



State of Tennessee

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 709

By **Marrero, Ford, Kelsey, Kyle, Norris, Tate**

A RESOLUTION recognizing Joe Manuel and The Saturday Night Jamboree.

WHEREAS, music is a bright thread running through the rich tapestry that is Tennessee's cultural history, giving us our voices, telling our stories and our histories, and shaping our identity as a people; and

WHEREAS, from the soulful strains of the Blues rising up from Memphis to the Country and Western Mecca of Nashville to the Bluegrass roots buried deep in East Tennessee, it is music that unites us as Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly pause in their deliberations to recognize those who, through their efforts and their influences, have helped shape the course that music has travelled through this State; and

WHEREAS, Joe Manuel was one such individual. A popular Hillbilly Radio Star for WHBQ in Memphis in the 1930s and '40s, Mr. Manuel, who was a talented stage musician, entertainer, and songwriter, is perhaps best known as the founder of The Saturday Night Jamboree; and

WHEREAS, The Saturday Night Jamboree was a local stage show held every Saturday night in 1953-54 in the Goodwyn Institute Auditorium in downtown Memphis; and

WHEREAS, due to the popularity of his radio show, Mr. Manuel became familiar with many of the young musicians in and around Memphis. He recognized their talents and realized that, for many of them, an opportunity to showcase their talents for the public would start them on the road to professional success; and

WHEREAS, Joe Manuel and his band played the first show with Marcus Van Story and his band. Soon thereafter, the show attracted several young singers and musicians from the Memphis area, which then led to KWEM radio broadcasting the Jamboree; and

WHEREAS, a number of major artists had their first public appearances on Joe Manuel's Saturday Night Jamboree, including Johnny Cash, Lee Adkins, Eddie Bond, and the young and as-yet-unknown Elvis Presley; and

WHEREAS, it was the Jamboree's life backstage that was truly magical, however. It was backstage where these talented musicians would mingle, interacting with one another and experimenting with new sounds, mixing fast Country, Gospel, Blues, and boogie woogie sounds to create something altogether new and original. It was backstage where they would teach each other the new licks they had learned, and it wasn't long before this new sound adopted a name: "Rockabilly"; and

WHEREAS, it was on the stage of The Saturday Night Jamboree that the first Rockabilly shows played to very receptive audiences; and

WHEREAS, Joe Manuel soon recruited the help of his close friend and business mentor, M.E. Ellis, whose wealth of business experience greatly contributed to the rising success of the show; and

WHEREAS, it was in 1954 that Mr. Manuel decided to close the doors on The Saturday Night Jamboree. By that time, many of the Jamboree's performers had become professional recording artists and were touring every weekend; and

WHEREAS, Joe Manuel continued his radio broadcasts until his death in 1959; and

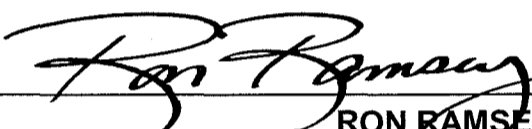
WHEREAS, the significance of the role Joe Manuel and his Saturday Night Jamborees played in the shaping of the music coming out of Memphis, and spreading to the rest of the world over the next several decades is practically incalculable, and it is wholly fitting that he be formally recognized by this body; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize The Saturday Night Jamboree, for its many contributions to the world of music, and for its influence upon the development of the Rockabilly sound birthed in Memphis in the 1950s. It is our fervent hope that the legacy of the Jamboree and its founder, the late Joe Manuel, never be forgotten.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

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ADOPTED: March 22, 2012



RON RAMSEY
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE



BETH HARWELL, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED this 22nd day of March 2012



BILL HASLAM, GOVERNOR