

Chapter No. 2189
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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 595***

Originated in Senate

Ag Welch

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 595

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE DISTINGUISHED LEGAL CAREER OF JUDGE HENRY T. WINGATE, UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI, THE FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN FEDERAL JUDGE AND THE YOUNGEST FEDERAL JUDGE EVER APPOINTED IN MISSISSIPPI.

WHEREAS, in honor of Black History Month we recognize United States District Court Judge Henry T. Wingate, the first African-American Federal Judge ever appointed in the history of the State of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Judge Henry T. Wingate was born January 6, 1947, in Jackson, Mississippi. He attended Brinkley Junior-Senior High School of Jackson, Mississippi, and graduated among the top of his class in June 1965. During high school, he lettered in baseball and basketball. He was selected for the State All-Star Basketball Team and was elected Co-Captain; and

WHEREAS, following high school, Judge Wingate attended Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa, identified by *Newsweek Magazine* in 2004 as the best overall college or university in the nation. There, he majored in Philosophy, accumulating a 3.65 in that

discipline. He was Co-Captain of the varsity basketball team and very active in college organizations, especially theatre, where he starred in various productions, one of which was a two-man performance widely acclaimed as the best theatre production of four years. He graduated in 1969 with a Bachelor of Arts degree; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wingate acquired his Juris Doctorate degree from Yale Law School, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, universally acclaimed as the number one law school in the nation. While a student at the Yale Law School, Judge Wingate worked part time for the New Haven Legal Service Office. He was among the first law students in the State of Connecticut to be certified to practice before lower state courts as a third-year law student. Also, while at Yale Law School, Judge Wingate was named as one of few recipients of a national, competitive fellowship from the Law Students Civil Rights Research Organization of New York, New York, which subsidized summer study of Civil Rights issues at a law firm of Judge Wingate's choosing. He was admitted to The Mississippi Bar in 1973; and

WHEREAS, from July 1973 until September 1976, Judge Wingate served as Lieutenant with the Judge Advocate General's Corps, United States Navy, at Naval Legal Services Office, Norfolk, Virginia. He was assigned principally to the Criminal Division where he both prosecuted on behalf of the government, represented military accused before all military courts, and served on

military selection boards. From 1973 to 1975, Judge Wingate was the only African-American lawyer in the entire United States Navy, a circumstance which required Judge Wingate to dialogue with the highest ranking Naval officers on matters of race, while still charged with handling the most challenging caseload of any Naval lawyer on the East Coast; and

WHEREAS, in October 1976, Judge Wingate joined the staff of the Attorney General for the State of Mississippi. The first African-American lawyer to be hired in the office, he was variously assigned to the Criminal Appellate Division, the State Court Division, and to the Federal Litigation Division. Pursuant to these assignments, he handled an extensive criminal appellate practice and appeared often in state and federal courts on civil matters. In January 1980, Judge Wingate left the Attorney General's Office and began employment as State District Attorney for Hinds and Yazoo Counties. Judge Wingate was the first full-time African-American hiree. In charge of the prosecution of violent crimes (capital murder, murder, robbery, rape, kidnapping, etc.), Judge Wingate appeared regularly in trials before juries. Next, Judge Wingate accepted employment with the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Mississippi. He was the first African-American lawyer hired in that office. As an Assistant United States Attorney, he prosecuted the major crimes, and his duties involved extensive trial work; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wingate's teaching experience is considerable. He is an Adjunct Professor at Mississippi College School of Law where he has taught Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Military Law, Trial Practice and Procedure, and Complex Litigation; and has served as an Adjunct Professor at Jackson State University; lecturer on the national faculty of National College of District Attorneys (NCDA); lecturer with the Mississippi Judicial College; lecturer with the Mississippi Prosecutors' College; and lecturer for the Mississippi State Bar Review. In constant demand as a speaker, Judge Wingate has lectured regularly at District Court Judges' Workshops; United States Bankruptcy Judges' Seminars; Bench-Bar Conferences, as well as having served as Commencement Speaker at a number of academic institutions, including Alcorn State University and Coahoma Junior College; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wingate was recommended to the federal bench in December 1984 by Senator Thad Cochran and appointed by the President in October 1985, after confirmation by the United States Senate. The first African-American Federal Judge ever appointed in the history of Mississippi, Judge Wingate, at 38 years of age when appointed, also became Mississippi's youngest Federal Judge ever appointed; and

