

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 40

BY SENATORS GALLOT, KOSTELKA, LONG AND RISER AND
REPRESENTATIVES DIXON AND HARRIS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend the inaugural Little Walter Music Festival to be held in Alexandria on May 4, 2013, and to acknowledge and recognize the musical talents and enduring legacy of Little Walter.

WHEREAS, the inaugural Little Walter Music Festival will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2013, at the downtown Alexandria Amphitheater situated on the Red River, honoring Rock & Roll Hall of Famer, Blues sideman and bandleader "Little Walter"; and

WHEREAS, the festival will begin with Bobby Rhodes and The Ministry of Blues; Josh Hyde and the Hitchhikers with legendary guitarist Buddy Flett, featuring harp player A.J. Cascio, who will perform some Little Walter covers along with original songs from his latest CD, The Green Room; and Texas Bluesman Mike Morgan & the Crawl will follow with gritty originals and covers, highlighting his guitar punches and jumping Stax/Volt-era soul, reminiscent of Otis Redding's Otis Blue with a 21st century feeling; and

WHEREAS, headlining the event is the "Louisiana Music Hall of Fame Little Walter Legends" as multiple Louisiana Blues harp artists, LMHOF member Henry Gray (who played with Little Walter in Chicago) and a cast of Louisiana Blues All Stars will help usher "Little Walter" into The Louisiana Music Hall Of Fame with a presentation from LMHOF President Mike Shepherd; and

WHEREAS, closing the event will be a jam session featuring Lady Liz Neville, former lead vocalist in the Hotel Bentley's Mirror Room, along with the LMHOF "Legends" band on Little Walter's classic hits, "Juke" and "My Babe"; and

WHEREAS, Little Walter revolutionized the sound of the blues harmonica through amplification just by claspings a microphone to the harmonica as he played; and

WHEREAS, Little Walter was born Marion Walter Jacobs on May 1, 1930, in Marksville near what is now known as Spring Bayou Road, moved to Alexandria as a young boy, and learned to play the harmonica on Lee Street, where a historical marker was erected near the house in which he was raised; and

WHEREAS, his revolutionary approach to playing the harmonica has earned him comparisons to Charlie Parker and Jimi Hendrix, for innovation and impact on succeeding generations; and

WHEREAS, his virtuosity and musical innovations fundamentally altered many listeners' expectations of what was possible on blues harmonica; and

WHEREAS, Little Walter made his first released recordings in 1947; joined Muddy Waters' band in 1948; and by 1950, was playing acoustic harmonica on Muddy Waters' recordings; and

WHEREAS, Little Walter became a bandleader and the first completed take of the first song attempted at his debut session, "Juke", became his first hit, spending eight weeks in the number-one position on the Billboard R&B chart and is still the only harmonica instrumental ever to become a number-one hit on the Billboard R&B; and

WHEREAS, three other harmonica instrumentals by Little Walter also reached the Billboard R&B top 10: "Off the Wall" reached number eight, "Roller Coaster" achieved number six, and "Sad Hours" reached the number-two position; and

WHEREAS, Little Walter scored fourteen top-ten hits on the Billboard R&B charts between 1952 and 1958, including two number-one hits (the second being "My Babe" in 1955), a level of commercial success never achieved by Muddy Waters; and

WHEREAS, upon his departure from Muddy Waters' band in 1952, he recruited a young band that was later re-christened "The Jukes" on most of the Little Walter records on which they appeared; and

WHEREAS, Little Walter was inducted into The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2008 in the "sideman" category making him the first and only artist ever to be inducted specifically for his work as a harmonica player; and

WHEREAS, Little Walter, who died on February 15, 1968, has been described as "king of all post-war blues harpists", who "took the humble mouth organ in dazzling amplified directions that were unimaginable prior to his ascendancy"; is arguably the single most influential artist in the history of the blues harmonica; and his legacy has been enormous as he is widely credited by blues historians as the artist primarily responsible for establishing the standard vocabulary for modern blues and blues rock harmonica players.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana hereby commends the inaugural Little Walter Music Festival to be held in Alexandria on May 4, 2013, and acknowledges and recognizes the musical talents and enduring legacy of Little Walter.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES