

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 609

By Akbari

A RESOLUTION to commend and honor country music artist T.J. Osborne.

WHEREAS, the artists who pour their hearts and souls into the music we love so often become our heroes and role models—familiar faces who express resonant truths, making us feel the full spectrum of emotions and less alone; and

WHEREAS, one such esteemed artist is country music star T.J. Osborne, who recently shared with the public what had been known by his family and his close-knit Nashville community for years, that he is gay; and

WHEREAS, his decision to be publicly forthcoming about such an integral, heretofore muted part of his identity came after months of lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic, when his introspection allowed him to come to the realization that he wanted to reach the height of his career "being completely who I am"; and

WHEREAS, T.J. Osborne is the lead vocalist of the duo Brothers Osborne, which he formed with his guitarist brother, John, in 2012; together, they make roots-inflected, soulful country-rock that has garnered them a legion of fans and much critical acclaim; and

WHEREAS, T.J. and John, along with their sister, Natalie, had a rich musical upbringing in Deale, Maryland, with their father, "Big John," incorporating them into his local blues band shows; all three of the siblings eventually moved to Nashville, and Natalie Osborne currently works for a music publisher; and

WHEREAS, once in Music City, the Brothers Osborne first signed a publishing deal and later a record deal; since signing with EMI Records Nashville, the duo has released three albums and seven Top 40 country singles, including the platinum crossover hit "Stay a Little Longer"; and

WHEREAS, the duo has won four Country Music Association (CMA) awards, been nominated for seven Grammys, and collaborated with heavy-hitting country contemporaries such as Dierks Bentley and Maren Morris; and

WHEREAS, though T.J. Osborne is not the first country music artist to come out as gay, he is the first and currently only openly gay artist signed to a major country music label; though it may have merely been a consequence of being true to himself, he has nonetheless become a trailblazer and a symbol of hope for those country music artists and fans alike who may have felt ostracized from a genre they hold dear; and

WHEREAS, it is most fitting that Mr. Osborne be recognized at this time; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we commend and honor country music artist T.J. Osborne, the first openly gay artist signed to a major country music label, extending our gratitude for his integrity and our best wishes for much continued success in all his future endeavors.

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.