

112TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 555

To commemorate the life and accomplishments of Whitney Elizabeth Houston over the past 48 years; and expressing the condolences of the House of Representatives to her family upon her death.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 16, 2012

Mr. PAYNE (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. RUSH, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. CLEAVER, and Ms. WATERS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

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## RESOLUTION

To commemorate the life and accomplishments of Whitney Elizabeth Houston over the past 48 years; and expressing the condolences of the House of Representatives to her family upon her death.

Whereas Whitney Elizabeth Houston was born on August 9, 1963, in Newark, New Jersey;

Whereas Whitney Houston was the youngest daughter of famed singer Cissy Houston and John Russell Houston Jr., cousin of Dee Dee and Dionne Warwick, and god-daughter of Aretha Franklin;

Whereas Whitney Houston began following in her mother's footsteps at the age of 11 by performing at her church, New Hope Baptist Church in Newark, New Jersey, and a short time later began performing in shows alongside her mother in New York City in the 1970s and early 1980s;

Whereas, as a teenager, Ms. Houston earned album credits for vocals with the Michael Zager Band, Chaka Khan, Lou Rawls, Herbie Mann, the Neville Brothers, Bill Lawswell's Material, Jermaine Jackson, and various other artists;

Whereas Ms. Houston began modeling in the 1980s and became the first woman of color to grace the cover of Seventeen Magazine;

Whereas, as an accomplished model, Ms. Houston's striking good looks and girl-next-door charm lead her to be a sought after model and featured in multiple layouts, including Glamour, Cosmopolitan, and Young Miss;

Whereas upon seeing Ms. Houston perform in 1983, Arista Records founder and president, Clive Davis immediately signed her and, within a year after being signed, Ms. Houston had her first top-5 R&B hit with Teddy Pendergrass, titled "Hold Me";

Whereas Ms. Houston's debut album, "Whitney Houston", was released in 1985, was certified 13-times platinum (diamond) in the United States, and sold 25,000,000 copies worldwide;

Whereas Ms. Houston's debut album earned her many distinctions, including biggest selling debut album by a solo artist, first female artist to debut an album with three Number One hits, first female Artist to be "Artist of the

Year” and “Album of the Year” on Billboard charts, and first African-American female artist to have consistent and heavy rotation on MTV;

Whereas this early success and acceptance opened many doors for other African-American women vocal artists;

Whereas Ms. Houston’s second album, “Whitney”, was released in 1987 and debuted at Number One on the Billboard album chart, marked the first time in music history that a female artist debuted at Number One in both the United States and the United Kingdom, gave her seven consecutive Number One hits, which broke the record held by the Beatles and The Bee Gees, made her the first female artist to generate four Number One hits from one album, was certified nine-times platinum, and sold 20,000,000 copies worldwide;

Whereas Ms. Houston’s third album, “I’m Your Baby Tonight,” was release in 1990, earned Ms. Houston back-to-back Number One hits, peaked at number three on the Billboard album charts, and was certified four-times platinum and sold 8,000,000 copies worldwide;

Whereas Ms. Houston delivered the most stunning performance of the National Anthem before the 1991 Super Bowl, and more than 20 years later, her performance is not only one of the most spectacular moments in American sports history, but is also the gold standard for all Super Bowl performances;

Whereas, in 1992, Ms. Houston made her movie debut in “The Bodyguard” with Oscar-winning actor and director Kevin Costner and not only did the film break box office records worldwide, but the soundtrack album, which featured six Whitney Houston songs, was the biggest selling

motion picture soundtrack of all time and voted Grammy-winning “Album of the Year”; the soundtrack was certified 17-times platinum and sold more than 42,000,000 copies worldwide;

Whereas Ms. Houston continued to be a successful actress with roles in “Waiting to Exhale”, “The Preacher’s Wife”, Rodgers and Hammerstein’s “Cinderella” and Ms. Houston’s success as a songstress continued with vocals on each soundtrack leading them to similar sales accomplishments as her solo albums;

