

By: Senator(s) Brown, Tollison, Blount, To: Rules
Browning, Bryan, Burton, Butler (36th),
Butler (38th), Carmichael, Chassaniol,
Clarke, Collins, Dawkins, Doty,
Fillingane, Flowers, Frazier, Gandy,
Gollott, Hale, Harden, Harkins, Hill,
Hopson, Horhn, Hudson, Jackson (11th),
Jackson (15th), Jackson (32nd), Jolly,
Jones, Jordan, Kirby, Lee, Longwitz,
Massey, McDaniel, Montgomery, Moran,
Parks, Polk, Simmons (12th), Simmons
(13th), Smith, Sojourner, Stone,
Tindell, Turner, Ward, Watson, Wiggins,
Wilemon

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 503

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND COMMENDING THE
2 HISTORIC PUBLIC SERVICE OF FORMER GOVERNOR WILLIAM LOWE "BILL"
3 WALLER, SR., AND EXPRESSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE LEGISLATURE.

4 WHEREAS, former Mississippi Governor William Lowe "Bill"
5 Waller, Sr., who made history as a prosecutor and as a Governor,
6 passed away on November 30, 2011; and

7 WHEREAS, Governor Waller was born in Oxford, Mississippi, on
8 October 21, 1926, to Percy Andreth Waller and Myrtle Gatewood
9 Waller of the Burgess Community of Lafayette County, Mississippi.
10 He graduated from University High School in Oxford, the University
11 of Memphis, and the University of Mississippi School of Law. Bill
12 Waller was admitted to The Mississippi Bar in 1950. He served in
13 the United States Army Intelligence Corps during the Korean War.
14 Governor Waller entered private law practice in 1950 in Jackson,
15 Mississippi, and became the Senior Partner in Waller, Pritchard
16 and Fox, and later, Waller and Waller Attorneys. He practiced law
17 for 61 years; and

18 WHEREAS, he began his public-service career in 1960 as
19 District Attorney for the Seventh Judicial District, which then
20 included Hinds, Madison and Yazoo Counties. As District Attorney,
21 he is best remembered for his prosecution of the first civil
22 rights murder prosecution in Mississippi; and

23 WHEREAS, Waller served as Governor from 1972 to 1975. In
24 1971, Waller defeated Lieutenant Governor Charles L. Sullivan in
25 the Democratic primary runoff and Waller was credited with



26 successfully winning elections without using racially charged or
27 racially offensive rhetoric; and

28 WHEREAS, higher education and transportation saw significant
29 advances under his leadership. He was the first Governor to
30 appoint African-Americans to key positions within state
31 government. Governor Waller effectively shut down the
32 segregationist Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission by vetoing
33 its appropriation while he was Governor; and

34 WHEREAS, Waller was a faithful Deacon and member of First
35 Baptist Church Jackson for more than 60 years, and he was a member
36 of the Fishers of Men Sunday School Class. He was a founding
37 member of the Friends of Alcoholics; and

38 WHEREAS, in remembering the legacy of former Governor Waller,
39 United States Senator Thad Cochran, Republican-Mississippi,
40 stated, "Our state has lost one of its finest leaders. Bill
41 Waller was a superb lawyer, determined prosecutor, and courageous
42 political leader. We will miss having the benefit of his wise
43 counsel and friendship"; and

44 WHEREAS, his autobiography, *Straight Ahead*, is an inspiring
45 story of how character, faith, hard work and perseverance led from
46 rural hardship to the highest office in our state; and

47 WHEREAS, he is survived by his wife of 61 years, Carroll
48 Overton Waller; brother, Don Waller of Oxford; four sons; and 14
49 grandchildren. His children and grandchildren include: Chief
50 Justice William L. Waller, Jr., and his wife, Charlotte, of
51 Jackson, and their three children: Dr. William L. Waller, III,
52 Jeannie Waller and Clayton Waller; Robert O. Waller and his wife,
53 Margaret, of Jackson, and their six children: Joy Waller, Robert
54 O. Waller, Jr., Madeline Waller, Millie Waller, Ava Burton Waller
55 and Maggie Waller; Edward C. Waller, and his wife, Bae, of
56 Jackson, and their two daughters, Emma Carroll Waller and Dannie
57 Waller; and Donald E. Waller and his wife, Yonnie, of Jackson, and
58 their three children: Anne Overton Waller, Lucy Waller and Don



59 Waller, Jr. He was preceded in death by his parents; his
60 stepmother, Emma Winter Waller; his beloved daughter, Gloria Joy
61 Waller; and his sister, Mildred Waller Burtschell. Honorary
62 pallbearers included members of the Fishers of Men Sunday School
63 Class, Deacons of First Baptist Church Jackson, former members of
64 Governor Waller's administration, the Weaver Gore Coffee Club,
65 former law partners, and the Tomato Sandwich Club; and

66 WHEREAS, Governor Waller's legacy lies in his significant
67 leadership to bring Mississippi into the modern era on race
68 relations and he is remembered most of all as a man of principle
69 and courage:

70 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
71 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
72 we do hereby mourn the loss and commend the historic public
73 service of former Governor William Lowe "Bill" Waller, Sr., and
74 express the sympathy of the Legislature to his surviving family on
75 his passing.

76 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
77 Chief Justice William L. Waller, Jr., representing Governor
78 Waller's surviving family, and be made available to the Capitol
79 Press Corps.

