

By: Senator(s) Horhn, Frazier, Butler
(38th), Barnett, Branning, Jackson (11th),
Simmons (12th), Simmons (13th), Thomas

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 535

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE RECOGNITION OF THE
2 MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE TO THE ICONIC GOSPEL GROUP THE WILLIAMS
3 BROTHERS AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2022 GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARD FOR
4 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN MUSIC.

5 WHEREAS, the Governor's Arts Awards Program has announced its
6 2022 recipients, which include the iconic gospel group The
7 Williams Brothers for Lifetime Achievement in Music; and

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

15 WHEREAS, few gospel groups can equal The Williams Brothers in
16 terms of longevity. Organized in 1960 by their late father, Leon
17 "Pop" Williams, and late brother, Frank Williams, the group now
18 consists of Doug and Melvin Williams, Henry Green and Andre Tate;
19 and



20 WHEREAS, originally based in the southwest Mississippi Town
21 of Smithdale and called The Little Williams Brothers, the group
22 toured on weekends, returning home by Monday to attend school.
23 They quickly built a following and dropped the word "Little" from
24 their name, settling on the Sensational Williams Brothers and
25 later simply "The Williams Brothers"; and

26 WHEREAS, in the late 1960s, the group recorded two singles
27 for a small Jackson label called Delta. In 1971, the group
28 reached a national audience through a split-sided album with the
29 Jackson Southernaires, a group that featured two other Williams
30 brothers, Huey and Frank. Around this time, session drummer
31 Maurice Surrell joined the group. Throughout the 1970s, the group
32 toured extensively on the success of numerous albums and hit
33 singles, for labels like Nashboro, Savoy, Tomato, and New Birth
34 Records. The 1980s saw the group settle in at Jackson's Malaco
35 Records, where they recorded several more popular, award-winning
36 albums; and

37 WHEREAS, in 1991, The Williams Brothers formed Blackberry
38 Records in Ridgeland. Their first release on Blackberry won a
39 Stellar Award and was nominated for a Grammy. They have been
40 inducted as members of the International Gospel Hall of Fame.
41 Over the years, they have performed at some of the most hallowed
42 venues in the world, including Madison Square Garden, the Apollo
43 Theater, Radio City Music Hall and Carnegie Hall. The Williams



44 Brothers were the first gospel headliner to appear at the Hard
45 Rock Hotel and Casino; and

46 WHEREAS, the group has recorded three Billboard Number 1
47 albums and 18 Top Ten Albums. Altogether, they have released more
48 than 42 albums. The Williams Brothers have shared the stage with
49 Stevie Wonder, Brandy, Charley Pride, Jerry Lee Lewis, Patti
50 LaBelle, James Taylor, and many others. In 2015, they performed
51 at the White House with Aretha Franklin for former President
52 Barack Obama; and

53 WHEREAS, demand for their live performances has taken them to
54 venues across the United States and abroad. They have one of the
55 most loyal fan bases in gospel music; and

56 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and
57 express appreciation for the talent of a world-class Mississippi
58 gospel group that has made Mississippi a better place and
59 exemplifies the musical traditions of our great state:

60 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
61 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
62 we do hereby extend the recognition of the Mississippi Legislature
63 to The Williams Brothers, the recipient of the 2022 Governor's
64 Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement in Music, and extend our
65 congratulations to this mighty gospel group on this auspicious
66 occasion.



67 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
68 The Williams Brothers as part of the Governor's Arts Awards
69 presentation and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

