

By: Senator(s) Horhn, Blount, Michel,
Norwood, Frazier, Chassaniol, Fillingane,
Jackson (32nd)

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 9

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE RECOGNITION OF THE MISSISSIPPI
2 SENATE TO MUSICIAN'S MUSICIAN RAPHAEL SEMMES AS THE RECIPIENT OF
3 THE 2021 GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARD AS MISSISSIPPI CULTURAL AMBASSADOR.

4 WHEREAS, the Governor's Arts Awards Program has announced its
5 2021 recipients, which includes Raphael Semmes as Mississippi
6 Cultural Ambassador; and

7 WHEREAS, established in 1988, Governor's Arts Awards are
8 given to individuals and organizations to recognize outstanding
9 work in the artistic disciplines, as well as arts-based community
10 development and arts patronage in Mississippi. The awards are
11 presented in partnership with the Governor's Office and signify
12 the important relationship between government and the arts; and

13 WHEREAS, Raphael Semmes is a musician's musician. He first
14 picked up a guitar as a boy in Grenada, raised by parents who
15 nurtured his love for all music by exposing him to rock and roll,
16 country, blues and jazz; and

17 WHEREAS, as a college student in the 1970s, he was tapped to
18 play with the faculty Jazz Quartet at the University of



19 Mississippi. There he earned the nickname "Radar" due to his
20 natural talent for finding the right notes and knowing what to
21 play without reading a musical score; and

22 WHEREAS, after short stints as a working musician in Los
23 Angeles and Memphis, Semmes came home and dove head first into
24 playing music and promoting Mississippi's culture at home and
25 abroad; and

26 WHEREAS, in the early 1980s, Raphael Semmes helped cultivate
27 a live local music scene in Jackson as bass player with Sassy
28 Jones and These Days with Jewell Bass and Nice Try; and

29 WHEREAS, many popular musical artists have called on Semmes
30 to play with them, including Mississippi Jazz and Blues legends
31 Mose Allison and John Lee Hooker. He toured internationally with
32 Katie Webster, Vasti Jackson and Dorothy Moore. He was a member
33 of the first band to play behind the Iron Curtain in the 1980s
34 with Joe Frank Carollo and George Sandifer. The second group to
35 do this was Joan Jett; and

36 WHEREAS, Semmes has represented the best that Mississippi
37 music has to offer by organizing talent for Governors'
38 inaugurations, writing and performing an original song for a state
39 tourism campaign, producing music festivals, and performing his
40 "Mississippi Live" show; and

41 WHEREAS, today, Raphael Semmes continues to produce and
42 perform in the Township Jazz Festival, which he cofounded. He
43 plays live jazz regularly at Table 100 and Hal and Mal's in



44 addition to hosting the Fusion Coffeehouse Jazz Series. He is the
45 long-time leader of the Governor's Arts Awards Combo; and

46 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and
47 express appreciation for the talent of a world-class musician who
48 has made Mississippi a better place and exemplifies the musical
49 traditions of our great state:

50 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
51 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the recognition of the
52 Mississippi Senate to Raphael Semmes, the recipient of the 2021
53 Governor's Arts Award as Mississippi Cultural Ambassador, and
54 extend our congratulations to this mighty musician on this
55 auspicious occasion.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
57 Raphael Semmes as part of the Governor's Arts Awards presentation,
58 and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

