

By: Representatives Creekmore IV, Lancaster, Reynolds To: Rules

## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 80

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING CHICKASAW COUNTY,  
2 MISSISSIPPI, NATIVE, THE LEGENDARY AND RENOWNED SINGER-SONGWRITER  
3 MRS. BOBBIE GENTRY FOR HER MUSICAL ARTISTRY AND EXTRAORDINARY  
4 TALENT.

5 WHEREAS, "Chickasaw County child, Is gonna be ok, Chickasaw  
6 County child, You gonna be somebody someday" sang the Chickasaw  
7 County, Mississippi, child who grew up to be somebody, the  
8 legendary and renowned singer-songwriter Mrs. Bobbie Gentry; and

9 WHEREAS, Bobbie Gentry, born Roberta Lee Streeter on July 27,  
10 1942, on a little farm outside the Village of Woodland in  
11 Chickasaw County, is a retired, legendary musical artist who used  
12 her talents as a songwriter and singer during her time as one of  
13 the first female musicians who wrote, produced and even published  
14 her own music; and

15 WHEREAS, she is remembered for her Southern themed narrative  
16 songs including her classic recordings "Fancy," a hit for Bobbie  
17 in 1969 and later famously covered by Reba McEntire in 1990, and  
18 her 1967 debut single "Ode To Billie Joe" which became a U.S.



19 number one hit and a worldwide sensation, and was later adapted  
20 into a movie in 1976; and

21 WHEREAS, Mrs. Gentry released seven albums on Capitol  
22 Records including her defining works "Patchwork," "The Delta  
23 Sweete" and "Ode to Billie Joe," before her self-imposed  
24 retirement, and she also had a successful partnership with Glen  
25 Campbell with whom she recorded an album of duets; and

26 WHEREAS, her native Mississippi roots are found in many of  
27 her most popular songs: "Ode to Billie Joe," "Mississippi Delta,"  
28 "Parchman Farm," "Chickasaw County Girl" and "Okolona River  
29 Bottom," among others; and

30 WHEREAS, years ahead of her time, Bobbie was also a keen  
31 businesswoman: within months of the success of her first single,  
32 she established two music publishing companies, organized beneath  
33 her parent company, Gentry Ltd., which among other activities  
34 produced her live shows; and later, when she was primarily  
35 performing, she negotiated her own multi-million dollar contracts;  
36 and she was an original co-owner of the Phoenix Suns Basketball  
37 Team, helping bring the first major professional sports franchise  
38 to the State of Arizona; and

39 WHEREAS, early in her career, despite performing regularly,  
40 initially Bobbie's sole ambition was to write songs to sell to  
41 other artists, telling *The Washington Post* that she only sang on  
42 the recording of "Ode to Billie Joe" she took to Capitol Records  
43 because it was cheaper than hiring a professional; and also



44 delivered to Capitol Records was the track "Mississippi Delta,"  
45 and it was this recording rather than "Ode to Billie Joe" that  
46 initially got her signed; and

47 WHEREAS, the first six years of her career Bobbie was  
48 primarily a recording artist, and for the next six she was an  
49 entertainer appearing on stages all over the world, but primarily  
50 in Las Vegas and Reno; and though she had started playing Las  
51 Vegas as early as 1968 when Howard Hughes put her on at Caesar's  
52 Palace, it was not until her recording career ended that her stage  
53 career really took off; and

54 WHEREAS, one of Bobbie's most talked about live segments in  
55 this period was her tribute to Elvis Presley, witnessed one night  
56 by the King himself; and by the mid-seventies, she was the  
57 undisputed Queen of Las Vegas breaking attendance records at The  
58 Landmark and apparently racking up more performances during her  
59 stage career than any other lady to play the strip; and

60 WHEREAS, her last production was at the Sahara in Las Vegas  
61 during September 1980; but there was no farewell show or  
62 announcement of her retirement; and in May 1981, Bobbie was one of  
63 many guest stars on the NBC special "An All-Star Salute to  
64 Mother's Day" during which she sang just one song: a rendition of  
65 the Broadway tune "Mama, A Rainbow," dedicated to her own mother  
66 who was in the audience; and

67 WHEREAS, what no one knew at the time was that this would be  
68 her last performance; and the following year she made her last



69 public appearance at the Country Music Awards on April 29, 1982,  
70 at 40 years old; and since that time, she has not recorded,  
71 performed or been interviewed again; and

72 WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to celebrate  
73 the accomplishments of musical artists from the State of  
74 Mississippi who have used their talents to enhance the musical  
75 landscape of our lives:

76 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
77 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING  
78 THEREIN, That we do hereby commend legendary and renowned  
79 singer-songwriter Mrs. Bobbie Gentry for bringing the gift of  
80 music into the lives of millions, and we extend our sincere wishes  
81 for good health and happiness in her lighter years.

82 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be  
83 furnished to Mrs. Bobbie Gentry and to the members of the Capitol  
84 Press Corps.

