

SENATE BILL 3345

By Tate

AN ACT to name a segment of Interstate 40 in West Tennessee in honor of the late Isaac Hayes.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the General Assembly recognize those artistic sons and daughters of Tennessee who have brought great acclaim to this State as a result of their talents, creativity, generosity, and determination; and

WHEREAS, no Tennessee artist could possibly be more deserving of such salutation than legendary singer, producer, songwriter, musician, and Soul Man, Isaac Hayes, who partnered with the Tennessee Department of Tourism Development to promote Tennessee's music attractions and destinations to audiences worldwide; and

WHEREAS, Isaac Hayes was a true Renaissance man who achieved success in vocal performances, songwriting, humanitarian work, and television and motion picture endeavors, and as a radio show host, pianist, saxophone player, restaurateur, and cookbook author; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being one of the architects of the Memphis Sound while at Stax Records, Isaac Hayes was an innovative solo artist whose music combined elements of rhythm and blues, soul, gospel and jazz to create a unique signature sound that identified him as the progenitor of widely divergent genres, from disco to hip-hop; and

WHEREAS, in addition to this peerless musical legacy, he also distinguished himself as one of the most influential cultural and artistic icons in African American history through his many humanitarian efforts and contributions to literacy and education internationally; and

WHEREAS, born in the rural poverty of a sharecropper's family in Covington, Tennessee in Tipton County on August 20, 1942 and orphaned in infancy, Isaac Hayes was raised by his maternal grandparents; and

WHEREAS, Isaac Hayes sang publicly for the first time at an Easter ceremony at Saint Stephen's Chapel when he was only three years old; and

WHEREAS, Isaac Hayes attended a small schoolhouse in Rialto until third grade when he moved to Memphis; he graduated from Memphis Manassas High School in 1962 and soon thereafter began playing dates as a keyboardist at the newest record label in Soulsville USA, Stax Records; and

WHEREAS, he was a self-taught keyboardist and vocalist who became a veteran musician, producer and arranger and quickly progressed from session player to a ubiquitous presence at Stax; collaborating with David Porter, Isaac Hayes penned, arranged and produced some two hundred soul standards in a very short period of time, including "Hold On! I'm Comin'," "I Thank You," the R&B Grammy award winning "Soul Man," "B-A-B-Y," "I Got to Love Somebody's Baby," "I Had a Dream," and "When Something Is Wrong With My Baby"; and

WHEREAS, as a result of that fruitful songwriting collaboration, Isaac Hayes and David Porter, the legendary duo, were inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in its 36th annual induction in New York City on June 9, 2005, a recognition which acknowledges the talent and passion the men shared for composing some of the world's most memorable songs; and

WHEREAS, his work with Sam and Dave, Otis Redding, Booker T and the MGs, the Mar-Keys, the Bar-Kays, Rufus and Carla Thomas, and virtually the entire Stax roster was seminal in creating "The Memphis Sound" that transformed popular music internationally; and

WHEREAS, in 1967 Isaac Hayes began a solo career which included nine top 40 R&B albums ranging from his 1967 debut *Presenting Isaac Hayes* and the landmark Grammy awarded 1969 album *Hot Buttered Soul*, 1970's *To Be Continued*, 1970's *The Isaac Hayes Movement*, 1971's *Black Moses*, 1973's *Joy*, 1973's *Live at the Sarah Tahoe*, 1975's *Chocolate Chip*, 1979's *Don't Let Go*, 1995's *Branded and Raw and Refined*, to 2005's *Ultimate Isaac Hayes Can You Dig It?*; and

WHEREAS, although he produced many memorable songs and albums, Isaac Hayes was nearly universally identified with the 1971 soundtrack double album and musical score for the movie *Shaft* and the theme song single of the same name; and

WHEREAS, *Shaft* was the first album in history by a solo black artist to reach number one on both the pop and R&B charts, and Isaac Hayes was the first African American composer to win an Oscar for the Best Musical Score; *Shaft* also won a Golden Globe award, two Grammy awards, and a NAACP Image Award; and

WHEREAS, Isaac Hayes was instrumental in staging the 1972 Wattstax concert in which he performed as the headline act; performed at the Los Angeles Coliseum in the summer of 1972, Wattstax was a great source of pride for the African-American Los Angeles community of Watts and focused worldwide attention on issues of social and economic justice for that beleaguered community, while also highlighting the great Memphis Stax sound; and

