

Chapter No. 2116

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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 579***

Originated in Senate

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Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 579

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CIVIC LEADERSHIP OF DR. LEE GARDNER ROYCE AS THE 19TH PRESIDENT OF MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE.

WHEREAS, Lee Gardner Royce became Mississippi College's 19th President in July 2002, and under his leadership the Christian university has experienced record enrollment growth, financial success and a construction renaissance; and

WHEREAS, the former President of Anderson University in South Carolina, Dr. Royce pursues the institution's vision "to be recognized as a university known for academic excellence and commitment to the cause of Christ"; and

WHEREAS, despite economic difficulties facing America in recent years, Mississippi College's Growing the Vision Campaign raised \$87.4 Million for academic programs, scholarships, the university's endowment, construction needs and other vital initiatives. Concluding in 2011, the five-year campaign owes much thanks to the Board of Trustees and the extended Mississippi College family; and

WHEREAS, since Dr. Royce assumed the Presidency of Mississippi College more than a decade ago, there has been a 69% growth rate for the operating budget, the endowment has climbed 82%, and the Baptist-affiliated university's long-term debt has been reduced 89%. With more than 5,030 students, enrollment has jumped 60% since 2002 with a record 615 freshmen in the Fall of 2013. International student enrollment of more than 250 students from 26 nations reflects Mississippi College's global outreach. That is up from just nine international students when Dr. Royce arrived in 2002. The number of full-time faculty members grew by 42; and

WHEREAS, the hard work of the Vanderbilt University graduate is gaining national attention in higher education circles. In February 2014, Dr. Royce will receive the Executive Leadership Award from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education's District III Southern region. The honor goes to university administrators encouraging innovation among employees, presenting a positive image of their institution, advancing fund-raising and having a strong success rate for major initiatives; and

WHEREAS, on a local level, the Clinton Chamber of Commerce has recognized Dr. Royce as the community's "Citizen of the Year" for his efforts to strengthen partnerships between the University and its hometown in Central Mississippi. Dr. Royce also serves on

the Board of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities; and

WHEREAS, after 12 years as leader of the nation's second oldest Baptist college, Dr. Royce's work is far from over. After adding impressive new academic initiatives such as Mississippi's unique Physician Assistant Program, doctorates in education leadership and professional counseling, and guiding Mississippi College Choctaws' athletic teams to return to NCAA Division II ranks in the Fall of 2014, there is much left to accomplish. From the main campus in Clinton to the Mississippi College Law School in downtown Jackson, there is much on President Royce's to-do list. "Over the past decade, we have encouraged a culture of innovation and responsiveness at Mississippi College; maintaining that momentum in positive times is our next challenge," Dr. Royce said; and

WHEREAS, a native of Miami, Florida, Dr. Royce earned his Bachelor's degree in History, Master's degree in Business Management and Doctorate in Higher Education Administration, all at Vanderbilt University. He served as Vice President for University Relations at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee, before becoming President at Anderson University and then Mississippi College; and

WHEREAS, in 1975, Dr. Royce married Russell Rhoda Royce, a former Editor with *Open Windows* Magazine and other publications with LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist

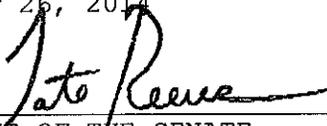
Convention in Nashville. A Magna Cum Laude graduate of Belmont University with a master's degree from the University of South Carolina, Rhoda Royce is an Adjunct Instructor of Business Communications at Mississippi College. The Royces have one son, Mark, a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science and Graduate Teaching Assistant at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we commend this Christian academic leader whose record of achievement and legacy of leadership and dedication to the citizens of Mississippi brings honor to his college, his community and to our 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 the accomplishments and civic leadership of Dr. Lee Gardner Royce, the 19th President of Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi, and extend to Dr. Royce and his family our best wishes for future success.

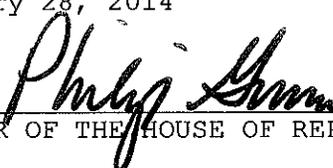
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Dr. Royce, forwarded to the Board of Trustees of Mississippi College and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 26, 2014



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 28, 2014



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES