

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 222

BY REPRESENTATIVE WALTERS

A RESOLUTION

To designate the city of Shreveport as the Southern Soul City and the official founder of Southern Soul.

WHEREAS, Southern Soul is an eclectic derivative of soul music that emerged in the Southern United States, blending elements of blues, rhythm and blues, gospel, and occasionally country and rock n' roll; and

WHEREAS, in the Southern Soul Capital of Shreveport, Louisiana, the sound and culture of Southern Soul influences every aspect of life, from music played in entertainment venues to the food served at restaurants; and

WHEREAS, Shreveport's connection to what evolved into the Southern Soul genre dates back to the 1930s, as the birthplace and home of blues legend Huddie "Lead Belly" Ledbetter; and

WHEREAS, Shreveport was a popular tour stop among African American performers who performed in the city's night clubs in the earlier days, which served as proving grounds for artists like James Brown, John Lee Hooker, Bobby Rush, and many more; and

WHEREAS, Carl Sims is widely regarded as the godfather of Southern Soul Music due to his significant contributions to the genre; and

WHEREAS, many of the most revered record labels in Southern Soul history were located in Shreveport, including Jewel, Ronn, and Paula Records; and

WHEREAS, Jewel Records played a vital role in the growth of soul music in Shreveport by establishing a vibrant music scene that contributed in meaningful ways to the local economy; and

WHEREAS, Jewel Records was founded in 1963 in Shreveport, Louisiana, by Stan and Paula Lewis; and

WHEREAS, Jewel Records was one of the only recording studios for African American soul and blues artists in the south in the 1960s and was a major distributor for soul and blues music in Louisiana and Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Jewel Records recorded artists such as John Lee Hooker, Lightnin' Hopkins, and Little John Taylor; and

WHEREAS, disc jockeys stopped playing traditional blues and soul music; and

WHEREAS, at the time, Leonard J. Lewis, the son of Stan Lewis, observed that every artist that was being played was from the south and stated, "it's like Southern Soul"; and

WHEREAS, E. Rodney Jones affirmed Len Lewis' observation and stated that such music was to be called "Southern Soul"; and

WHEREAS, Garland Jones, a former employee of Jewel Records, created the first Southern Soul music compilation; and

WHEREAS, Leonard J. Lewis and Garland Jones developed and promoted the genre and worked together to create air play for Southern Soul music; and

WHEREAS, "Southern Soul" was registered within the trademark database of the Louisiana Secretary of State by Leonard J. Lewis, in Shreveport, Louisiana, on June 28, 2001; and

WHEREAS, this genre of music serves to bridge the gaps of age, race, socio-economic status, and musical preference by bringing together individuals of varying backgrounds to celebrate music that truly moves the soul; and

WHEREAS, September is the month Shreveport will observe Southern Soul history recognizing it as "Southern Soul September"; and

WHEREAS, this honor is worthy of extending beyond a monthly or periodic celebration to an official recognition of Shreveport, Louisiana, as the Southern Soul City based on its contributions to originating the sound and continuing its growth and popularity.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby designate the city of Shreveport as the Southern Soul City and the official founder of Southern Soul.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the mayor of Shreveport, the chair of the board of directors of the Shreveport-Bossier African American Chamber of Commerce, the chairman of the board of directors of the Shreveport Regional Airport, the president of the board of control of the Shreve Memorial Library, the vice president of business development of the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau and the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission, and the commissioner of the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES