

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 941

By Beck

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Ricky Skaggs upon his fortieth anniversary as a member of the Grand Ole Opry.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should recognize those gifted artists who have experienced great success in the world of country and bluegrass music; and

WHEREAS, Ricky Skaggs, winner of multiple Grammys and International Bluegrass Music Association awards, will celebrate his fortieth anniversary as a member of the Grand Ole Opry on May 15, 2022; and

WHEREAS, although fifty years have passed since Ricky Skaggs made his television debut on Flatt and Scruggs's Martha White-sponsored show, he is still one of the youngest Grand Ole Opry stars to legitimately qualify as an elder statesman of country and bluegrass music; and

WHEREAS, beginning with his 1961 appearance on that show at the age of seven, Ricky Skaggs has blazed an astonishing path through music, first as a sideman and then as a star, earning lasting acclaim for his signature combination of skill, passion, tradition, and creativity; according to the legendary Chet Atkins, Mr. Skaggs "singlehandedly saved country music"; and

WHEREAS, the child of a musical family, Ricky Skaggs entered the world of professional music with another future star, his friend, Keith Whitley, when bluegrass pioneer Ralph Stanley employed the teenage musicians in 1971 for summer touring and recording; and

WHEREAS, after completing high school, Mr. Skaggs enjoyed high-profile stints with the Country Gentlemen and J. D. Crowe's New South before forming Boone Creek, an influential band that bridged tradition and more modern sounds; and

WHEREAS, Ricky Skaggs's career as a band member and sideman concluded in the late 1970s with a tour of duty in Emmylou Harris's Hot Band, during which time he produced several of her most admired albums; and

WHEREAS, in 1981, Ricky Skaggs moved to center stage when several singles from his first album, *Waitin' for the Sun to Shine*, hit the top of the country charts, including "Heartbroke," "Highway 40 Blues," "Country Boy," and "Don't Cheat in Our Hometown," all of which featured his fresh combination of traditional material, modern production, soulful singing, and hot picking; and

WHEREAS, he was among the Top Twenty artists of the decade in the 1980s and the Top 100 of the past fifty years in airplay; he also earned eight awards from the Country Music Association, including Entertainer of the Year in 1985; and

WHEREAS, Ricky Skaggs took his career in a new direction in the mid-1990s, when he vowed to carry on the legacy of Bill Monroe by rededicating himself to bluegrass; beginning with *Bluegrass Rules!*, a steady stream of albums and concert, festival, and television appearances with his award-winning band, Kentucky Thunder, have brought him a new round of honors and a new generation of fans; and

WHEREAS, today, even as he continues to explore new territory through guest appearances with rock and classical groups and collaborations with other artists, including Bruce Hornsby and The Raconteurs, Ricky Skaggs continues to serve as one of bluegrass' most admired and gifted ambassadors; and

WHEREAS, it is the dream of every country music artist to be a member of the Grand Ole Opry and perform on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry House, and it is most fitting that Ricky Skaggs be recognized on this special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE

CONCURRING, that we honor and recognize Ricky Skaggs upon his fortieth anniversary as a member of the Grand Ole Opry, commend his illustrious career in country and bluegrass music, and extend to him our best wishes for every continued success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.