WHEREAS, on November 4, 2003, Judge Wingate became Chief Judge of the Southern District of Mississippi and served in that position for a term of seven years. As Chief Judge, Judge Wingate presided over a court of six active District Judges, six Senior

District Judges, five Magistrate Judges, and three Bankruptcy Judges. He approved budgets, appointed committees, while various department heads, including Clerk of Court, Bankruptcy, and Parole and Probation, all reported to him. His task was to ensure a cohesive, smooth operation of the court family for the Southern District of Mississippi, which embraces 45 counties of the State of Mississippi, over half the state. The Southern District of Mississippi has courthouses in Jackson, Meridian, Hattiesburg, Natchez and Gulfport; and

WHEREAS, in the Winter 2006 issue of *Lawdragon*, a national publication, Judge Wingate is named as one of the leading 500 trial and appellate judges in America. Judge Wingate has received many honors and recognitions. On May 19, 1986, Grinnell College of Grinnell, Iowa, bestowed upon him a coveted honorary Doctor of Laws degree. On May 16, 2004, Tougaloo College of Tougaloo, Mississippi, bestowed upon Judge Wingate an honorary Doctor of Laws degree. On May 13, 2011, Mississippi College of Clinton, Mississippi, bestowed upon Judge Wingate an honorary Doctor of Laws degree; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wingate's picture and brief biography are featured in a permanent exhibition on the life and legacy of Medgar Evers at the Jackson, Mississippi, International Airport, showing the racial progress of Mississippi since Medgar's assassination; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wingate has served as President of the United States District Judges Association for the Fifth Circuit, that is, all district judges in the States of Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. Previously, he served as President-Elect, Vice President, and before that, as Secretary/Treasurer of that organization. From 1994 to 1999, Judge Wingate served as a member of the Judicial Resources Committee under the Judicial Conference of the United States. Judge Wingate serves on the Pattern Criminal Jury Instruction Committee for the Fifth Circuit. Judge Wingate, over 12 years ago, created his Federal Court-Watch Program. This free program, financed entirely by Judge Wingate, has several components: (1) a summer session for high school and college students which focuses upon careers in law and law enforcement; (2) a GospelFest, a musical presentation by members of the Mississippi Mass Choir and others, aimed at uplifting the spiritual mood of the prisoners at the Yazoo Federal Penitentiary, Yazoo City, Mississippi; (3) a VIP Tour for juveniles and adults of the living, educational, correctional facilities of the Yazoo Federal Penitentiary; and (4) a Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) review and lecture on law schools for those who are interested in attending law school; and

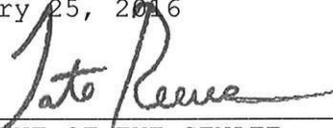
WHEREAS, Judge Wingate was married to the late Turner Arnita (Ward) for 34 years. She was a former State Racquetball Champion, a former State Bowling Champion, and a respected educator, having taught in high school and college; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wingate is a leader and mentor in the legal profession, who has lectured on the professional standards of the practice including ethics, integrity, civility, courtesy, and adherence to the Golden Rule. Judge Wingate's career has honored The Mississippi Bar and Bench and this great state that he has served:

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 distinguished legal career of Judge Henry T. Wingate, United States District Court Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi, the first African-American Federal Judge and the youngest Federal Judge ever appointed in Mississippi.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Judge Wingate, forwarded to The Mississippi Bar and the Judicial Conference of the United States, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 25, 2016



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
March 3, 2016



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES