

By: Senator(s) Norwood, Frazier, Blount,
Thomas, Horhn, Hickman, Simmons (12th),
England, Kirby

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 33

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING JACKSON STATE
2 UNIVERSITY'S MARCHING BAND "SONIC BOOM OF THE SOUTH" AND DIRECTOR
3 DR. RODERICK LITTLE FOR ITS EXCITING PERFORMANCE WITH ROCK LEGEND
4 USHER DURING THE "APPLE MUSIC SUPER BOWL LVIII HALFTIME SHOW" ON
5 THE OCCASION OF "JSU DAY AT THE CAPITOL" ON MARCH 19, 2024.

6 WHEREAS, Jackson State University's "Sonic Boom of the South"
7 Marching Band made a special appearance with eight-time
8 Grammy-winning artist Usher during the "Apple Music Super Bowl
9 LVIII Halftime Show" in Las Vegas, Nevada, on February 11, 2024;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, the "Boom" showed television viewers and football
12 fans in Allegiant Stadium why they are known as the "Summa Cum
13 Laude of Bands," making the most of a once-in-a-lifetime
14 opportunity; and

15 WHEREAS, there were 123.4 million viewers watching the
16 halftime show of the NFL Championship Game between the Kansas City
17 Chiefs and the San Francisco 49ers, including a shocked audience
18 of Jackson State students, faculty and alumni around the world.
19 Also surprised were the band's family members, who knew the band



20 was performing somewhere but had no clue where. That's because
21 the band had successfully kept the news of its invitation to
22 perform at the world's most-watched sporting event a secret for
23 more than three months; and

24 WHEREAS, "It is not every day you are invited to participate
25 in such a monumental moment. The reality of the situation did not
26 hit us until we began rehearsals in Las Vegas," shares Roderick
27 Little, Ph.D., Director of Bands at JSU. "I cannot think of
28 anything more exciting or rewarding than walking onto the field,
29 hearing the roar of the Super Bowl crowd, and immersing ourselves
30 in the spirit that Usher brought to his performance"; and

31 WHEREAS, Dr. Little says he was met with disbelief when he
32 informed the band students that they would participate in the
33 halftime show. "They deserve this adventure and have worked hard
34 to be here. I am also proud that I could fulfill two of my
35 strategic goals for our band program: provide life-changing
36 experiences for our students and place our program on one of the
37 most visible national stages in this country. It does not get any
38 bigger than the Super Bowl"; and

39 WHEREAS, the band's appearance at the Super Bowl started with
40 a conversation between JSU alum Cortez Bryant and his friend Jesse
41 Collins, Executive Producer of the Halftime Show. "He asked if I
42 knew of any HBCU bands. Of course, Jackson State's "Sonic Boom"
43 is the best band in the land. Without a doubt, they were going to
44 receive my recommendation," says Bryant, also a "Sonic Boom" alum



45 and Co-CEO of Blueprint Group/Maverick. The rest is Jackson State
46 University history; and

47 WHEREAS, the "Sonic Boom" set the stage for Jackson State
48 University to continue to elevate the institution by highlighting
49 the campus culture and student experience. President Marcus L.
50 Thompson, Ph.D., says the performance reiterates the institution's
51 reputation as a global research institution where students excel
52 in and out of the classroom. "I am extremely proud of our
53 students' performance tonight with Usher, and the precision and
54 musicality they brought to one of America's biggest celebrations
55 of sport was unparalleled," says Thompson. "When you realize that
56 these student artists hail from various parts of the country and
57 are studying a variety of majors, including biology, political
58 science, and communications, you can appreciate the level of hard
59 work and perseverance that went into this show"; and

60 WHEREAS, Jackson State University's "Sonic Boom of The South"
61 and the "Prancing J-Settes" have been invited to participate in
62 the 136th Tournament of Roses Parade presented by Honda on
63 Wednesday, January 1, 2025, in Pasadena, California; and

64 WHEREAS, the Jackson State University Marching Band was
65 dubbed "Sonic Boom of the South" in 1971 by students in the band.
66 In 1974, the band's theme, "Get Ready," an old Motown favorite,
67 was selected. Three years later, the "Tiger Run-On" was
68 perfected, which is a fast, eye-catching shuffle that blends an



69 adagio step with an up-tempo shuffle, a "Sonic Boom" trademark
70 that brings fans to their feet during halftime performances; and

71 WHEREAS, the "Sonic Boom" has performed at many halftime
72 appearances, including the Atlanta Falcons, Detroit Lions, New
73 Orleans Saints and Cincinnati Bengals; a television special for
74 Motown's 30th Anniversary and the 34th NAACP Image Awards. The
75 band is a favored entry in halftime performances during football
76 season and for parades throughout Mississippi and the United
77 States; and

78 WHEREAS, the Super Bowl honor adds to the "Boom's" legacy of
79 iconic performances and moments that help elevate the university's
80 name and brand. It is with great pride that we join the students,
81 faculty, JSU administration and JSU fans in recognizing and
82 celebrating this outstanding musical organization which has
83 brought notoriety and honor to their university and to the State
84 of Mississippi:

85 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
86 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend and congratulate Jackson
87 State University's Marching Band "Sonic Boom of the South" and
88 Director Dr. Roderick Little for its exciting performance with
89 rock legend Usher during the "Apple Music Super Bowl LVIII
90 Halftime Show" on the occasion of "JSU Day at the Capitol" on
91 March 19, 2024.

92 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
93 Dr. Roderick Little, Ph.D., Director of Bands, and Dr. Marcus



94 Thompson, Ph.D., President of JSU, forwarded to the Board of
95 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, and be made
96 available to the Capitol Press Corps.

