

Chapter No. 2012

11/HR07/R1731

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**HOUSE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 47**

Originated in House Don Richardson Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 47

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING AND DESIGNATING THE YEAR 2011 AS THE "100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF LEGENDARY BLUESMAN ROBERT JOHNSON."

WHEREAS, legendary Blues Guitarist Robert Johnson was born May 8, 1911, in Hazlehurst, Mississippi, and died on August 16, 1938, at the tender age of 27 under mysterious circumstances; and

WHEREAS, Robert Johnson was an influential Mississippi Blues singer and songwriter, who was born and raised in Mississippi, and started playing blues guitar in the late 1920s; and

WHEREAS, sadly, his wife and child died in childbirth around 1930 and after their death, he is said to have devoted himself to the guitar in such a manner that has become legend; the singer and songwriter supposedly sold his soul to Satan "at the crossroads" in exchange for his remarkable talent on the guitar; and

WHEREAS, a portion of this "crossroads" legend stems from a report that he dropped out of sight for a while in the early 1930s and returned to the music scene as a phenomenal guitarist, who recorded at least 29 songs in Texas (San Antonio and Dallas) between 1936 and 1937, and then returned to Mississippi to play and sing in clubs; and

WHEREAS, the 2011 Blues at the Crossroads Concert Series picks up the thread of Johnson's legacy in Mississippi, at the infamous "crossroads," located at the junction of U.S. Highways 61 and 49, where Johnson's burning desire pushed him to make his deal with the devil to give up his soul to write the best blues the world has ever heard; and

WHEREAS, as one of the most famous Delta Blues musicians, Robert Johnson has influenced a broad range of musicians for generations with his songs, vocal phrasing and guitar style which were magnificently displayed in his landmark recordings from 1936 to 1937; and

WHEREAS, Eric Clapton has called Johnson "the most important blues singer that ever lived" and described Johnson's emotive vocal delivery as "the most powerful cry that I think you can find in the human voice."; and

WHEREAS, Johnson's songs, such as "Crossroad Blues," "Me and the Devil Blues," "Love in Vain" and "Terraplane Blues," have been covered by several rock stars, including Eric Clapton and The Rolling Stones; and

WHEREAS, Johnson was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as an "Early Influence" in its first induction ceremony in 1986; and

WHEREAS, the Robert Johnson Centennial Concerts have a direct connection to the legend through authentic Blues performers and family members of Robert Johnson, and this year marks a very important musical anniversary, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to present Mississippi's cultural background and Blues music to fans of the Blues; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to acknowledge important events in Mississippi's musical history, such as the "100th Anniversary of the Birth of Legendary Bluesman Robert Johnson":

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby acknowledge and designate 2011 as the "100th Anniversary of the Birth of Legendary Bluesman Robert Johnson" and invite fans of the Blues around the world to travel to Mississippi to experience the Blues where it originated.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be furnished to the Division of Tourism, the Mississippi Arts Commission and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 3, 2011



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 24, 2011



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE