

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor



EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 1479

WHEREAS, on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, Mississippi lost a respected leader and devoted public servant with the passing of Wayne O. Burkes at the age of 90; and

WHEREAS, Wayne O. Burkes was born on December 6, 1929, in Neshoba County, Mississippi, to Dewitt T. Burkes and Cleo Gentry Burkes and raised on the family farm; and

WHEREAS, he graduated from Arlington High School, East Central Mississippi Community College and attended Mississippi College earning a B.A., M.Ed. and LL.D. He received his Master of Divinity from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and did graduate studies at the University of Southern Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Wayne was ordained as a Baptist minister, and served several churches in mid-Mississippi. After retiring, he continued to officiate at weddings and funerals, counseling his many friends and serving as a visiting minister. He served as trustee of Baptist Hospital Systems, was a member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and served as a local deacon being active in First Baptist Churches of Clinton and Jackson; and

WHEREAS, Wayne served two tours of active service in the United States Air Force and is a graduate of the Air Force pilot training school, Industrial College of the Armed Forces and the Air War College. He attained over 7,000 hours of flight time in eight different aircraft serving as a command pilot and achieving the rank of Major General and retiring as a Lieutenant General with 38 years total service; and

WHEREAS, Wayne was an advocate for Mississippi veterans and served on the Mississippi Veterans Affairs Board as chairman and on various committees. He was instrumental in the construction of the Mississippi Veterans Cemetery at Newton, Mississippi. He was a life member of Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion and Military Order of the World Wars; and

WHEREAS, Wayne began his career as a teacher, counselor and administrator at Hinds Community College; and

WHEREAS, In 1976 Wayne was elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives and in 1980, he was elected to the Mississippi State Senate and served for 10 years; and

WHEREAS, Wayne was elected Central Mississippi Highway Commissioner in 1989 until being appointed by President Clinton in 1999 to complete an unexpired five-year term on the U.S. Surface Transportation Board; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 Governor Phil Bryant presented him with The Mississippi Distinguished Civilian Service Medal for his long distinguished service to the people and veterans of the State of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, the prayers of this state are with his wife Ann Rushing Burkes, their sons Ted M. Burkes (Trish) of Stafford, Virginia, Tim R. Burkes (Jane) of Warner Robins, Georgia, his grandchildren, great-grandchildren, other family members and many friends:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tate Reeves, by the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and laws of the State of Mississippi, do hereby proclaim a period of official mourning in the State of Mississippi and do hereby order all flags of the United States of America and the State of Mississippi be flown at half-staff on all buildings and grounds of the State of Mississippi and all areas under its jurisdiction from sunrise to sunset on Friday, May 8, 2020, in remembrance of a dedicated Mississippi public servant and a good man, Wayne O. Burkes.



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

DONE at the Capitol in the City of Jackson, the 7 day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and forty-fourth.

Tate Reeves
TATE REEVES
GOVERNOR

BY THE GOVERNOR:

Michael Watson
MICHAEL WATSON
SECRETARY OF STATE