

By: Senator(s) Jackson (11th)

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 4

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE ETERNAL "RESPECT" OF THE SENATE
2 FOR THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ARETHA FRANKLIN, THE "QUEEN OF
3 SOUL," AND EXPRESSING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE MISSISSIPPI SENATE TO
4 HER FAMILY UPON HER PASSING.

5 WHEREAS, Aretha Franklin, whose impassioned, riveting voice
6 made her a Titan of American Music, passed away on August 16,
7 2018, at the age of 76; and

8 WHEREAS, Aretha Franklin was one of the transcendent
9 cultural figures of the 20th Century. Raised on an eclectic
10 musical diet of gospel, R&B, classical and jazz, she blossomed
11 out of her father's Detroit church to become the most
12 distinguished female black Artist of all time, breaking
13 boundaries while placing 100 hits on Billboard's R&B Chart with
14 20 reaching No. 1; and

15 WHEREAS, the "Queen of Soul," as she was crowned in the
16 1960s, leaves a sprawling legacy of classic songs that includes
17 "Respect," "(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman," "Chain of
18 Fools," "Baby I Love You," "Angel," "Think," "Rock Steady,"



19 "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and "Freeway of Love," along with a
20 bestselling Gospel Catalog; and

21 WHEREAS, the "Queen of Soul" sang for presidents and
22 royalty, and befriended high-profile leaders, including the
23 Reverends Martin Luther King, Jr., and Jesse Jackson. Amid the
24 global glitter and acclaim, she remained loyal to her adopted
25 home, living in the Detroit area for decades, including the
26 Bloomfield Hills house where she moved in the late 1980s.
27 Aretha's voice was a singular force, earning her a multitude of
28 laurels through the decades, including 18 competitive Grammy
29 Awards, a Lifetime Achievement Award, the Presidential Medal of
30 Freedom, and Honorary Doctorates from a host of institutions.
31 In 1987, she became the first Female Artist inducted into the
32 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and at age 52, the youngest
33 recipient of a Kennedy Center Honor. Aretha topped *Rolling*
34 *Stone* magazine's "100 Greatest Singers of All Time" and "100
35 Greatest Artists of All Time" lists, and her signature hit,
36 "Respect," ranked No. 4 on "Songs of the Century," a 1999
37 Project by the National Endowment for the Arts. She was
38 inducted into the UK Music Hall of Fame in 2005 and the GMA
39 Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2012. Franklin's influence was
40 vast and indelible, and was heard in the myriad voices that
41 followed her, from Mary J. Blige to Adele, and male singers like
42 Luther Vandross; and



43 WHEREAS, the Women's Rights Movement was just emerging in
44 1967 when Aretha took on Otis Redding's "Respect," which soon
45 became known as an anthem both for civil rights and for
46 feminism. She changed the song's meaning radically by singing
47 it in her own, inimitable voice. Aretha may not have intended
48 it to be a feminist anthem, but she surely knew how it would
49 resonate; and

50 WHEREAS, Aretha's father, the late Reverend C.L. Franklin,
51 and mother, the late Barbara Vernice Siggers Franklin, were both
52 natives of Shelby, Mississippi. Her father, a Civil Rights
53 Pioneer, died in 1984, and her mother, an accomplished pianist and
54 vocalist, died in 1952. Aretha's brother and Manager died in
55 1989. Reverend Franklin also had a career as a Recording
56 Minister. He began recording with Chess Recording Company in
57 1953. His first album in 1953 was "The 23rd Psalms" and his
58 second, and one of his most famous, was "The Eagle Stirreth her
59 Nest"; and

60 WHEREAS, born in Memphis on March 25, 1942, Aretha moved at
61 age four to Detroit when her father, the Reverend C.L. Franklin,
62 took over duties at New Bethel Baptist Church. In 1960, at age
63 18, Aretha Franklin spurned a hometown offer from Berry Gordy's
64 fledgling Motown Label and opted to sign with New York's
65 Columbia Records, where her demo tape had caught the ear of
66 iconic talent Scout John Hammond. A year later, after Aretha
67 married her Manager Ted White, her Columbia debut was released.



68 Real success blossomed in 1967 when the 24-year-old Franklin
69 declined to renew her Columbia contract and signed with Atlantic
70 Records, where Executives Ahmet Ertegun and Jerry Wexler saw a
71 chance to unleash the raw power of Franklin's vocals. Her first
72 Atlantic single "I Never Loved a Man (The Way I Love You)" was
73 cut at the burgeoning soul-music hotbed FAME Studios in Muscle
74 Shoals, Alabama. Within weeks it was Franklin's first No. 1 on
75 Billboard's R&B Chart, cracking the Pop Top 10 as well. She was
76 on her way to mainstream success; and

77 WHEREAS, just as important is Aretha's broader social impact:
78 She embodied American black culture, emphatically and without
79 apology, and through sheer force of talent, thrust it onto the
80 global stage. Aretha Franklin not only had the voice of an angel
81 but a heart of gold; her humanitarian efforts are as impressive as
82 her accolades; and

83 WHEREAS, in the words of Paul McCartney, "Let's all take a
84 moment to give thanks for the beautiful life of Aretha Franklin,
85 the Queen of our souls, who inspired us all for many years. She
86 will be missed, but the memory of her greatness as a musician and
87 a fine human being will live with us forever":

88 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
89 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the Eternal "RESPECT" of the
90 Senate for the life and accomplishments of Aretha Franklin, the
91 "Queen of Soul," and express the condolences of the Mississippi
92 Senate to her family upon her passing.



93 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be transmitted
94 to the surviving family of Aretha Franklin, forwarded to the
95 Mississippi Arts Commission, and made available to the Capitol
96 Press Corps.

