

By: Senator(s) Williamson, Dearing, Blackmon, Gordon, Jackson, Browning, Burton, Robertson, Minor, Carmichael, Canon, Chamberlin, Farris, Harden, Harvey, Horhn, Jordan, Little, Michel, Moffatt, Nunnelee, Ross, Scoper, Smith, Stogner, Thames, Walls

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 71

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING CHIEF PHILLIP MARTIN OF THE
2 MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS FOR HIS LEADERSHIP IN CREATING
3 VERY STRONG AND DIVERSIFIED TRIBALLY-OWNED AND OPERATED BUSINESSES
4 AND ENTERPRISES.

5 WHEREAS, Phillip Martin is the democratically elected Tribal
6 Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, a
7 federally-recognized American Indian tribe of 9,100 enrolled
8 members living on or near 30,000 acres of reservation land in East
9 Central Mississippi; and

10 WHEREAS, Martin has a 45-year record of service and
11 leadership in the tribal government, having served with the utmost
12 integrity and dignity as Tribal Chief since 1979. Chief Martin is
13 currently serving his sixth consecutive four-year term. His date
14 of birth is March 13, 1926; and

15 WHEREAS, Chief Martin serves the Mississippi Band of Choctaw
16 Indians on numerous Boards of Directors. During his tenure as
17 Tribal Chief, Mr. Martin has established Tribally-owned and
18 operated businesses and service operations, most of which are
19 located on the Choctaw Indian Reservation, and some of which are
20 located in Mexico and in major cities across North America. The
21 result has been the creation of a very strong and widely
22 diversified local economy, with the Tribe now ranking among
23 Mississippi's five largest employers; and

24 WHEREAS, on July 1, 1994, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw
25 Indians launched its first gaming operation, the Silver Star Hotel
26 and Casino, organized under the authority of the Indian Gaming
27 Regulatory Act. The largest and most profitable Choctaw Tribal
28 enterprise to date, the Las Vegas-style Silver Star Hotel and



29 Casino is located on Tribal land in East Central Mississippi. In
30 August 2002, the ribbon was cut for the Tribe's second casino, the
31 Golden Moon Hotel and Casino, doubling the Tribe's entertainment,
32 gaming, fine dining and hospitality venues. Another part of the
33 rapidly growing Pearl River Resort complex is the Dancing Rabbit
34 Golf Club, a 36-hole, championship golf course designed by
35 Architect Tom Fazio and professional golfer Jerry Pate. The
36 resort and casinos currently employ approximately 4,000 people.
37 The Tribe is bringing Mississippi the state's first Hard Rock
38 Cafe. It will open near Lake Pushmataha at Geysers Falls Water
39 Theme Park in May 2003, along with the Hard Rock Beach Club, and a
40 300-room Hard Rock Hotel is slated to open at the Pearl River
41 Resort within three years; and

42 WHEREAS, during his tenure as Tribal Chief (uninterrupted
43 since 1979), Phillip Martin has helped to create approximately
44 9,000 permanent, full-time jobs on the reservation. Martin has
45 been responsible for establishing an 80-acre industrial park, a
46 Tribally-owned construction company, and several public service
47 enterprises, such as the Choctaw Transit Authority, the Choctaw
48 Utility Commission, the Choctaw Water Treatment facility, and the
49 Choctaw Department of Public Works. Mr. Martin also developed
50 Chahta Enterprises, now located in Mexico, which assembles
51 automotive wiring harnesses for the Ford Motor Company, as well as
52 Delphi Packard and Matrix Systems. Other customers have included
53 United Technologies, Eastman Kodak, Sylvania, General Motors and
54 Daimler-Chrysler. Further, Chief Martin began a joint venture with
55 American Greetings, to hand-finish greeting cards for the
56 corporation; this is the first plant built on Tribal land through
57 use of state industrial revenue bonds. Another Tribal enterprise
58 is the First American Printing and Direct Mail, a commercial
59 printing and mail processing business. First American is the
60 largest commercial printer on the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and



61 WHEREAS, nationally, Mr. Martin has served as President of
62 National Tribal Chairmen's Association, and President of United
63 South and Eastern Tribes, Inc., (USET), an association of 23
64 federally-recognized Tribes in the eastern portion of the United
65 States, Mr. Martin founded the USET organization in 1969. He was
66 the first President of the Board of Regents of Haskell Indian
67 Junior College, between 1970 and 1976 (now Haskell Indian Nations
68 University). In 1992, Mr. Martin founded the United South and
69 Eastern Tribes Gaming Association. He currently presides over the
70 organization; and

71 WHEREAS, a strong and well-known advocate for education,
72 Chief Martin serves on the Advisory Committee for the Division of
73 Technology, Mississippi State University, Meridian Branch. He has
74 also established the Choctaw Tribal Scholarships Program to ensure
75 that all Mississippi Choctaw students can attend the colleges and
76 universities of their choice; and

77 WHEREAS, during recent years, Phillip Martin, as the elected
78 Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, has been the
79 recipient of several awards. In addition to winning the United
80 Indian Development Association's Jay Silverheels Award, Chief
81 Martin received the Minority Supplier/Distributor of the Year
82 Award from the Small Business Administration and the Minority
83 Business Development Administration, the "Soar Like An Eagle"
84 Achievement Award from the United Indian Youth Organization
85 (UNITY), and the Economic Achievement Award from the United States
86 Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Millsaps
87 College in Jackson, Mississippi, awarded Chief Martin an Honorary
88 Doctor of Laws Degree at the school's Spring 2002 commencement
89 ceremonies on May 11, 2002, in his honor and also as a tribute to
90 the Choctaw people of Mississippi and the nearly 9,000 employees
91 who serve the Tribe; and

92 WHEREAS, through the years Chief Martin has dedicated his
93 service to improving the overall livelihood of all Tribal members



94 and has garnered phenomenal achievements in economic, educational
95 and community development. Chief Martin's business savvy and
96 leadership skills have propelled the Tribe to the forefront of
97 economic development in the Southeast; and

98 WHEREAS, the people of Mississippi are extremely proud of
99 Chief Phillip Martin for his 40 years of outstanding public
100 service as an elected official of the Choctaw Tribal government
101 and for his major contribution to the economy of the State of
102 Mississippi:

103 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
104 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend Chief Phillip Martin for
105 his many years of tireless devotion to the Choctaw Indian people
106 and for his leadership in creating very strong and diversified
107 tribally-owned and operated businesses and enterprises which
108 enhance the local economy and benefit the entire State of
109 Mississippi.

110 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
111 Chief Phillip Martin and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
112 and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

