

By: Representatives Fillingane, Bentz,
Davis, Dedeaux, Holland, Lane, Lott,
Peranich, Read, Scott, Simpson, Smith (59th),
Walley, Weathersby, Patterson

To: Rules

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 117

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE
2 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI GOLDEN EAGLES FOOTBALL TEAM FOR
3 THEIR EXCELLENT 2005 SEASON, AND EXTENDING BEST WISHES FOR SUCCESS
4 IN THEIR FUTURE ATHLETIC AND ACADEMIC ENDEAVORS.

5 WHEREAS, the University of Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles
6 Football Team finished the 2005 season with a 7-5 overall record,
7 giving USM a winning season for 12 straight years, one of only
8 seven schools to accomplish that feat; and

9 WHEREAS, the Golden Eagles are one of only 12 teams in the
10 nation to win seven or more games nine times in the past 10 years,
11 and with their 5-3 record in Conference USA, are the only team in
12 the league to finish with a winning record in the conference every
13 year since its formation in 1996; and

14 WHEREAS, USM defeated Arkansas State 31-19 in the 2005 New
15 Orleans Bowl at Lafayette, Louisiana, making its eighth bowl
16 appearance in the past nine years, one of only 10 schools to have
17 done so; and

18 WHEREAS, during this season, the Golden Eagles tied for the
19 national lead in fumbles recovered, finished high in the national
20 rankings for turnovers gained (6th), turnover margin (tied for
21 7th), passes intercepted (tied for 23rd) and net punting yard
22 average (15th), and led Conference USA in scoring defense and
23 sacks; and

24 WHEREAS, several of the Golden Eagles accomplished feats that
25 put them among the national leaders, with kicker Darren McCaleb
26 ranking 4th in field goals made per game and 17th in scoring,
27 punter Luke Johnson ranking 7th in average punting yards per game,

28 and linebacker Kevis Coley ranking 8th in total tackles, 7th in
29 solo tackles and tied for 69th in tackles for loss; and

30 WHEREAS, within the conference, punter Luke Johnson finished
31 1st in average punting yards per game, kicker Darren McCaleb
32 finished 1st in field goals made per game and kick scoring, 2nd in
33 overall scoring, 4th in field goal percentage and 5th in extra
34 point percentage, and linebacker Kevis Coley finished 1st in total
35 tackles and fumbles recovered, 5th in tackles for loss and tied
36 for 7th in sacks; and

37 WHEREAS, senior quarterback Dustin Almond set single season
38 school records for passes completed, passing attempts, passing
39 yards and yards of total offense and was 2nd in passing
40 touchdowns, and he set the school career record for touchdowns
41 responsible for, finished 2nd in career yards, total offense and
42 interception avoidance, 3rd in passing completions, passing
43 attempts and passing efficiency, and tied for 4th in passing
44 touchdowns; and

45 WHEREAS, kickoff returner John Eubanks ranks 1st in
46 conference history in career yards per return, 2nd in career
47 return yards, and tied for 2nd in career kickoff return
48 touchdowns, and also ranks 1st in school history in career kickoff
49 returns and 3rd in career kickoff return average, 5th in
50 single-season kickoff return average, and 4th in kickoff return
51 average in a game; and

52 WHEREAS, tight end Shawn Nelson finished the season with 35
53 catches for 540 yards, an average of 15.4 yards per catch and five
54 touchdowns, all of which are school records for a tight end; and

55 WHEREAS, three of the Golden Eagles were honored for their
56 outstanding play by being selected for All-American honors this
57 season, with Kevis Coley, Luke Johnson and Darren McCaleb being
58 named as third team All-American by SI.com and as honorable
59 mention All-American by CollegeFootballNews.com; and

60 WHEREAS, several team members received various honors for
61 their superior season performances: linebacker Kevis Coley was
62 named as conference Defensive Player of the Year; defensive back
63 Brandon Sumrall was named a Sophomore All-American by
64 CollegeFootballNews.com; tight end Shawn Nelson was named a third
65 team Freshman All-American by The Sporting News and
66 CollegeFootballNews.com; Kevis Coley, Trevis Coley, Luke Johnson,
67 George Batiste and John Eubanks were named to the first team
68 All-Conference Team; Travis Cooley, Tom Johnson, Brandon Sumrall
69 and Darren McCaleb were named to the second team All-Conference
70 Team; Shawn Nelson was named to the third team All-Conference Team
71 and to the All-Freshman Team; and kicker Darren McCaleb was named
72 a semifinalist for the Lou Groza Award, which honors the best
73 kicker in the nation; and

74 WHEREAS, punter Luke Johnson was named a finalist for the
75 Danny Wuerffel Trophy and the ARA Sportsmanship Award and was
76 named the Division I male recipient of the Woody Hayes Award, all
77 of which are awarded to the top players in the nation based on
78 academic, athletic and community service; and

79 WHEREAS, the Golden Eagles were honored for the third year in
80 a row by the American Football Coaches Association for producing a
81 graduation rate of 70% or better, one of only 30 teams with such
82 an accomplishment; and

83 WHEREAS, the Golden Eagles were superbly coached and inspired
84 during the season by Head Coach Jeff Bower, who won his 100th
85 career victory with the win over UAB on October 21, 2005, making
86 him the 20th active coach in the nation to accomplish that feat;
87 and

88 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize the
89 accomplishments of this group of student athletes who have brought
90 honor to their university, their community and to the State of
91 Mississippi:

92 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
93 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING
94 THEREIN, That we commend and congratulate the University of
95 Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles Football Team for their
96 excellent 2005 season, and we extend to them the best wishes of
97 the Legislature for success in their future athletic and academic
98 endeavors.

99 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
100 furnished to the University of Southern Mississippi and to members
101 of the Capitol Press Corps.