

By: Senator(s) Clarke, Butler,
Carmichael, Davis, Dearing,
Frazier, Harvey, Hewes, Jackson
(11th), Jordan, Pickering,
Thames, Thomas, Walls, White,
Williamson

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 514

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LIFE OF RENOWN
2 MISSISSIPPI NOVELIST AND CIVIL WAR HISTORIAN SHELBY FOOTE, A
3 NATIVE OF GREENVILLE, MISSISSIPPI, AND LONGTIME RESIDENT OF
4 MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE
5 ON HIS PASSING.

6 WHEREAS, Novelist and Civil War Historian Shelby Foote, who
7 became a national celebrity explaining the war to America on a
8 1990 PBS documentary, died at 88 years of age on Monday, June 27,
9 2005; and

10 WHEREAS, Shelby Foote was born in Greenville, Mississippi, in
11 1916, where he spent most of his childhood and his early adult
12 life. After attending the University of North Carolina from 1935
13 to 1937, Foote was drafted into the Army in 1940. He rose to the
14 rank of Captain before being dismissed by court martial in Ireland
15 in 1944 after traveling two miles beyond the official limit to see
16 his girlfriend (who later would become his first wife); he joined
17 the Marines the next year; and

18 WHEREAS, born during the Jazz age when money was abundant,
19 and growing up during the Great Depression when money was scarce,
20 Shelby Foote experienced many changes that greatly influenced his
21 ideas and writings. There was definitely much to write about,
22 having lived in the heart of the South where cotton plantations
23 thrived, where the depression hit hard, and where the prospect and
24 excitement of war was always in the air. Shelby Foote's ancestors
25 also created exciting elements for his fiction and influenced his
26 work. The details of Foote's family background are directly
27 related to Foote's work; and

28 WHEREAS, Foote published his first novel, *Tournament*, in
29 1949. This was followed by three other works -- *Follow Me Down*
30 (1950), *Love in a Dry Season* (1951), and *Shiloh* (1952). Foote's
31 ability to create a realistic portrayal of the Civil War --
32 factually accurate, richly detailed, and entering into the minds
33 of men on both sides -- led by his editors in Random House to
34 invite him to write a short history of the war to appear for the
35 conflict's centennial. Twenty years later, Foote had produced his
36 massive three-volume history of the war -- *Fort Sumter to*
37 *Perryville* (1958), *Fredericksburg to Meridian* (1963), and *Red*
38 *River to Appomattox* (1974). To a generation of Americans who
39 learned most of what they knew of the Civil War from his starring
40 role as the co-narrator of the PBS documentary *The Civil War*, he
41 was an enigma of sad and haunted dark eyes and a lilting Southern
42 drawl; and

43 WHEREAS, Foote has been a Guggenheim Fellow three times, and
44 has served as a lecturer at the University of Virginia and Memphis
45 State; and

46 WHEREAS, in addition to his wife Gwyn, he is survived by his
47 daughter, Margaret Shelby, and a son, Huger Lee; and

48 WHEREAS, like William Faulkner, Walker Percy, Richard Wright,
49 Willie Morris, Eudora Welty and other magnificent Mississippi
50 writers before him, Foote's talents will stand the test of time.
51 It is with sadness that we note the passing of this prolific
52 Mississippi Journalist, whose gift for storytelling brought
53 permanent recognition to the Mississippi Delta and to the State of
54 Mississippi:

55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
56 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
57 we do hereby commend the life of renown Mississippi Novelist and
58 Civil War Historian Shelby Foote, a native of Greenville,
59 Mississippi, and longtime resident of Memphis, Tennessee, and

60 express to his surviving family the sympathy of the Legislature on
61 his passing.

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
63 the surviving family of Shelby Foote and be made available to the
64 Capitol Press Corps.