

By: Senator(s) Chism, Chassaniol, Michel,  
Boyd, Fillingane, Blackwell, Younger, Whaley,  
Hill, England, McLendon, Barrett, Tate,  
Suber, McMahan, Turner-Ford, Barnett,  
Branning, Jackson (11th), Jackson (32nd),  
Simmons (13th), Sparks

To: Rules

## SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 15

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY OF THE  
2 MISSISSIPPI SENATE TO THE SURVIVING FAMILY OF JIM WEATHERLY,  
3 PONTOTOC NATIVE AND HALL OF FAME SONGWRITER WHO LED THE OLE MISS  
4 REBELS FOOTBALL TEAM TO THE 1962 CONSENSUS NATIONAL TITLE, AND  
5 COMMENDING HIS CAREER.

6 WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of a  
7 Mississippi legend. James Dexter (Jim) Weatherly, the Pontotoc  
8 native and former Ole Miss quarterback who became a celebrated  
9 songwriter with hits like "Midnight Train To Georgia," passed away  
10 on February 3, 2021; and

11 WHEREAS, in nearly 50 years as a songwriter in Los Angeles  
12 and Nashville, Weatherly composed songs that became pop and R&B  
13 classics, but also crossed over to country, gospel and jazz. He  
14 was enshrined into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2014; and

15 WHEREAS, Jim Weatherly's biggest songwriting hit was  
16 "Midnight Train To Georgia" for Gladys Knight and the Pips. The  
17 1973 recording reached No. 1 on both the pop and R&B charts and  
18 won a Grammy Award. "Midnight Train To Georgia" was inducted into  
19 the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1999. In 2001, the National Endowment



for the Arts and the Recording Industry Association of America selected the 365 Songs of the Century (1900-2000), with "Midnight Train To Georgia" making the list at No. 29. The song also made *Rolling Stone* magazine's top 500 songs of all time in 2003; and

WHEREAS, Weatherly's collaboration with Gladys Knight and the Pips resulted in more hits. "Neither One Of Us (Wants To Be The First To Say Goodbye)" reached No. 1 on the pop and soul charts and won a Grammy while "The Best Thing That Ever Happened To Me" was a No. 1 R&B and No. 2 pop hit. Those two songs also crossed over to the country charts. Ray Price scored a No. 1 with "You're The Best Thing," and Bob Luman had a top-five hit with "Neither One Of Us." Price went on to record 38 Weatherly songs; and

WHEREAS, Jim Weatherly, who moved to Nashville in the 1980s, continued his hit-making success with songs like "A Lady Like You," a No. 1 for Glen Campbell, and "Someone Else's Star," which topped the charts for Bryan White. Weatherly was a prolific writer whose songs were recorded by a diverse group of artists, including Vince Gill, Reba McEntire, Kenny Rogers, Etta James, Garth Brooks, Andy Williams, The Oak Ridge Boys, Hall and Oats, Lynn Anderson and many others; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being a member of the Songwriters Hall of Fame, Weatherly was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2006 and the Mississippi Musicians Hall of Fame in 2011. He received the Governor's Award for Excellence in Music from the State of Mississippi in 2014. He



45 also had his own recording career, releasing seven albums. His  
46 1974 single, "The Need To Be," reached No. 11 on the pop charts  
47 and No. 6 on the adult contemporary charts. He also had a top-10  
48 country single, "I Still Love You," in 1975; and

49 WHEREAS, Jim Weatherly began writing songs while growing up  
50 in Pontotoc. He had his own bands in high school and college and  
51 played dates throughout the South until he moved to Los Angeles  
52 with his rock band, The Gordian Knot, in 1966. After meeting  
53 Larry Gordon, who became his Publisher and Manager, Weatherly's  
54 songwriting began to flourish; and

55 WHEREAS, Weatherly is one of the musical artists from  
56 Pontotoc County honored on a Mississippi Blues Trail marker in his  
57 hometown; and

58 WHEREAS, on the football field, Jim Weatherly was an all-star  
59 quarterback for Pontotoc High School. At Ole Miss, he won  
60 All-Southeastern Conference and honorable mention All-American  
61 honors in 1964. Jim was a backup on the only unbeaten and untied  
62 team in Ole Miss history, which won a share of the 1962 National  
63 Championship. The 1962 and 1963 Rebel Teams also won SEC  
64 Championships. Weatherly was inducted into the Ole Miss Alumni  
65 Hall of Fame in 2011; and

66 WHEREAS, Jim Weatherly is survived by his wife, Cynthia;  
67 daughter, Brighton; and son, Zack; and



68 WHEREAS, we pay tribute and cherish fondly the memory of a  
69 legendary Mississippi songwriter who has brought honor to our  
70 state and will be missed:

71 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
72 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the deepest sympathy of the  
73 Mississippi Senate to the surviving family of Jim Weatherly,  
74 Pontotoc native and Hall of Fame Songwriter who led the Ole Miss  
75 Rebels Football Team to the 1962 Consensus National Title, and  
76 commend his career.

77 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
78 the surviving family of Jim Weatherly, forwarded to the Grammy and  
79 Songwriters Hall of Fame and the University of Mississippi  
80 Athletic Department, and made available to the Capitol Press  
81 Corps.

