MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE FIRST EXTRAORDINARY SESSION 2017

By: Senator(s) Fillingane, Barnett, Jackson (32nd), McDaniel, Stone

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 21

A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC SERVICE OF COLLINS, MISSISSIPPI, MAYOR V.O. SMITH AS HE LEAVES OFFICE.

WHEREAS, Mayor V.O. Smith of Collins, Mississippi, one of the two longest-serving mayors in the State of Mississippi, will be leaving office after nearly four decades of dedicated service and unprecedented municipal development. He has been a wonderful example for public servants; and

WHEREAS, Collins, Mississippi, with its antique-looking lampposts imported from Canada, multicolored water fountains, hanging baskets, new sidewalks and landscaping, is considered one of the state's 11 most successful small communities, according to the book *Boom Town, USA.* One of the keys to success in any small community is leadership; and

WHEREAS, in his early adult life, Smith owned and operated several businesses in the City of Collins. He owned a Sears catalog store, the Chicken Box Restaurant, a discount bread store and a convenience store, "Smith's Curb Mart." It was during those

days of operating the businesses that he was approached to run for office. After much consideration, Smith agreed to run for a seat on the board. He was elected to the Board of Aldermen for the city in 1977. During his time on the board, Smith realized his love for helping others; and

WHEREAS, it was only a few short years later that he ran and was elected to the Mayor's office. Thirty-five years later, Smith became one of the two longest-serving Mayors in the State of Mississippi. It's a position he has held because he has not forgotten his commitment to the residents and, today, still strives to help them solve their problems. Smith learned early on that the way to help the city was by searching for grant monies that are available to municipalities. Infrastructure issues were also a concern for Smith during the early years. Serving as a volunteer fireman for 27 years for the city, his calling to serve was put to use. Smith considered his telephone number a public number. That round-the-clock title is one he wore proudly. Often times Smith could be seen in the evenings up and down Main Street in Collins planting flowers, watering trees and maintaining the green spaces. Today, the City of Collins enjoys much growth. It boasts a larger, progressive police department under the direction of Chief Joey Ponder; a state-of-the-art fire department under Chief John Pope; a solid, quality public works department and an innovative online presence under the guidance of the City Clerk. Smith noted that he is proud of the fact that the police officers

have body cameras and the city already has six video cameras in the police cars; and

WHEREAS, as a longtime, small town Mayor, Smith has been active in organizations throughout the state. He is the past President of the Mississippi Municipal League, and now serves on the Board of Directors. He is also the Chairman of the Mississippi Service Company, a board on which he has served since 1989. The Mississippi Service Company is for insurance for Mississippi cities and towns, and Smith is the longest-serving member on the board; and

WHEREAS, today, Collins enjoys new growth and expanding and new businesses in the city; and

WHEREAS, his legacy as Mayor will be that of a role model of fairness, honesty and genuine love for the citizens of Collins and will continue after his term as husband, father, grandfather and friend to everyone:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby recognize the legacy of leadership and public service of Collins, Mississippi, Mayor V.O. Smith as he leaves office, and extend to Mayor Smith and his family our best wishes for future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to Mayor Smith, forwarded to the Collins Board of Aldermen, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.