

Chapter No. 2215

11/SS02/R1329

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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 644***

Originated in Senate

Sumi W. Hughes

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 644

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GRAY SWOOPE.

WHEREAS, Gray Swoope, Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), has announced that after 4 years in his position he has taken a similar post as head of Economic Development in Florida. Appointed by Governor Haley Barbour in 2007 to lead the state's economic development efforts, he joined MDA in 2004, bringing to the agency over 25 years of economic development experience, including work on the local, regional and state levels in both Mississippi and Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Development Authority is the state's official economic and community development agency. The Jackson, Mississippi-based organization focuses on business recruitment, community and tourism development and employs more than 250 people. Before he was named Executive Director in 2007, Swoope had been Deputy Director of MDA since 2004; and

WHEREAS, since 2004, in both his role as Chief Operating Officer and later as Executive Director, Gray and MDA have been instrumental in securing such projects as the Toyota \$1.3 Billion North American manufacturing plant in Blue Springs, along with six tier-one suppliers; Nissan's \$118 Million expansion in Canton; multiple expansions at Chevron's refinery in Pascagoula; Severstal's Steel Mini-Mill; GE Aviation's composite jet engine parts facility; PACCAR's truck engine manufacturing plant; Schulz Xtruded Products' seamless extruded bonded pipe manufacturing facility; Twin Creeks Technologies' and Stion's solar panel

manufacturing facilities; Soladigm, a producer of energy-efficient dynamic insulated glass units; and biofuels producer KiOR. In addition, Gray has worked to expand and retain Mississippi businesses, such as Cooper Tire. He also aided the Coast following Hurricane Katrina and the recent BP oil spill; and

WHEREAS, under Gray's leadership, the MDA team has provided technical or financial assistance to business location and expansion projects that are creating 46,000 jobs and are generating nearly \$12 Billion in investment in Mississippi. These successes have been accomplished despite a 26% decrease in the MDA budget and a 15% decrease in the agency's workforce, through natural attrition. Gray oversees over 300 employees who are engaged in providing services to businesses and communities throughout Mississippi, ranging from traditional business recruitment and retention to developing unique Mississippi assets such as cultural heritage, to implementing programs that address community development, tourism, disaster recovery and energy, among other things. MDA is recognized by site selection consultants and company executives as being one of the most responsive and effective economic development entities in the country; and

WHEREAS, Gray received both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Business Administration from Mississippi State University. He leads the MDA team with the mantra of "changing lives and changing minds" in all that the agency does. Before joining MDA, Swoope spent 25 years with local, regional and state economic development groups in Mississippi and Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, in a statement, Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour said Swoope is leaving behind an organization that is better off than it was when he first took over. "He and the Mississippi Development Authority have led the way in creating thousands of high-paying jobs, and our citizens will benefit from his effort for decades to come," Governor Barbour said. "Gray will now be

the head of Economic Development for a state 8 times the size of Mississippi, and he deserves that opportunity. Florida's gain is our loss"; and

WHEREAS, Gray Swoope has been instrumental in attracting big business to his home State of Mississippi, bringing new energy and expertise to Mississippi's economic development activities and we join his MDA colleagues and Mississippi businessmen in extending the thanks of a grateful state:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby recognize and commend the accomplishments of Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) Executive Director Gray Swoope on the occasion of his appointment as Director of the Florida Economic Development Authority by Florida Governor Rick Scott, and extend to Gray and his family our best wishes.

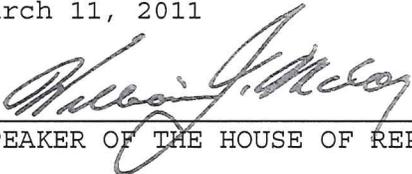
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Gray Swoope, forwarded to Governor Haley Barbour and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
March 9, 2011



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
March 11, 2011



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES