

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor



A Proclamation By Governor Ronnie Musgrove

WHEREAS, forty years ago this year the Freedom Riders—over 400 brave men and women, African-American and white, young and old, Yankee and Southern, Christian and Jew, all committed to non-violence under the leadership of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—boarded buses, planes and trains and traveled across the South to challenge segregation in public accommodations; and

WHEREAS, they continued their mission undeterred by violence, mobs and arrests in Jackson, Mississippi and elsewhere for breach of the peace or inciting violence, resulting in the majority of them being incarcerated for periods of up to forty days, including the Hinds County Jail and at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman Farm, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, all of the trials of Freedom Riders in local courts resulted in convictions, which were reversed upon appeal; and

WHEREAS, we salute the heroic efforts in 1961 of the Freedom Riders, and their role also as an inspiration to others to follow on the long, often perilous road to end segregation and bring freedom and justice to Americans everywhere, a journey and struggle that continues today; and

WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi is proud today to have left behind that unfortunate chapter in its history with the help of the Freedom Riders and many other champions of the Civil Rights Movement; and

WHEREAS, the Freedom Riders are gathering in the City of Jackson, Mississippi on Veterans Day Weekend to honor the Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement, to seek reconciliation with those who once sought to perpetuate the system of segregation; America's own version of apartheid, to pass the torch of the Freedom Riders' legacy to future generations, and to assess what additional efforts may still be made to bring about a society of true racial equality and justice:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ronnie Musgrove, Governor of the State of Mississippi, hereby proclaim November 10, 2001 as

FREEDOM RIDERS DAY

in the State of Mississippi.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi to be affixed.

DONE in the City of Jackson, November 1, 2001, in the two hundred and twenty-fifth year of the United States of America.


RONNIE MUSGROVE
GOVERNOR