WHEREAS, Isaac Hayes, a BMI songwriter, received 5 BMI R & B Awards, 2 BMI Pop Awards, and 2 BMI Urban Awards, and was honored as a BMI Icon in 2003; and

WHEREAS, during the succeeding years, Isaac Hayes pursued a musical career that is second to none in innovation and influence on his fellow artists; his work has been sampled nearly 200 times by rappers and rockers alike; and

WHEREAS, Isaac Hayes also distinguished himself as a talented actor, starring in the movies *Truck Turner*, *Escape from New York*, *I'm Gonna 'Git You*, *Sucka*, *Soul Men* and numerous other films and the television shows *The Rockford Files*, *The A-Team*, *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*, *Miami Vice*, *Girlfriends* and many others; and

WHEREAS, he bridged the generation gap and established himself as an icon for a whole new generation through his role as Jerome "Chef" McElroy, Cartman's favorite cafeteria worker on the animated television series *South Park*; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hayes also played an instrumental role in establishing and supporting the Soulsville Foundation which operates the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, and was a persuasive fundraiser on behalf of the Stax Music Academy, a facility where he developed, counseled and taught future Memphis musicians and singers; and

WHEREAS, inspired by the kindness and concern shown for him by his teachers at Manassas High School, Isaac Hayes dedicated his life to improving literacy and education, and promoting music education; and

WHEREAS, a humanitarian mission to Ghana in the early 1990s resulted in Isaac Hayes' coronation as King for Development in the Ada coastal district of Ghana, where he was a member of the Royal Family; instead of resting on his royal laurels, he raised money to build a large educational facility in Ada called NekoTech that provides Internet access and education in reading, pedagogy, computer technology, and health; and

WHEREAS, believing strongly that literacy and education are the keys to freedom and prosperity, he founded the Isaac Hayes Foundation whose mission is to enable people around the world to become whole by promoting literacy, music education, nutritional education, and innovative programs that raise self-esteem among the underprivileged and teach young people how to study; and

WHEREAS, Isaac Hayes donated thousands of dollars through grants from his Isaac Hayes Foundation to schools in Memphis, Nashville, and Washington, D.C. for the purpose of improving the musical education programs for those schools and for the purchase of musical instruments; and

WHEREAS, Isaac Hayes was, without question, an accomplished musical artist, but he may have been an even more valuable public servant, statesman, humanitarian and citizen of the world; his many contributions to improving literacy worldwide, his singular musical legacy,

and his heartfelt endeavors in promoting the State of Tennessee and its fine cities as worthy vacation destinations should be appropriately recognized; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly passed a resolution in 2005 honoring and recognizing Isaac Hayes as a Tennessee Treasure; and the State of Tennessee issued a proclamation on August 18, 2008, honoring Isaac Hayes and his contributions to the State of Tennessee and the entire Nation; and

WHEREAS, Isaac Hayes was a loving father, grandfather, great grandfather; and a loving husband to his wife Adjowa; and

WHEREAS, with the passing of Isaac Hayes on August 10, 2008, in Memphis, Tennessee, the Nation lost a talented artist, influential humanitarian, philanthropist, actor, artist, radio show host, and singer-songwriter; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this General Assembly designate a segment of Interstate 40 in West Tennessee in honor of Isaac Hayes, as he was born and spent his early years in Rialto, Tennessee, near Covington and lived for most of the rest of his life in Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the segment of Interstate 40 from the Fayette County / Shelby County line, westward to its intersection with Sam Cooper Boulevard in Shelby County is hereby designated as the "Isaac Hayes Memorial Highway" to honor the memory of, and as a lasting tribute to, a gifted Tennessean and an even more accomplished human being.

SECTION 2. The department of transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating the segment of Interstate 40 described in Section 1 as the "Isaac Hayes Memorial Highway."

SECTION 3. The erection of such signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall become operative only if the cost of the manufacture and installation of such signs is paid to the department of transportation from non-state funds within one (1) year of the effective date of this act. Such payment shall be made prior to any expenditure by the state for the manufacture or installation of such signs. The department shall return any unused portion of the estimated cost to the person or entity paying for such signs within thirty (30) days of the erection of such signs. If the actual cost exceeds the estimated cost, an amount equal to the difference in such costs shall be remitted to the department in non-state funds within thirty (30) days of the sponsoring person or entity receiving an itemized invoice of the actual cost from the department.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.