

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

To: Rules

## SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 18

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE RECOGNITION OF THE MISSISSIPPI  
2 SENATE TO THE LEGACY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE OF NATCHEZ FILMMAKER  
3 TATE TAYLOR AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2025 GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARD FOR  
4 EXCELLENCE IN MOTION PICTURE.

5 WHEREAS, the Governor's Arts Awards Program has announced its  
6 2025 recipients, which include renowned Mississippi filmmaker Tate  
7 Taylor from Natchez, Mississippi, as the 2025 Governor's Arts  
8 Award recipient for Excellence in Motion Picture; 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, Tate Taylor is a Mississippi-born filmmaker whose  
16 work demonstrates his genuine ability to bring stories to life.  
17 Taylor has used his Southern upbringing to inspire art for the big  
18 screen. He has worked in front of and behind the camera. His  
19 rise to fame began with the feature film *The Help*, which gained



four Academy Award nominations, including Best Motion Picture of the Year and an Oscar win by Octavia Spencer for Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role; and

WHEREAS, Taylor's impact is evident in his home state of Mississippi. By filming *The Help* in Greenwood and Jackson, Taylor brought significant attention and economic activity to the area. His commitment to filming in Mississippi has continued with other projects, fostering local talent and providing employment opportunities within the state. Taylor's work has sparked conversations on social issues, particularly through *The Help*, which addressed race and civil rights themes, resonating deeply across the nation and contributing to a broader cultural discourse; and

WHEREAS, Taylor's adept storytelling, nuanced direction, and ability to elicit powerful performances from his actors are hallmarks of his films. His works, such as *Palm Royale* (2023), *Get On Up* (2014), and *The Girl on the Train* (2016), exhibit versatility and a deep understanding of character-driven narratives that resonate with a broad audience; and

WHEREAS, Taylor has played a pivotal role in enhancing Mississippi's image through his dedication to using the state as a backdrop for his films. His projects highlight Mississippi's natural beauty and historical significance, attracting national and international attention. By consistently choosing Mississippi for his productions, as seen in *Get on Up* and *Breaking News in*



Yuba County, Taylor has helped establish the state as a viable and attractive location for the film industry; and

WHEREAS, Taylor's company, *Crooked Letter Pictures*, recently purchased over 100,000 square feet of empty warehouse space and founded Sandbox Stages and Production. This facility will allow movie producers to film an entire movie in one location and provide opportunities for the film industry in Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, in addition, Taylor is an entrepreneur who invests in businesses that provide opportunities for music and culinary arts, including Smoot's and The Little Easy in Natchez, as well as Church Hill Variety in Church Hill, Mississippi. He is a historic preservationist who understands the importance of preserving our rich Mississippi history and architecture. Taylor and his partner John Norris recently began the process of restoring Mississippi's oldest Episcopal congregation—Christ Episcopal Church of Church Hill; and

WHEREAS, his work has boosted the local economy and promoted Mississippi as a place of artistic and cultural importance. He loves nowhere more than his home in Church Hill and has poured himself into economic development and the arts in nearby Natchez, where his film studio, Wyolah Entertainment, is based; and

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and express appreciation for the energy of Mississippi filmmaker whose work and support of the arts have made Mississippi a better place



69 and exemplifies the charitable and artistic traditions of our  
70 great state:

71       NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
72 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the recognition of the  
73 Mississippi Senate to the legacy and community service of Natchez  
74 filmmaker Tate Taylor as the recipient of the 2025 Governor's Arts  
75 Award for Excellence in Motion Picture and extend our  
76 congratulations to this outstanding storyteller and arts support  
77 leader on this auspicious occasion.

78       BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
79 Tate Taylor and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

