

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 773

By Hardaway

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Michael Jackson, the undisputed "King of Pop."

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should honor the memory of one of the greatest entertainers and artists in the history of American popular music, namely Michael Jackson; and

WHEREAS, aptly named the "King of Pop," Michael Jackson transcended race to become one of the most beloved and most influential artists of the 20th century, inspiring people from all walks of life and from all over the world with his music; and

WHEREAS, born in Gary, Indiana on August 29, 1958, Michael Jackson was the seventh of Joseph and Katherine Jackson's nine children, including, in addition to Michael, Rebbie, Jackie, Tito, Jermaine, La Toya, Marlon, Randy, and Janet; and

WHEREAS, after beginning his career at the tender age of five, Michael made a huge splash in the music industry in 1969, at the age of eleven as the youngest member of the Jackson 5, as the group's first four singles reached number one; he began his solo career in 1971, while still a member of the group; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1980s, Michael Jackson became a dominant figure in popular music and the first African American entertainer to amass a strong crossover following through the auspices of MTV; and

WHEREAS, his music videos are widely credited with transforming the genre from a promotional tool into an art form, and through these videos, Michael was an enduring staple on MTV in the 1990s; and

WHEREAS, a man of great compassion and generosity, Michael Jackson raised and donated millions of dollars for worthy causes through his foundation, charity singles, and support of thirty-nine charities, including the Heal The World Foundation; and

WHEREAS, one of the few artists to have been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame twice, Michael Jackson was named the "Most Successful Entertainer of All Time" by Guinness World Records in recognition of his thirteen Grammys, thirteen number-one singles, and the sale of 750 million records worldwide; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, Michael Jackson made his film debut playing the Scarecrow opposite Diana Ross's Dorothy in *The Wiz*; and

WHEREAS, although he continued to record and perform with the Jackson 5 and The Jacksons during the 1970s and much of the 1980s, Michael Jackson grew leaps and bounds as an artist and musician with his solo album *Off The Wall*; co-produced by the legendary Quincy Jones and released in 1979, *Off The Wall* was the first album to generate four top ten hits in the U.S. and eventually sold twenty million copies worldwide; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, Michael Jackson reached the acme of his career with the release of *Thriller*, which charted in the top ten of the Billboard 200 for eighty consecutive weeks; seven singles from *Thriller* concurrently hit the Billboard Hot 100 top ten, and the album has gone on to sell upwards of 109 million copies, making *Thriller* the bestselling album of all time; and

WHEREAS, he also enjoyed great success with *The Making of Michael Jackson's Thriller*, a documentary by Michael and John Landis that sold over 350,000 copies; and

WHEREAS, beyond its artistic and commercial success, *Thriller* instituted multiple changes within the music industry and restored the industry's confidence in releasing high-level artistry during a time when profits had been declining; at the 25th anniversary of its release, *Thriller* remained an important influence on the music industry, musicians, and American culture; and

WHEREAS, on March 25, 1983, Michael Jackson performed live before forty-seven million viewers on the *Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever* television special, both with The Jacksons and on his own, and debuted his signature dance move, the moonwalk; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, Michael was invited to the White House to receive an award from President Ronald Reagan in recognition of his support of charities that funded treatment for alcohol and drug abuse; and

WHEREAS, after winning eight awards at the 1984 Grammys, Michael Jackson embarked on the Victory Tour as a member of The Jacksons; the Victory Tour showcased much

of his new solo material to more than two million Americans, and Michael donated his five-million-dollar share from the tour to charity; and

WHEREAS, Michael Jackson then co-wrote the charity single, We Are the World, which was released worldwide to aid the poor in Africa and the U.S. Michael was one of thirty-nine celebrities to perform on the record, and the song would become one of the best-selling singles of all time, with twenty million copies sold and millions of dollars donated to famine relief; and

WHEREAS, in 1987, Michael Jackson released his highly anticipated solo album, Bad, and launched his record-breaking first solo world tour, on which he performed 123 concerts to a total audience of 4.4 million people; Bad charted five singles at number one on the Billboard Hot 100, more than any other album, and sold thirty million copies worldwide; and

WHEREAS, while working with Paul McCartney on two duets, Michael was inspired by the ex-Beatle to broaden his business horizons to include buying, selling, and distributing publishing rights to music by other artists; shortly afterward, Michael purchased Northern Songs, which held rights to The Beatles' back catalog, for \$47.5 million; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, he married Lisa Marie Presley, daughter of rock and roll legend Elvis Presley, in the 87th House District of the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his parents and siblings, Michael Jackson is survived by his three children: Prince Michael Joseph Jackson, Paris Michael Katherine Jackson, and Prince Michael Jackson II (Blanket); and

WHEREAS, sadly, Michael Jackson departed this world for a far better existence on June 25, 2009, leaving behind, in addition to his grieving family and friends, literally millions of devoted fans who will always hold the King of Pop in the highest regard; and

WHEREAS, Michael Jackson and his indelible influence on popular music and popular culture should be commemorated by this General Assembly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Michael Jackson, the undisputed King of Pop, even as we reflect fondly upon his artistry as a musician, his status as an American icon, and his generosity as a philanthropist.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we extend to Michael Jackson's family and many friends our deepest sympathies and most sincere condolences.

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