

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

23-283

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

JUNE 9, 2020

To recognize, honor, and declare the month of June 2020, African American Music Appreciation Month.

WHEREAS, in 1979, President Jimmy Carter designated June as Black Music Month but it was not until US-Representative Chaka Fattah sponsored House Resolution 509 during the Clinton Administration that Black Music Month was formally recognized;

WHEREAS, African American Music Appreciation Month recognizes the connection to and cannot deny the birth of music from the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the forced transportation of millions of African people across the Atlantic who were enslaved. We celebrate the known and unknown musically talented persons who created this history;

WHEREAS, African American Music Appreciation Month gives homage to the talented and inspiring African American artists who expressed the full range of human emotions through spirituals, blues, jazz, gospel, rock and roll, hip hop, and every genre and style of music;

WHEREAS, African American Music Appreciation Month adorns African American Spirituals, the authentic voice of enslaved African Americans, who were denied the ability to write down and preserve their thoughts;

WHEREAS, African American Music Appreciation Month salutes the countless contributions of African Americans who connected universal shared emotions and experiences of suffering, joy, passion, pain, faith, injustice, and love into an art that speaks to the heart and spirit of any American;

WHEREAS, African American music has the power to encourage, inspire, and affect social change as proven by artists such as, DC natives Duke Ellington and Marvin Gaye and others such as Gil Scott Heron and Nina Simon;

WHEREAS, African American Music Appreciation Month celebrates the earliest jazz and blues recordings from 1920s. African-American musicians developed related styles such as rhythm and blues in the 1940s and had a major influence on white Americans into the 1960s;

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WHEREAS, African American Music Appreciation Month embraces the variations and themes bringing in swing rhythms with saxophones and trumpets, Jazz swing rhythms were

brought into full scale orchestras, ushering in the Swing Era with the likes of Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Dizzy Gillespie, and Count Basie;

WHEREAS, African American Music Appreciation Month recognizes the rise in the popularity of African American music as a cultural and political force, songs such as Billie Holiday's, Strange Fruit and James Brown's, "Say it Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud" became the soundtracks to the revolution;

WHEREAS, African American Music Appreciation Month recognizes the contributions of rap which became popular during the 1970's and was labeled as street art, especially among African American teenagers; but it wasn't until 1979, when the Sugarhill Gang released their breakaway hit, "Rapper's Delight" that producers took notice of this emerging musical genre;

WHEREAS, numerous rap acts grew, including Washington DC's own Wale and Shy Glizzy, and Tabi Bonney gained notoriety and popular success;

WHEREAS, African American Music Appreciation Month recognizes Go-Go, a popular music genre originating in Washington, DC and popularized by singer-guitarist Chuck Brown, affectionately known as the God Father of Go-Go;

WHEREAS, several Go-Go bands such as the Young Senators, Rare Essence, Experience Unlimited, and Junkyard Band contributed to the early evolution of the genre, and Backyard Band, the Take Over Boys (TOB), and the Total Control Band (TCB) continue to exemplify the creative spirit of the homegrown genre.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "African-American Music Appreciation Month Resolution of 2020."

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes, honors and declares the month of June 2020, African American Music Appreciation Month.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.