

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

66 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and
67 express appreciation for the energy of Mississippi filmmaker whose
68 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.

