

117TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. 809

Designating September 30, 2022, as “Mississippi National Guard Recognition Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating September 30, 2022, as “Mississippi National Guard Recognition Day”.

Whereas, since its inception in 1798, the Mississippi National Guard has served the Magnolia State and the United States;

Whereas the Mississippi National Guard has responded to national and State emergencies;

Whereas, on September 30, 1962, anticipating violence as a result of the admission of James Meredith, the first Black student in the history of the University of Mississippi, President John F. Kennedy and Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara activated the entire Mississippi National Guard to provide riot control during the desegregation of the University of Mississippi;

Whereas Major General William P. Wilson immediately ordered 14,400 officers and enlisted men of the Mississippi National Guard to report to their armories and await orders from their Commander, Brigadier General Charles Billingslea;

Whereas 2 battle groups and 1 armored cavalry regiment, comprised of 3,086 men, reported to Oxford, Mississippi, on September 30, 1962, under the command of General Billingslea;

Whereas the 1st Battle Group, 155th Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Laurel, Mississippi, and commanded by Colonel Marion D. Odell, was comprised of Guardsmen from Brookhaven, Tylertown, Natchez, Meadville, McComb, Magnolia, and Gloster, Mississippi;

Whereas the 2d Battle Group, 155th Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Amory, Mississippi, and commanded by Colonel Robert L. Gray, was comprised of Guardsmen from Corinth, Kosciusko, Louisville, Iuka, Aberdeen, and Starkville, Mississippi;

Whereas the 108th Armored Cavalry Regiment, headquartered in Tupelo, Mississippi, and commanded by Colonel James G. Martin, was comprised of Guardsmen from Belmont, Booneville, Fulton, Okolona, Baldwin, Nettleton, Ripley, Oxford, New Albany, Pontotoc, Holly Springs, Water Valley, Senatobia, Marks, Sardis, Batesville, Hernando, and Tunica, Mississippi;

Whereas, on the night of September 30, 1962, a violent mob, including some individuals from out of State, formed on the campus of the University of Mississippi, forcing reporters and United States Marshals to shelter inside the

Lyceum building on the campus of the University of Mississippi;

Whereas that same mob attacked General Billingslea, his deputy, General John Corley, and his aide, Captain Harold Lyon, while they were in their car, setting it ablaze and forcing the 3 men to escape by crawling 200 yards to the Lyceum building, all while under gunfire;

Whereas, at 10 o'clock in the evening of September 30, 1962, Troop G of Pontotoc, Mississippi, and Howitzer Battery 2nd Reconnaissance Squadron of Water Valley, Mississippi, 108th Armored Cavalry, were ordered to move immediately to the campus of the University of Mississippi to quell the rioters surrounding the Lyceum building;

Whereas, at approximately 3 o'clock in the morning of October 1, 1962, the 1st and 3rd Reconnaissance Squadrons, 108th Armored Cavalry, were ordered to the Lyceum building to clear the campus of rioters;

Whereas, by the morning of October 1, 1962, the rioters on the campus of the University of Mississippi had been subdued, but not before resulting in the death of Ray Gunter and Paul Guihard;

Whereas, because of the courage displayed by the members of the 155th Infantry Regiment and the 108th Armored Cavalry Regiment of the Mississippi National Guard, active-duty members of the Armed Forces, and law enforcement officers on that autumn day in Oxford, order was restored at the University of Mississippi;

Whereas, 60 years later, the Mississippi National Guard continues to provide protection of life and property, and up-

holds the preservation of peace, order, and public safety, for the citizens of Mississippi; and

Whereas thousands of students of all races, creeds, backgrounds, and beliefs today receive world-class education at the University of Mississippi because of the courage, discipline, and professionalism of the members of the 155th Infantry Regiment and the 108th Armored Cavalry Regiment of the Mississippi National Guard: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates September 30, 2022, as “Mississippi National Guard Recognition Day”; and

3 (2) recognizes the heroic efforts of the Mississippi National Guard 60 years ago to maintain
4 peace in Oxford, Mississippi, during the largest deployment of troops to a single disturbance in the his-
5 tory of the Mississippi National Guard.

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