

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 900

Expressing support for designation of April as “Gospel Music Heritage Month” and honoring gospel music for its valuable long-standing contributions to American culture.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 19, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas (for herself, Mrs. BONO, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. ROSS, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. HOYER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for designation of April as “Gospel Music Heritage Month” and honoring gospel music for its valuable long-standing contributions to American culture.

Whereas gospel music is a unique and beloved American art form, spanning decades, generations, and races;

Whereas gospel music is one of the cornerstones of the entire American musical tradition and has grown beyond its roots to achieve pop-culture and historical relevance;

Whereas gospel music has spread beyond its geographic origins to touch audiences around the world;

Whereas the history of what is today known as “gospel music” is traced back to multiple and diverse influences and foundations, including African-American spirituals that blended diverse elements from African music, melodic influences from Irish folk songs and hymns, and ultimately borrowed from other uniquely American musical styles including ragtime, jazz, and blues;

Whereas that tradition of diversity remains today, as the influence of gospel music can be found infused in all forms of secular music, from rock & roll, country, soul, R&B, and countless other styles;

Whereas the legacy of gospel music includes some of the most memorable voices and pioneers in American history, such as Thomas Dorsey, Mahalia Jackson, James Vaughan, Roberta Martin, Virgil Stamp, Diana Washington, Stamp Quartet, The Highway QCs, The Statesmen, The Soul Stirrers, Terry Woods, James Cleveland, and Billy Ray Hearn;

Whereas many of the biggest names in music came out of the gospel music tradition or have recorded gospel music including Sam Cooke, Al Green, Elvis Presley, Marvin Gaye, Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Little Richard, Ray Charles, Buddy Holly, Alan Jackson, Dolly Parton, Mariah Carey, Bob Dylan, and Randy Travis;

Whereas regardless of the musical style, these artists and so many more have turned to gospel music as the source and inspiration for their music that has blurred the boundaries between secular and gospel music;

Whereas beyond its contribution to the American musical tradition, gospel music has provided a cultural and musical backdrop across all of mainstream media, from hit tele-

vision series to major Hollywood motion pictures, including American Idol, Heroes, Dancing With The Stars, O Brother, Where Art Thou?, Sister Act, The Preacher's Wife, Evan Almighty and more;

Whereas gospel music has a huge audience around the country and around the world, a testament to the universal appeal of a historical American art form that both inspires and entertains across racial, ethnic, religious, and geographic boundaries; and

Whereas April would be an appropriate month for the establishment of a "Gospel Music Heritage Month" to celebrate the valuable contributions of gospel music: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives supports
- 2 the designation of a "Gospel Music Heritage Month" to
- 3 recognize the great contributions to American culture that
- 4 have derived from the rich heritage of gospel music and
- 5 its artists.

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