Chapter No. 2118
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SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 532

Originated in Senate [signature] Secretary

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE LOSS AND CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF AWARD-WINNING CAPITOL CORRESPONDENT NORMA FIELDS OF TUPELO, MISSISSIPPI.

WHEREAS, Norma Lee Hamilton Fields, a native of New Albany, Mississippi, who spent nearly three decades covering state politics, feature stories and other news for the *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, passed away on Sunday, September 12, 2010; and

WHEREAS, born in 1923, Norma Fields grew up in North Mississippi Union County during the Great Depression. She worked in Washington, D.C., for the Navy during World War II before returning to Mississippi. Fields did undergraduate work at the University of Mississippi. She began her journalism career in 1962 as a business reporter for Business Bureau Reports in Austin, Texas; and

WHEREAS, Norma began her long career with the *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal* in 1964 covering the Northeast Mississippi region as a general assignment reporter, but she made her impressive record as a writer and investigative journalist in reporting on politics, politicians, public affairs and the Mississippi Legislature; and

WHEREAS, Norma Fields covered the Journal's full circulation area for almost 12 years before moving on permanent assignment to Jackson in 1975. She covered the Capitol, politics and the affairs of state government until her retirement in late 1988, and later wrote freelance columns for the *Mississippi Business Journal*

and, occasionally, the *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*. Fields won many state and national awards for reporting; and

WHEREAS, she was the first woman to cover the Mississippi Capitol on a full-time basis and was well-known around the state as an outspoken advocate for women's advancement in government, business and the professions. She was described by fellow reporters and legislators as "feisty" in going after facts. She challenged everybody, whether rich or a pauper. Her hard, factual reporting on the highway funding program issue helped win its eventual adoption. Norma Fields reported on highway graft, power abuse and general hot air. Her weekly column was ferocious and smart-mouthed. She broke barriers as the first full-time female bureau chief at the Capitol; and

WHEREAS, Lloyd Gray, Executive Editor of the *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, first met Fields when he was a young Capitol reporter and said she quickly became a generous mentor and friend. "Norma Fields' work embodied the Journal's core mission," Gray said. "She was in journalism because she wanted to make Northeast Mississippi and the state a better place, and that work will be her legacy"; and

WHEREAS, Norma Lee Hamilton Fields is survived by her five children: Robert H. Fields, doing business in China; David S. Fields of Vallejo, California; Candace L. Renaud of Houston, Texas; Victoria C. Fields of Jackson; and Sarah E. Gray of Tupelo. She is also survived by four wonderful grandsons, Roderick and Nicholas Fields, Zachary Fields and Al Gray, and a lovely great-granddaughter, Shelby Gray. Also surviving are her sister, Juanita Gray of Greenville; and her brother, Charles Hamilton of Fort Worth, Texas. In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by sisters Edith Robertson of South Carolina, Lillian Gray of Memphis, Tennessee, and her parents, Norman and Hope Wade Hamilton, from New Albany; and

WHEREAS, Norma Fields was the epitome of a professional journalist, and the fact that women are treated more fairly today than when Norma first walked the Capitol beat is a testament to her courage, tenacity and sheer will, and she will be missed by the people of the State of Mississippi:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby mourn the loss and celebrate the life and legacy of award-winning Capitol Correspondent Norma Lee Hamilton Fields of Tupelo, Mississippi, and express the sympathy of the Legislature to her surviving family on her passing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the surviving family of Norma Fields, forwarded to the Editor of the *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal* and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 13, 2011

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 19, 2011

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES