

By: Senator(s) Brumfield, Horhn, Frazier,
Jordan, Blackmon, Butler, Simmons (13th),
Simmons (12th), Hickman, Norwood, Barnett,
Jackson, Boyd, Thomas

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 41

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE RECOGNITION OF THE MISSISSIPPI
2 SENATE TO THE ICONIC GOSPEL GROUP THE WILLIAMS BROTHERS IN HONOR
3 OF THEIR CONTINUING MUSICAL AND CULTURAL LEGACY.

4 WHEREAS, few gospel groups can equal The Williams Brothers in
5 terms of longevity. Organized in 1960 by their late father, Leon
6 "Pop" Williams, and late brother, Frank Williams, the group now
7 consists of Doug and Melvin Williams, Henry Green and Andre Tate;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, originally based in the southwest Mississippi Town
10 of Smithdale and called The Little Williams Brothers, the group
11 toured on weekends, returning home by Monday to attend school.
12 They quickly built a following and dropped the word "Little" from
13 their name, settling on the Sensational Williams Brothers and
14 later simply "The Williams Brothers"; and

15 WHEREAS, in the late 1960s, the group recorded two singles
16 for a small Jackson label called Delta. In 1971, the group
17 reached a national audience through a split-sided album with the
18 Jackson Southernaires, a group that featured two other Williams



19 brothers, Huey and Frank. Around this time, session drummer
20 Maurice Surrell joined the group. Throughout the 1970s, the group
21 toured extensively on the success of numerous albums and hit
22 singles, for labels like Nashboro, Savoy, Tomato, and New Birth
23 Records. The 1980s saw the group settle in at Jackson's Malaco
24 Records, where they recorded several more popular, award-winning
25 albums; and

26 WHEREAS, in 1991, The Williams Brothers formed Blackberry
27 Records in Ridgeland. Their first release on Blackberry won a
28 Stellar Award and was nominated for a Grammy. They have been
29 inducted as members of the International Gospel Hall of Fame.
30 Over the years, they have performed at some of the most hallowed
31 venues in the world, including Madison Square Garden, the Apollo
32 Theater, Radio City Music Hall and Carnegie Hall. The Williams
33 Brothers were the first gospel headliner to appear at the Hard
34 Rock Hotel and Casino; and

35 WHEREAS, the group has recorded three Billboard Number 1
36 albums and 18 Top Ten Albums. Altogether, they have released more
37 than 42 albums. The Williams Brothers have shared the stage with
38 Stevie Wonder, Brandy, Charley Pride, Jerry Lee Lewis, Patti
39 LaBelle, James Taylor, and many others. In 2015, they performed
40 at the White House with Aretha Franklin for former President
41 Barack Obama; and



42 WHEREAS, demand for their live performances has taken them to
43 venues across the United States and abroad. They have one of the
44 most loyal fan bases in gospel music; and

45 WHEREAS, when the Governor's Arts Awards Program announced
46 its 2022 recipients, the iconic gospel group The Williams Brothers
47 were included for Lifetime Achievement in Music; and

48 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and
49 express appreciation for the talent of a world-class Mississippi
50 gospel group that has made Mississippi a better place and
51 exemplifies the musical traditions of our great state:

52 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
53 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the recognition of the
54 Mississippi Legislature to The Williams Brothers in honor of their
55 continuing musical and cultural legacy, and extend our
56 congratulations to this mighty gospel group for their many
57 contributions.

58 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
59 The Williams Brothers in honor of their continuing musical and
60 cultural legacy, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