Whereas, upon the release of “The Preacher’s Wife” soundtrack, Ms. Houston accomplished a lifelong dream with the gospel-filled soundtrack, on which Ms. Houston sang lead vocals on 14 of the 15 songs and which became the biggest selling gospel album in Billboard chart history and was certified three-times platinum;

Whereas, after an eight-year absence, Ms. Houston released her fourth studio album, “My Love Is Your Love”, in 1998 and the album had a string of gold and platinum chart hit singles worldwide and featured vocals from her daughter, Bobbi Kristina Brown;

Whereas, as Ms. Houston celebrated her 15th anniversary as an Arista recording artist, she released “Whitney: the Greatest Hits” in 2000 and the album was certified three-times platinum and had worldwide sales of 10,000,000;

Whereas Ms. Houston released her last studio album, “I Look to You”, in 2009, and the album entered the Billboard album chart at Number One, Ms. Houston’s best opening week sales, and has been certified platinum;

Whereas Ms. Houston had sales of more than 170,000,000 combined album, singles, and videos worldwide during her career with Arista Records;

Whereas Ms. Houston has established the benchmark for stardom and has been named music's most awarded female artist of all time, with an amazing tally of 411 awards (as of 2006) a tally that is certainly topped by her two Emmy Awards, six Grammy Awards, 16 Billboard Music Awards, and 23 American Music Awards, as well as MTV Video Music Awards in the United States and Europe, NAACP Image Awards, BET Awards, Soul Train Music Awards, Soul Train's prestigious Quincy Jones Career Achievement Award in 1998, and her induction into the Black Entertainment Television Walk Of Fame in 1996;

Whereas Ms. Houston has won a worldwide following by reaching deep within her soul and finding common threads with her millions of fans;

Whereas Ms. Houston not only had the voice of an angel but a heart of gold, Ms. Houston's humanitarian efforts are as impressive as her accolades;

Whereas Ms. Houston raised funds for numerous causes, including children around the world, from South Africa to Newark, generating more than \$300,000 for the Children's Defense Fund as a result of a 1997 HBO concert;

Whereas Ms. Houston supported Nelson Mandela and the antiapartheid movement, and while a model refused to work with any agencies that did business with the then-apartheid South Africa;

Whereas Ms. Houston participated in a benefit concert that raised over \$1,000,000 for charities while bringing awareness to apartheid;

Whereas Ms. Houston worked tirelessly for St. Jude Children's Hospital, the United Negro College Fund, and the Children's Diabetes Foundation;

Whereas Ms. Houston founded the Whitney Houston Foundation for the Children, which cares for such problems as homelessness, children with cancer and AIDS, and issues of self-empowerment;

Whereas Ms. Houston's foundation was awarded a VH1 honor for its charitable work;

Whereas Ms. Houston founded the Whitney E. Houston Academy of Creative and Performing Arts to provide expanded arts-focused educational opportunities for its student body and the surrounding community;

Whereas Ms. Houston served as a spokesperson for a youth leadership conference;

Whereas, out of the generosity of her heart, Ms. Houston donated her portion of the proceeds from the release of the National Anthem as a single to the American Red Cross Gulf Crisis Fund and therefore was named to the American Red Cross Board of Governors;

Whereas Ms. Houston supported, performed, and visited many of our service men and women fighting in the Persian Gulf War;

Whereas The Whitney Houston Foundation For Children, Inc. agreed to donate royalties and net proceeds from all single sales of "The Star Spangled Banner" together with "America the Beautiful" to the New York Fire-

fighters 9–11 Disaster Relief Fund and the New York  
Fraternal Order of Police; and

Whereas Ms. Houston was a world-class entertainer and hu-  
manitarian: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) recognizes Ms. Whitney Houston as a world  
3       icon and a once-in-a-lifetime talent;

4               (2) honors Ms. Whitney Houston for her chari-  
5       table efforts; and

6               (3) extends the deepest condolences of the  
7       House of Representatives to the family of Ms. Whit-  
8       ney Houston.

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