HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 133

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE DISTINGUISHED AND LAUDABLE LEGISLATIVE CAREER OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVE, THE HONORABLE ADRIENNE WOOTEN AND CONGRATULATING HER UPON BEING ELECTED TO THE BENCH AS CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE OF DISTRICT 7, PLACE 1, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI.

WHEREAS, in the historical November 27, 2018, run-off election, the citizens of Hinds County returned to the polls in overwhelming fashion to elect former State Representative and daughter of the late Mr. Tommy Hooper, Sr., and Mrs. Jo Ann Hooper, the Honorable Adrienne Wooten, to the post of Circuit Court Judge of District 7, Place 1, Hinds County, Mississippi, while simultaneously relaying bittersweet confirmation of an official changing of the guard in the post held for the last 11 years by a visionary leader, friend, lawmaker and respected attorney; and

WHEREAS, the distinguished Gentle Lady from Hinds County, Mississippi, Representative Adrienne Wooten, an honored and cherished member of the Mississippi House of Representatives, revered for her legal expertise and credible public service, made

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

REGULAR SESSION 2019

By: Representative Williams-Barnes

To: Rules
election history to become the first African-American female to hold the position of Circuit Court Judge of District 7, Place 1, Hinds County, Mississippi, bringing a climactic end to the third year of her third term of legislative service as a member of the House of Representatives from District 71, after having been initially elected in November 2007, situated in the City of Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, a native of Meridian, Mississippi, Representative Wooten answered her call to public service when she made the decision to attend law school after earning her baccalaureate degree as a pre-law major from Alcorn State University, and upon completing the requisite courses of study to obtain her juris doctorate from the University of Mississippi School of Law and subsequent admission to The Mississippi Bar, she embarked on the journey of jurisprudence, which has now spanned the course of approximately two decades, when she began as an associate with the law firm of Blackmon and Blackmon, PLLC, before venturing out on her own to open the successful practice, the Law Firm of Adrienne Hooper-Wooten, PLLC, in 2004, with offices in Ridgeland and Lexington, Mississippi, and allowed her to hone her skills as a litigator in the areas of criminal law, premises liability, personal injury, drug product liability, product liability, mass tort litigation, medical malpractice, wrongful death and family law; and
WHEREAS, during her career as a litigator, Representative Wooten actively litigated civil matters and served as an Assistant Public Defender for Holmes County for 15 years representing indigent defendants, which heightened her mission to champion the cause for the "least of these" among us; and

WHEREAS, gaining stature as a prominent yet formidable politician, the Lady from Hinds' abilities and talent were immediately recognized by her colleagues, and when combined with her strong work ethic, she quickly rose from freshman lawmaker and Vice Chairman of both the Apportionment and Elections Committee and the Legislative Redistricting Committee at the onset of her first legislative term in 2008, to an influential purveyor of equity; and

WHEREAS, over the course of her storied legislative career, Representative Wooten's diligence and devotion to the office to which she was elected have been fueled by the desire to make the quality of life better for her immediate constituency base and the entire citizenry of the Hospitality State, as she has endeavored with feverish propensity through her vocal participation on the House Committees to which she was assigned, including: Banking and Financial Services, Constitution, Fees and Salaries of Public Officers, Insurance, Judiciary B, Judiciary En Banc, Labor, Municipalities, Public Health and Human Services, Public Property, Universities and Colleges and Workforce Development; and
WHEREAS, Representative Wooten's love and deeply felt respect for the Legislature as a hallowed institution has led her to fight to preserve and nurture its integrity, becoming a guardian of this democratic institution as one who equally held a lion's share in the stake of advancing the direction of the state's economic, educational and political climate; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure in the House, Representative Wooten maintained a strong role in every meaningful initiative addressed by the Mississippi Legislature, including economic development, fiscal affairs, education, gaming, public health, transportation, agriculture, and election reform initiatives and programs; and

WHEREAS, a rare leader who was able to lead effectively and serve with humility while promoting the integrity and strength of the Legislature with dogged determination and zealous advocacy for her constituency base, Wooten was known to be a fair and even-handed steward of the legislative process as demonstrated by her ability to uphold loyalty to the House of Representatives over individual political affiliations; and

WHEREAS, admired for her ability for building consensus in the Legislature regardless of the issues at hand, it is with the same deference that her presence to the bench is both essential and most appropriate to carry forward the service to the citizens of Hinds County, who avail themselves of the judicial system; and
WHEREAS, the Lady from Hinds exchanged the title of Representative Wooten for that of Judge Wooten, and resigned the title "Gentle Lady" for "Your Honor," as she makes her departure from the stained glass ceiling and decorative walls of the chamber of the Mississippi House of Representatives for a private judge's chamber, where her legal expertise and experience as a well-versed arbiter of the law will aid her in the even-handed issuance of justice; and

WHEREAS, the members of this Legislature will cherish the bond and common goals for the betterment of our great state shared with Representative Wooten, and that her impeccable service was unparalleled to the Mississippi Legislature, American Bar Association, Association of Trial Lawyers of America, Metro Jackson Black Women Lawyers Association, Mississippi Women's Lawyers Association, Magnolia Bar Association, Mississippi Bar Association, and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the constituents of District 71 and to this great state; and

WHEREAS, the service of Representative Wooten would be without honor but for the continued support, encouragement and love of her loving husband, Dewayne Wooten, who endured the daunting struggles that accompany the life of an elected official, and who sacrificed countless hours without her in order to allow her to fulfill her legislative obligations; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the House of Representatives to honor the indelible legacy of remarkable service of our former
colleague and friend, Representative Adrienne Wooten, who represented her district, this body and the people of this state with honor and intrepid dignity:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend the distinguished and laudable legislative career of former Representative Adrienne Wooten, congratulate her upon being elected to the bench as the Circuit Court Judge of District 7, Place 1, Hinds County, Mississippi, and express fondest respect and best wishes for continued success in this newly elected role as judge and all of her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to Honorable Judge Adrienne Wooten and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.