

2019 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 132

BY SENATOR PEACOCK

COMMENDATIONS. Commends music legend James Burton of Shreveport, on the occasion of his eightieth birthday.

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To commend James Burton for an outstanding career of over sixty years as a performer,
3 musician, and a Louisiana music legend and to congratulate him on the occasion of
4 his eightieth birthday.

5 WHEREAS, born in Dubberly, Louisiana, on August 21, 1939, James Edward Burton
6 grew up in Shreveport; he received his first guitar as a youngster and was playing
7 professionally by the age of fourteen; he was a self-taught musical phenomenon; and

8 WHEREAS, as he listened to KWKH radio, he was influenced by popular guitarists
9 of the day, such as Chet Atkins, Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Elmore James, Lightnin' Hopkins
10 and many others whose genres covered Rock and Roll, Delta Blues, and Country music; and

11 WHEREAS, James was required to obtain a special permit to play in nightclubs due
12 to his age, however, his guitar playing showed such promise that he was asked to join the
13 "staff band" of the legendary radio show, the Louisiana Hayride, and he played backup for
14 the likes of George Jones, Billy Walker, and Johnny Horton and within a few years, James
15 would be a headliner at the show; and

16 WHEREAS, he honed his craft on a variety of guitar types that included acoustic,
17 steel guitar, slide dobro, and electric styles like Fender Telecasters; no matter who played
18 lead guitar, James Burton had the guitar "licks" to complement the lead note for note; and

1 WHEREAS, while still a teenager, he left home for Los Angeles, California, where
2 he made his mark in the world as one of the most prolific recording session musicians that
3 ever lived and performed as "specialty" artist on thousands of recordings; and

4 WHEREAS, not every recording was an instant hit, however, Burton created a guitar
5 solo on Dale Hawkins' 1957 hit song, "Susie Q", a recording that made the list of the "*500*
6 *Songs that Shaped Rock and Roll*" published by the *Rock and Roll Hall of Fame*; and

7 WHEREAS, his playing style was very distinct; he used a straight pick and a finger
8 pick on his middle finger; he replaced the first four guitar strings with banjo strings which
9 allowed him to bend the strings to create his legendary "chickin' pickin" sound; and

10 WHEREAS, James was a much sought after musician who has performed with the
11 Everly Brothers, Dean Martin, Johnny Cash, Bobby Darin, and anyone else who he could
12 fit into his session schedule; and

13 WHEREAS, he performed as a band member with Ricky Nelson, Emmylou Harris,
14 John Denver, Jerry Lee Lewis, Glen Campbell, Elvis Costello, and a host of others; and

15 WHEREAS, fifty years ago, in 1969, James joined Elvis Presley, organized his band,
16 served as its leader, and backed Elvis until his death in 1977; while in concert, if Elvis
17 exclaimed, "Play it, James," that was his cue for a superb guitar solo; and

18 WHEREAS, Burton has a well-deserved reputation as one of the finest guitar
19 musicians in either country or rock and perhaps he is one of the best guitar players to ever
20 touch a fretboard; he is ranked number 19 in the list of the 100 Greatest Guitarists published
21 by *Rolling Stone Magazine*; and

22 WHEREAS, James Burton is truly a legend in American music; he is a member of
23 the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (2001); he is a recognized guitarist by the Rockabilly Hall
24 of Fame and the Musicians Hall of Fame and Museum (2007); he won a Grammy for Best
25 Country Instrumental Performance (2009); he was inducted into the Louisiana Music Hall
26 of Fame (2009); and he was inducted into the Louisiana Folklife Center Hall of Master Folk
27 Artists (2018); and

28 WHEREAS, James uses his music and his talents to promote the James Burton
29 International Guitar Festival, a three-day festival with featured guest musicians; the event
30 is a fund raiser for the James Burton Foundation, a nonprofit organization that raises funds

