



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1795-2013, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1795

Resolution proclaiming the month of June as African American Music Appreciation Month.

By Council Members Comrie, Dickens, Vann, Williams, Barron, Cabrera, Chin, Dromm, Eugene, James, King, Koo, Koslowitz, Mendez, Palma, Richards and Rose

Whereas, Music has consistently been a medium for African Americans to communicate their experiences and explore their duality of culture; and

Whereas, From the spirituals that communicated an unbreakable faith and plans of freedom for enslaved Africans to Hip Hop songs that expose the world to the African American experience, music has been used by African Americans to address social issues, pass on traditions and protest injustice; and

Whereas, Whether considered Hip Hop, Rhythm and Blues, Jazz, Funk, or Neo-Soul, African American music often contains elements of faith underscoring the power in the message and melody of the earliest spirituals; and

Whereas, African American music such as Gospel music was born out of the inability of African Americans to worship in houses of faith with other Americans; and

Whereas, Through music, artists such as Mahalia Jackson, Shirley Ceasar, The Winans, Take 6 and Mary Mary showcase the breadth of African American fortitude; and

Whereas, Historic points such as the events of the Civil Rights Movement, the protests of apartheid in South Africa and the call to acknowledge HIV and AIDS as a global pandemic were commemorated and solemnized by coalitions of African American artists; and

Whereas, The music of Louis Armstrong, Dorothy Dandridge, Lena Horne, Duke Ellington, Bessie Smith, Nora Douglas, Nina Simone, John Coltrane, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield and James Brown, helped to

break down racial barriers in the United States; and

Whereas, The music of these artists continues to be expressed and highlighted in the music of Jill Scott, the Roots, Erykah Badu, Mary J. Blige, Common, Miguel, and countless other African American artists; and

Whereas, Contemporary African American artists are following in the tradition of their predecessors by using music to promote positive self-awareness, encourage voter participation and to end gun violence and domestic violence; and

Whereas, These artists have also raised a collective voice and illuminated the need to reform New York State's antiquated drug policies that largely affect African American people living in the City; and

Whereas, Notably, the City has produced many musical artists that have contributed to African American culture; and

Whereas, We appreciate every note sung and every instrument played in Addisleigh Park and Corona, Queens by Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald and Fats Waller; and

Whereas, The music of the Harlem Renaissance during the 1920s and 1930s reinvigorated African American culture in the City; and

Whereas, The musical styles of Harry Belafonte and Luther Vandross, are both shining example of African American music by artists that were born in Manhattan that reflect the variety of this rich musical culture; and

Whereas, The Bronx gave birth to a musical tradition that would forever change the world, Hip Hop, in the 1970s; and

Whereas, Jay-Z, one of today's most renowned Brooklyn-born Hip Hop artists, has made several contributions to the City, including sold out concerts in Madison Square Garden and Barclay's Center, and whose hit song "Empire State of Mind" became the anthem for the New York Yankees 2009 World Champions; and

Whereas, We recognize the indelible mark that African American music has made on the landscape of

our City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York proclaims the month of June as African American Music Appreciation Month.

FCC
LS # 2552
5/20/13