

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.

