

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 884  
By Walker

A RESOLUTION to honor Eddy Arnold, all-time great country music recording artist, respected businessman and civic leader.

WHEREAS, Tennessee is renown as the center for country music and its citizens are justifiably proud of the nationally and internationally acclaimed artists of that music genre that have spread appreciation of its messages and melodies across the globe; and

WHEREAS, there was a time when country music was simply a regional style played mostly at home or in local gatherings in a mostly rural America; even when radio broadcasting came into being, country music was not immediately a national phenomenon; and

WHEREAS, the early radio performers and pioneer recording artists of country music began the process of extending the reach of country music appreciation; on May 15, 1918, Richard Edward "Eddy" Arnold was born on a farm near Henderson in Chester County, Tennessee to parents accomplished on the guitar and fiddle; and

WHEREAS, young Eddy grew up listing to local mountain music and blues and learned to play the guitar at the age of ten; he practiced the guitar and harmonica and listened to

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records. His father died when he was only eleven and the farm had to be sold, but Eddy stayed with his music while sharecropping and began to play at local dances; and

WHEREAS, in 1936, he first appeared on local radio station WTJS in Jackson, and went on to Memphis, Louisville and St. Louis, and performed as a member of Pee Wee King's Golden West Cowboys from 1940-43; in late 1943, he launched his solo career as "The Tennessee Plowboy," touring with the Grand Ole Opry's Camel Caravan Show. He was signed by RCA Records, debuting in 1945 with *Each Minute Seems a Million Years* and soon replaced Roy Acuff as country music's most popular and prolific singer; and

WHEREAS, Eddy Arnold's career did not falter from that initial start; he made records and broke records steadily for over fifty years. Thirty-two years ago, on February 23, 1970, RCA presented him with an award to commemorate his selling of over 60 million records; his total now is over 85 million; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Arnold's superlatives are legion, including his retention of the #1 ranking all-time Country Music Artist, the record for Most Country Records on the Charts, record for length of time on the charts for a country music record for *Bouquet of Roses*, and first country music star with a network television show; his early recording sessions launched the Nashville recording industry, and he pioneered the Nashville Sound that took the City's music to great heights of popularity during the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, the country music industry accorded Eddy with many honors, electing him to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1966, awarding him the Country Music Association "Entertainer of the Year" for 1967, the Pioneer Award from the Academy of Country Music in 1984; and

WHEREAS, the depth and breadth of Mr. Arnold's appeal is illustrated by his having appeared with the Symphony Orchestras of Atlanta, Birmingham, Dallas, Denver, Hartford, Jacksonville, Memphis, and Phoenix, among others; at Houston's Astrodome he performed before a record-breaking 46,583 people; and

WHEREAS, Eddy introduced country music at Carnegie Hall, performing there twice to superlative reviews, including "Time Magazine's" report that "...he drew a standing ovation and a stampede of well wishers..."; other notable venues include Caesar's Palace and the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas, and Harrah's Hotels in Lake Tahoe, Reno and Atlantic City; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Arnold's far-flung and well-received performances have justifiably earned him the title of "Ambassador of Country Music"; millions came to appreciate the basic melodies and lyrics of our national heritage of country music through hearing him on RCA records, and as a guest artist with symphony orchestras, major night clubs and in concerts across the United States and Europe; and

WHEREAS, Eddy has appeared on every major network variety show in this country and in Europe, hosted many television specials, including the Tonight Show for the vacationing Johnny Carson, seventeen Kraft Music Hall shows, a Kraft Music Hall Christmas Special and a summer Kraft Music Hall series entitled "County Fair"; he narrated the NBC-TV Special, "Music from the Land," a history of country music; and

WHEREAS, generations of American music lovers treasure such hits as *Bouquet of Roses*, *That's How Much I Love You*, *Anytime*, *Cattle Call*, *Make the World Go Away*, *I Want to Go with You*, *The Last Word in Lonesome is Me*, *What's He Doing in My World*, *Lonely Again*, *Misty Blue*, and *Turn the World Around the Other Way*, as well as the co-authored favorites, *You Don't Know me* and *Just A Little Lovin'*; and

WHEREAS, Eddy Arnold has successfully synthesized rural and urban, folksy and sophisticated elements to create his enormous universal appeal, yet staying true to the down-to-earth quality of the country music genre; he retired from performing on May 16, 1999, and considers the song *To Life*, the greatest of his career and a fitting capstone; and

WHEREAS, as a person, Mr. Arnold commands great respect and affection, reflected by the fact that both major political parties have asked him to run for Governor of Tennessee; he is also an established and effective businessman with interests in real estate and land

development, an automobile dealership, music publishing, record pressing, water utilities and apartment houses. He sits on the Boards of Directors of several corporations and banks and is a past President and Honorary Governor of the Nashville Chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences; and

WHEREAS, his great artistry and many accomplishments aside, Eddy has been fortunate to share the love and support of his wife, Sally, and their daughter and son; he now enjoys hunting, boating, fishing, golf and reading at his home outside Nashville; and

WHEREAS, the many years of pleasure brought to millions by the profound artistry of this accomplished Tennessean and exemplary human being are worthy of our heartfelt expression of appreciation and gratitude; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we extend our thanks and praise to Eddy Arnold, "Ambassador of Country Music," for his long career of carrying the banner of country music across this nation and the world, express our gratitude for the legacy of his wonderful work which resides in our collective memory, and offer our best wishes for every happiness and satisfaction in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.