

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

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 15

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE RECOGNITION OF THE MISSISSIPPI
2 SENATE TO THE LEGACY AND TALENT OF EDDIE COTTON, JR., OF JACKSON,
3 MISSISSIPPI, AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2025 GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARD
4 FOR EXCELLENCE IN MUSIC.

5 WHEREAS, the Governor's Arts Awards Program has announced its
6 2025 recipients, which include Gospel/blues artist Eddie Cotton,
7 Jr., of Jackson, Mississippi, as the 2025 Governor's Arts Award
8 recipient for Excellence in Music; and

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

15 WHEREAS, Eddie Cotton, Jr., is a Gospel-infused, juke
16 joint-style Blues Artist with a worldwide reach. He was born in
17 Jackson, Mississippi, and moved to Clinton, Mississippi, when he
18 was two years old. Cotton grew up singing and playing gospel
19 music in his father's church. He started on the drums and then



20 took piano lessons at home. As a youth, he began listening to the
21 blues, and it was not long before that foot-stomping, down-home
22 music would stir in his soul, inspiring him to pick up the
23 electric guitar and cleverly interpret the blues with an original
24 modern flare; and

25 WHEREAS, when Cotton was six, his father took him to the YWCA
26 on Farish Street, where he took guitar lessons from Zac Harmon,
27 who was 17 years old at the time. Cotton and his father often
28 visited other churches, allowing Eddie to learn new chords and
29 techniques and expand his guitar skills. The gospel music he
30 learned in the Church of God in Christ was a creative mix of funk,
31 blues, and even a little jazz. Cotton was attracted to the blues
32 while listening to it on the radio because it reminded him of
33 church chords; and

34 WHEREAS, Cotton received a scholarship to Jackson State
35 University (JSU), where he learned to play jazz and studied music
36 theory. During his time at JSU, he began to get into the blues
37 scene. Cotton frequented the legendary Subway Lounge, where he
38 would watch King Edward Antoine play. Antoine soon learned that
39 Cotton could play guitar and mentored him. Cotton joined King
40 Edwards's band for almost two years until 1996 when Cotton put
41 together his own band, The Mississippi Cotton Club; and

42 WHEREAS, Cotton's music inspires his fans to get up, move,
43 and dance. Cotton has shared line-ups with notables such as
44 Hubert Sumlin, Honey Boy Edwards, Bobby Rush, B.B. King, Little



45 Milton Campbell, Dorothy Moore, The Temptations, Cassandra Wilson,
46 Smokey Wilson, Charlie Pride, Marty Stewart, Sonny Rhodes, The
47 Williams Brothers, Mavis Staples, Gladys Knight, Chaka Khan, Patti
48 LaBelle and many more; and

49 WHEREAS, his blues career has taken him all over the world,
50 and he has played at prestigious festivals and events in Canada,
51 Finland, Norway, France, Germany, and throughout the United
52 States. Cotton has performed at four of the Mississippi GRAMMY
53 Legacy shows cosponsored by the Recording Academy, Los Angeles,
54 and the State of Mississippi. He has also been featured in
55 numerous publications nationally and internationally and has
56 appeared in several films about the blues; and

57 WHEREAS, Cotton's honors include The Peavey Award (2008),
58 Winner of the Vicksburg Blues Society Blues Challenge (2014),
59 Winner of the International Blues Challenge, Memphis (2015),
60 Jackson Music Awards Entertainer of the Year (2016), Jus' Blues
61 Awards Entertainer of the Year (2016) and Central Mississippi
62 Blues Society Lifetime Achievement Award (2024). Among his awards
63 and accolades, he has a Mississippi Blues Trail marker in his
64 hometown of Clinton; and

65 WHEREAS, Cotton has recorded five albums, two of which were
66 live recordings at the Alamo Theater in Jackson. His most recent
67 release, *The Mirror* on the Malaco label, comprises all original
68 songs. Cotton continues to perform at events nationally and
69 internationally. He is working on a new album release for 2025



70 and is part of a book project about Jackson, Mississippi's music
71 history, which will be unveiled in 2025; and

72 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and
73 express appreciation for the energy of a Mississippi musician
74 whose performances have made Mississippi a better place and
75 exemplifies the charitable and artistic/musical traditions of our
76 great state:

77 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
78 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the recognition of the
79 Mississippi Senate to the legacy and talent of Eddie Cotton, Jr.,
80 of Jackson, Mississippi, as the recipient of the 2025 Governor's
81 Arts Award for Excellence in Music and extend our congratulations
82 to this outstanding musician on this auspicious occasion.

83 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
84 Eddie Cotton, Jr., and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

