

Chapter No. 2094

12/SS02/R560

JN 156/AS

***SENATE  
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION  
No. 536***

Originated in Senate \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 536

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE HISTORIC DONATION OF THE "AIRLIEWOOD" CIVIL WAR ERA ESTATE TO RUST COLLEGE IN HOLLY SPRINGS AND THANKING THE OVERSTREET FAMILY FOR THEIR GENEROSITY IN MAKING THE SINGLE LARGEST GIFT EVER TO AN HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.

WHEREAS, a Germantown couple has given an historic Holly Springs estate to Rust College, the largest single gift ever given to an historically black college or university; and

WHEREAS, Rust College President David L. Beckley announced that a required \$750,000.00 in matching funds had been raised, clearing the way to receive ownership from Joe and Kathy Overstreet of the 9,070-square-foot William Coxe Estate, commonly known as "Airliewood." Valued at \$3 Million, the house and 15-acre estate are in the heart of Holly Springs on Salem Avenue, about four blocks from the Rust Campus and within walking distance of Holly Springs High School. The site is expected to house school artifacts and serve as the future site of social events and fundraisers; and

WHEREAS, known since 1938 as Airliewood, the mansion is a Gothic style villa, built as a townhouse for planters in 1858 for William H. Coxe on a 15-acre estate in the heart of Holly Springs on Salem Avenue. The massive iron gate and fence were attributed to Wood & Perot of Boston, and are identical to those at the United States Military Academy at West Point. At the invitation of Coxe, Major General U.S. Grant occupied the home as his headquarters and residence for him and his family during the winter of 1862-1863. In its early years, it was the scene of

lavish entertainment, including an historic Christmas dinner for General Grant and his staff; and

WHEREAS, since 1858, the house has enjoyed many changes in both owners and renovations. The Overstreets purchased the Mansion in 2002, in a severe state of disrepair, and presided over a massive multiyear restoration of the original 5,070-square-foot home, and added a 4,000-square-foot addition, all done under the direction of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, that made it possible for the Mansion to remain on the National Register as an historic site. Three other properties owned by the college are listed on the National Register of Historic Sites: Oakview Mansion, the McCoy Administration Building on the main campus, and the former campus of the Mississippi Industrial College. The College is currently seeking funding to restore three buildings on the Mississippi Industrial College site; and

WHEREAS, "Airliewood" has made history, again, by becoming the property of historic Rust College, a 145-year-old Historically Black College located in Holly Springs on a former slave auction market that Union forces, under Major General U.S. Grant, used as a campsite during their stay in Holly Springs; and

WHEREAS, "Airliewood" will be used by the College in furthering its academic and community service programs, and may be used as its official museum, guest facility and meeting and public events center. Currently, the College is using space in the Leontyne Price Library to house an international collection of Art and Artifacts from around the world, with a Special African Mask collection housed in the Beckley Conference Center. "Airliewood" will permit visitors to see all of the collections at one place. Other activities and events would also be held on the property that will be labeled as "Rust at Airliewood"; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Beckley has expressed thanks to the Overstreet Family for making this gift possible to Rust College and a special thanks to Rust alumni, friends, community supporters, area

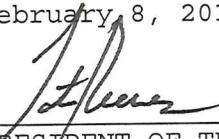
churches for their generous support of this effort. The Overstreets added, "We are excited about Rust College acquiring the estate. Airliewood has a special place in the hearts of many in the community and in the rich history of Holly Springs. We are proud of the plans that Rust College has for Airliewood, which will benefit future generations, and that the proud history will be preserved":

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we commend this contribution to higher education in Mississippi which will enhance educational opportunities and realize the rich history of Holly Springs, Mississippi:

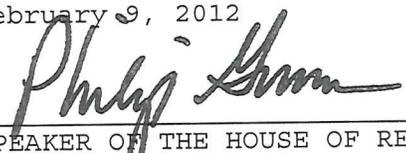
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby recognize the historic donation of the "Airliewood" Civil War era estate to Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi, and thank the Overstreet family in Germantown, Tennessee, for their generosity in making the single largest gift ever to a Historically Black College or University.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be transmitted to Rust College President David Beckley for presentation to Joe and Kathy Overstreet, forwarded to Dr. William Nelson, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Rust College, and to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of Holly Springs and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE  
February 8, 2012

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
February 9, 2012

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES