

By: Representatives Peranich, Blackmon,
Broomfield, Burnett, Calhoun, Coleman (29th),
Compretta, Dedeaux, Dickson, Espy, Flaggs,
Fleming, Fredericks, Frierson, Gibbs, Green,
Holloway, Huddleston, Ishee, Janus, McCoy,
Middleton, Myers, Patterson, Read, Robinson (63rd), Shows, Simpson,
Smith (27th), Staples, Straughter, Sullivan, Thomas, Upshaw, Watson,
Bentz, Guice

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 25

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE AND
2 ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF COLONEL LAWRENCE E. ROBERTS AND EXPRESSING
3 DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS UPON HIS PASSING.

4 WHEREAS, Colonel Lawrence E. Roberts, an American hero,
5 loving husband, devoted father, warrior, gentleman, man of God and
6 decorated veteran of both the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force,
7 departed this life on Tuesday, October 12, 2004, at the age of 81
8 to enter into eternal rest, causing great sorrow and loss to his
9 family and friends; and

10 WHEREAS, having served his country in many capacities as a
11 groundbreaking Tuskegee Airman, a decorated fighter pilot and a
12 highly respected officer, Colonel Roberts, in addition to being a
13 model figure for his family, served his chosen Gulf Coast
14 community in the capacities that matter most: improving
15 education, molding young leaders and living his deeply held belief
16 in the strength of God and family; and

17 WHEREAS, there can be no greater measure of success than to
18 say that a person's life made the world a better place, and the
19 measure of Colonel Roberts' success cannot yet be taken, because
20 the profound impact upon his family and friends will continue to
21 be his legacy of strength, responsibility, integrity and faith for
22 generations; and

23 WHEREAS, remaining humble in every aspect of life, making no
24 mention of his own distinguished career, Colonel Roberts shared
25 his family with the community and the nation, and that deep family
26 pride and support provided the foundation upon which the building
27 blocks of confidence and success were solidly grounded; and

28 WHEREAS, one of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, Roberts arrived at
29 Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, as a cadet in 1943
30 and retired there as a colonel in 1975 and he subsequently worked
31 with Global Associates until retiring permanently in 1985; and

32 WHEREAS, having grown up in Vauxhall, New Jersey, Colonel
33 Roberts made his first flight in a J-3 Piper Cub, and as a
34 Tuskegee Airman, flew Piper Cubs, Boeing B-25 bombers, C-54
35 transports and F-86 fighter jets; and

36 WHEREAS, the timeline of Colonel Roberts' military career is
37 complemented by an impressive record of service as he progressed
38 through the ranks, inclusive of Keesler Air Force Base; Tuskegee
39 Institute, first as cadet and later as assistant professor of air
40 science; Lockbourne Air Force Base, Ohio; Japan; Williams Air
41 Force Base, Arizona; Sioux City Air Force Base; Canada; McGuire
42 Air Force Base, New Jersey; Izmir, Turkey, as NATO Commander; and
43 Vietnam, as adviser to the South Vietnamese Air Force; and

44 WHEREAS, as a member of the historic and prestigious
45 all-black U.S. Army Air Corps units that flew 1,578 missions over
46 Europe and the Pacific during World War II and engaged in an
47 additional 200 missions as bomber escorts which never lost a
48 single aircraft; Colonel Roberts never received the opportunity to
49 engage in World War II combat, but served in Vietnam, where he was
50 awarded one of his three Legion of Merit medals; and

51 WHEREAS, while Colonel Roberts carried great responsibility
52 in the Air Force, he also remained active in community groups,
53 including Leadership Gulf Coast, the Boy Scouts of America, the
54 Pass Christian Rotary Club, the Pass Christian School Board and in
55 1996, along with his family, created the Genesis Foundation of
56 Mississippi, Inc., to assist Coast nonprofit agencies and
57 organizations; and

58 WHEREAS, a deeply religious man and member of First
59 Presbyterian Church in Bay St. Louis, Colonel Roberts was never

60 too busy for his family and instilled in them a spirit of giving;
61 and

62 WHEREAS, hailed as a legend of his time, Colonel Roberts will
63 be remembered for his genteel spirit and genuine concern for a
64 better quality of life and education for all, and his legacy and
65 memory will forever thrive in the hearts and memories of his
66 survivors, including: wife of 57 years, Lucimarian; son, Lawrence
67 II; daughters, Sally Ann, Dorothy and Robin; eight grandchildren;
68 and a host of friends and colleagues; and

69 WHEREAS, it is the policy of the Legislature to commend the
70 lives of such notable and humble Mississippians as Colonel
71 Roberts, whose life will forever be remembered in the history of
72 this state and nation, and who inspired countless numbers to
73 strive diligently to achieve their dreams:

74 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
75 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
76 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the life of the legendary
77 Tuskegee Airman, astute soldier and devout Mississippian, Colonel
78 Lawrence E. Roberts, and extend our deepest sympathy to his family
79 and friends upon his passing.

80 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
81 furnished to the family of Colonel Roberts and to the members of
82 the Capitol Press Corps.