

By: Representatives Clark, West, Bailey,
Banks, Broomfield, Clarke, Fleming, Harrison,
Hines, Myers, Peranich, Thomas, Young,
Perkins, Flaggs, Brown, Blackmon, Coleman
(29th), Coleman (65th), Dickson, Ellis, Espy,
Evans, Fredericks, Gibbs, Green, Henderson, Holloway, Huddleston,
Middleton, Morris, Robinson (63rd), Scott (80th), Smith (27th),
Straughter, Wallace, Watson

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 94

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE OF MEDGAR WILEY
2 EVERS AND HIS SURVIVING WIDOW, MYRLIE EVERS-WILLIAMS.

3 WHEREAS, a pioneer in the fight for racial justice, Medgar
4 Wiley Evers was born July 2, 1925, in Decatur, Mississippi, to
5 James and Jessie Evers; and

6 WHEREAS, to faithfully serve his country, Medgar left high
7 school to join the United States Army when World War II began and
8 after coming home to Mississippi, he completed high school and
9 enrolled in Alcorn College, presently known as Alcorn State
10 University, and majored in business administration; and

11 WHEREAS, as a student at Alcorn, Medgar was a member of the
12 debate team, the college choir, the football and track teams, the
13 editor of the campus newspaper and the yearbook, and held several
14 student offices which gained him recognition in *Who's Who in*
15 *American Colleges*; and

16 WHEREAS, while a junior at Alcorn, Medgar met a freshman
17 named Myrlie Beasley, whom he married on December 24, 1951, and
18 with whom he spent the remainder of his life; and

19 WHEREAS, after receiving his bachelor of arts degree, Medgar
20 and Myrlie moved to historic Mound Bayou, Mississippi, where
21 Medgar became employed by Magnolia Mutual Life Insurance Company
22 and soon began establishing local chapters of the National
23 Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
24 throughout the Delta; and

25 WHEREAS, moved by the plight of Blacks in Mississippi and a
26 desire to change the conditions, in 1954, after the United States
27 Supreme Court ruled school segregation unconstitutional, Medgar



28 became the first known Black person to apply for admission to the
29 University of Mississippi Law School, yet was denied; and

30 WHEREAS, as a result of this denial, Medgar contacted the
31 NAACP to take legal action, but was offered a position as the
32 Mississippi Field Secretary for the NAACP in 1954, which he
33 accepted with Myrlie as his secretary; and

34 WHEREAS, with Myrlie by his side, Medgar began a movement to
35 register people to vote in Mississippi and as a result of his
36 activities, Medgar received numerous threats; and

37 WHEREAS, in spite of threats, Medgar persisted, with
38 dedication and courage, to organize rallies, build NAACP
39 membership and travel around the country with Myrlie to educate
40 the public; and

41 WHEREAS, Medgar's passion for quality education for all
42 children led him to file suit against Jackson Public Schools which
43 gained him national media coverage; and

44 WHEREAS, Medgar organized students from Tougaloo and Campbell
45 Colleges, coordinated and led protest marches, organized boycotts
46 of Jackson businesses and sit-ins, challenged segregated bus
47 seating and for these heroic efforts, he was arrested, beaten and
48 jailed; and

49 WHEREAS, the violence against Medgar came to a climax on June
50 12, 1963, when he was killed in front of his home; and

51 WHEREAS, after the fingerprints of an outspoken
52 segregationist were recovered from the scene of the shooting and
53 two juries deadlocked without a conviction, Myrlie and her three
54 children moved to Claremont, California, where she enrolled at
55 Pomona College and earned her bachelor's degree in sociology in
56 1968; and

57 WHEREAS, after Medgar's death, Myrlie began to create her own
58 legacy and emerged as a national catalyst for justice and equality
59 by becoming active in politics, becoming a founder of the National
60 Women's Political Caucus, running for Congress in California's



61 24th District, serving as Commissioner of Public Works for Los
62 Angeles, using her writing skills as a correspondent for *Ladies*
63 *Home Journal* and the Paris Peace Talks, and rising to prominence
64 as Director of Consumer Affairs for Atlantic Richfield Company;
65 and

66 WHEREAS, Myrlie Evers became Myrlie Evers-Williams when she
67 married Walter Williams in 1976; and

68 WHEREAS, in the 1990s, Myrlie convinced Mississippi
69 prosecutors to reopen Medgar's murder case which led to the
70 conviction and life imprisonment of Medgar's killer, and she
71 became the first female to chair the sixty-four-member Board of
72 Directors of the NAACP to provide guidance to an organization that
73 was dear to Medgar's heart; and

74 WHEREAS, to enlighten the world to the struggles which
75 plagued her life as the wife of an activist and empowered her to
76 become a community leader, Myrlie has published her memoirs, *Watch*
77 *Me Fly: What I Learned on the Way to Becoming the Woman I Was*
78 *Meant to Be*, and is widely known as a motivational lecturer and
79 continues to speak out against discrimination and injustice; and

80 WHEREAS, her latest endeavor has brought her home to
81 Mississippi to make two remarkable contributions, the Evers
82 Collection and the Medgar Evers Institute, which advance the
83 knowledge and cause of social justice and which encompass the many
84 lessons in the life's work of Medgar and Myrlie Evers; and

85 WHEREAS, Myrlie has presented these extraordinary papers to
86 the Mississippi Department of Archives and History where they are
87 being preserved and catalogued; and

88 WHEREAS, it is the policy of the Legislature to recognize and
89 pay tribute to the lives and accomplishments of extraordinary
90 Mississippians such as Medgar Evers and Myrlie Evers-Williams
91 whose life sacrifices have contributed to the betterment of the
92 citizens of Mississippi as well as the United States of America:



93 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
94 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
95 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the life and accomplishments of
96 Medgar Wiley Evers and his widow, Myrlie Evers-Williams, and
97 express our greatest respect and gratitude.

98 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
99 furnished to the family of Medgar Evers and Myrlie Evers-Williams
100 and the Capitol Press Corps.

