people  
60 whose lives he touched. He worked unceasingly to help others. He  
61 saw the best in everyone. His diligence and devotion were



62 unparalleled. Because of his vision and his efforts, he left the  
63 world a better place; and

64 WHEREAS, Mr. Smith is survived by his wife, Denise Bowman  
65 Smith of Jackson; daughter, Erin McPeak of Laurel; grand-daughter,  
66 Lydia McPeak; two brothers, Mathew Smith of Walnut Creek,  
67 California, and Rev. Jerry Smith of New Orleans, Louisiana; and  
68 nephews and nieces; and

69 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of this  
70 dedicated public servant and advocate, whose contributions to his  
71 community and state will serve as a model for us all:

72 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
73 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That  
74 we do hereby commend the life and career of Mark F. Smith,  
75 longtime Executive Director of the Mississippi Coalition for  
76 Citizens with Disabilities, and do hereby express the sympathy of  
77 the Legislature on his passing.

78 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
79 the surviving family of Mark Smith, be forwarded to the Coalition  
80 for Citizens with Disabilities and be made available to the  
81 Capitol Press Corps.

