

By: Senator(s) Norwood, Frazier, Simmons  
(12th), Butler, Blount

To: Rules

## SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 21

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING "THEE" JACKSON  
2 STATE UNIVERSITY "SONIC BOOM OF THE SOUTH" MARCHING BAND AND  
3 DIRECTOR DR. RODERICK LITTLE FOR THEIR ELECTRIFYING PERFORMANCE AT  
4 THE 2025 TOURNAMENT OF ROSES PARADE IN PASADENA, CALIFORNIA.

5 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we extend the  
6 congratulations of the State to the Jackson State University  
7 "Sonic Boom of the South" Marching Band for its outstanding  
8 performance on national television entertaining parade spectators  
9 at the 2025 Tournament of Roses Parade on January 1, 2025; and

10 WHEREAS, all eyes were glued to the Tournament of Roses  
11 Parade on January 1, 2025, with Mississippians entertaining crowds  
12 along the parade route. Jackson State University's Sonic Boom of  
13 the South and Mississippi's musical legacy appear on the national  
14 stage, showing why the state is the birthplace of American music;  
15 and

16 WHEREAS, "It's an opportunity for us to share with the world  
17 what we've always known, which is that we have the greatest band  
18 in the land, that Mississippi is home, it is the birthplace of  
19 music, and that we are maintaining that tradition," said Dr. Lisa



20 Beckley-Roberts, Chair of Jackson State University's Department of  
21 Music; and

22 WHEREAS, "This is a place that we've belonged for a long  
23 time, but we're finally taking our place," said *Visit Jackson*  
24 spokesperson Yolanda Clay-Moore. "We have such a rich culture and  
25 musical footprint"; and

26 WHEREAS, it's been quite a year for the Sonic Boom,  
27 performing at the Super Bowl in February and now starting the New  
28 Year in the Rose Parade. "A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for  
29 our students and now to cap off this year and to be in California  
30 and to be performing at the Rose Bowl Parade, we're all just  
31 overwhelmed with gratitude," added Beckley-Roberts; and

32 WHEREAS, the Sonic Boom of the South is one of the elite  
33 Historically Black Colleges and Universities marching bands. Its  
34 unique style and showmanship include the J5 drum majors, Prancing  
35 J-Settes, floating JSU, Tiger Run-On, the "Get Ready" entrance,  
36 and "The Series." Its musical approach can be traced to the early  
37 years, when a former arranger for Cab Calloway's big band was the  
38 director (1948-1971). The band performs marches, Jazz, Gospel,  
39 R&B, Hip-Hop, and Deep South Rap. Founded as the Jackson State  
40 University Marching Band, the name "Sonic Boom of the South" was  
41 adopted by Director Harold J. Haughton, Sr. in 1971, having been  
42 suggested by band members; and

43 WHEREAS, Haughton acted as director until 1983. During his  
44 tenure, he changed the band uniform color from royal blue to light



navy blue, introduced the Motown hit "Get Ready" as the band's theme, replaced the Majorettes with featured dancers and introduced the "Tiger Run-On" shuffle, "Tiger Strut" and "Floating JSU" half-time display. He was replaced as director by Dowell Taylor, an alumnus of the band. In 2020, alumnus Roderick Little became the youngest director in the band's history; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, Sonic Boom of the South was featured on ABC's *Good Morning America* during JSU's homecoming week. In 2024, Sonic Boom of the South performed with Usher during the Super Bowl LVIII half-time show. The Sonic Boom of the South has performed at several notable occasions such as Motown 30th Anniversary, the 34th National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Image Awards, alongside "Cedrick the Entertainer", a number of NFL games and its prestigious performance at the 2021 Presidential Inauguration Parade; and

WHEREAS, the JSU Sonic Boom of the South marching band was in the 17th position in the Rose Parade, followed by the Mississippi Float in the 19th position; and

WHEREAS, "We're thrilled to add this award to the long list of recent wins for Mississippi," said Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves. "From record-breaking tourism and economic development to our nationally recognized advancements in education, something special is happening in Mississippi. This award is yet another example of that. Today we extended an invitation to the 850,000 parade attendees and millions of viewers around the country and



70 world to discover all of the awesome things our state has to  
71 offer. It was a great day for Mississippi"; and

72 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we recognize this elite  
73 Mississippi university musical organization that has brought  
74 excitement and excellent musical performances to venues across our  
75 country and has brought honor to its university, its community and  
76 to the State of Mississippi:

77 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF  
78 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby commend and congratulate "Thee"  
79 Jackson State University "Sonic Boom of the South" marching band  
80 and Director Dr. Roderick Little for their electrifying  
81 performance at the 2025 Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena,  
82 California, and extend the best wishes of the Senate for future  
83 successes.

84 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to  
85 the director and staff of the Sonic Boom of the South, forwarded  
86 to the President of JSU, Marcus Thompson, and the Board of  
87 Trustees of IHL and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

