

Chapter No. 2070

12/SS26/R344

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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 503***

Originated in Senate

Liz Welch

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 503

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Waller served as Governor from 1972 to 1975. In 1971, Waller defeated Lieutenant Governor Charles L. Sullivan in the Democratic primary runoff and Waller was credited with successfully winning elections without using racially charged or racially offensive rhetoric; and

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, he is survived by his wife of 61 years, Carroll Overton Waller; brother, Don Waller of Oxford; four sons; and 14 grandchildren. His children and grandchildren include: Chief Justice William L. Waller, Jr., and his wife, Charlotte, of Jackson, and their three children: Dr. William L. Waller, III, Jeannie Waller and Clayton Waller; Robert O. Waller and his wife, Margaret, of Jackson, and their six children: Joy Waller, Robert O. Waller, Jr., Madeline Waller, Millie Waller, Ava Burton Waller and Maggie Waller; Edward C. Waller, and his wife, Bae, of Jackson, and their two daughters, Emma Carroll Waller and Dannie Waller; and Donald E. Waller and his wife, Yonnie, of Jackson, and their three children: Anne Overton Waller, Lucy Waller and Don Waller, Jr. He was preceded in death by his parents; his stepmother, Emma Winter Waller; his beloved daughter, Gloria Joy

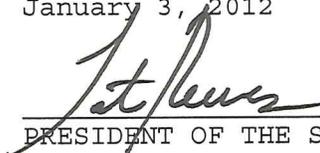
Waller; and his sister, Mildred Waller Burtschell. Honorary pallbearers included members of the Fishers of Men Sunday School Class, Deacons of First Baptist Church Jackson, former members of Governor Waller's administration, the Weaver Gore Coffee Club, former law partners, and the Tomato Sandwich Club; and

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

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 commend the historic public service of former Governor William Lowe "Bill" Waller, Sr., and express the sympathy of the Legislature to his surviving family on his passing.

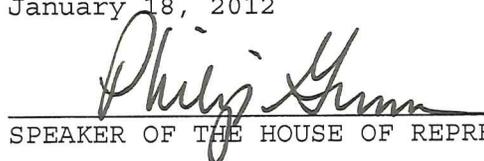
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Chief Justice William L. Waller, Jr., representing Governor Waller's surviving family, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
January 3, 2012



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 18, 2012



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES