

By: Senator(s) Horhn, Blackmon, Butler,
Chassaniol, Frazier, McLendon, Robinson,
Simmons (13th), Simmons (12th), Thomas,
Norwood

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 14

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE RECOGNITION OF THE MISSISSIPPI
2 SENATE TO THE LEGACY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE OF THE RISING STARS
3 FIFE AND DRUM BAND FROM COLDWATER, MISSISSIPPI, AS THE RECIPIENT
4 OF THE 2025 GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TRADITIONAL
5 ARTS.

6 WHEREAS, the Governor's Arts Award Program has announced its
7 2025 recipients, which include the Rising Stars Fife and Drum Band
8 from Coldwater, Mississippi, as the 2025 Governor's Arts Award
9 recipient for Excellence in Traditional Arts Award; and

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

16 WHEREAS, the Rising Stars Fife and Drum Band has kept the
17 tradition of Fife and Drum musical expression alive and well for
18 nearly 90 years. The art form has its roots in Mississippi, but
19 has spread across the globe. Fife and Drum music is mainly



20 associated with Northern Mississippi and was popular during
21 slavery and throughout the Civil War. Over 100 years later, the
22 father of Fife and Drum, Otha Turner, carried on the tradition
23 during the 20th century. Today, his legacy lives on through the
24 band led by his granddaughter, Shardé Thomas Mallory; and

25 WHEREAS, Mallory grew up hearing her grandfather play the
26 fife with her brother and cousins playing drums. Mallory wanted
27 in on the fun, so Turner made her a fife of her own. Today,
28 Mallory continues the family tradition by performing with the fife
29 her grandfather made for her as well as the one he played when he
30 was alive; and

31 WHEREAS, the band's origins date back to the 1970s, when
32 Turner played with Jessie Mae Hemphill and Abe Young. At that
33 time, they called themselves the "Mississippi Fife and Drum
34 Corps." Later, Turner formed the current band with his
35 grandchildren, naming the group "Rising Star"; and

36 WHEREAS, after Turner's passing in 2003, Mallory decided to
37 keep the band to introduce fife and drum music to another
38 generation. They changed the band's name to "Rising Stars"
39 because each member shines in their own way, creating not one but
40 many rising stars. The band added more percussion to incorporate
41 corps-style drumming techniques, faster tempos, and more pop music
42 to its repertoire; and

43 WHEREAS, for over two decades, the Rising Stars Fife and Drum
44 Band has been performing on the festival circuit and at venues,



45 including the Cognac Passions Blues Festival, the National Museum
46 of African American History and Culture's grand opening, and on
47 university stages around the country. The band has traveled
48 domestically and internationally, sharing this valuable art form
49 in Europe and Africa; and

50 WHEREAS, their work culminated with the 2023 release of the
51 album *Evolution of Fife and Drum*, which features an eclectic
52 mixture of traditional fife and drum music, gospel, pop, blues,
53 and elements of West African culture. The album won the Memphis
54 Blues Society Best Self-Produced CD Competition in 2023; and

55 WHEREAS, the Rising Stars Fife and Drum Band has been a
56 fixture in the long and strong legacy of Mississippi music and
57 culture. The band's dedicated artists have served Mississippi
58 communities by educating young people on the Mississippi musical
59 tradition of fife and drum music and inspiring them to pursue
60 their own artistic passions; and

61 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and
62 express appreciation for the energy of a Mississippi traditional
63 musical ensemble whose support of the arts has made Mississippi a
64 better place and exemplifies the charitable and artistic/musical
65 traditions of our great state:

66 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
67 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the recognition of the
68 Mississippi Senate to the legacy and community service of the
69 Rising Stars Fife and Drum Band from Coldwater, Mississippi, as



70 the recipient of the 2025 Governor's Arts Award for Excellence in
71 Traditional Arts and extend our congratulations to this
72 outstanding musical organization on this auspicious occasion.

73 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
74 the Rising Stars Fife and Drum Band and made available to the
75 Capitol Press Corps.

