

Senate Resolution 596

By: Senators Orrock of the 36th, Henson of the 41st, Davenport of the 44th, Seay of the 34th, Fort of the 39th and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending Giwayen Mata on their 20th anniversary; and for other
2 purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Giwayen Mata is an award-winning, dynamic, soul-stirring, all-sistah, dance,
4 percussion, and vocal ensemble that celebrates the richness of traditional Africa by exhibiting
5 its exemplary art forms; and

6 WHEREAS, in 1991, Ramatu Afegbua Mahmud Sabbat organized sistahs for jam sessions
7 in city parks of Atlanta, Georgia, in the spirit of the principles of "kuumba" and
8 "kujichagulia," Kiswahili words for creativity and self-determination; and

9 WHEREAS, the Giwayen Mata ensemble was founded in 1993 when Gail Vernon Zuri Sami
10 Ra Maati Jordan, Omelika Kuumba, Osunlade Fatunmise, Sarahn Henderson, Ife Hendricks,
11 Sauda Jackson, Shalewa Mackall, Andrea Richards, Ramatu Sabbatt, and Ama Tyus
12 performed at Celebration '93, a Mother's Day celebration sponsored by the women of the
13 Atlanta Mas-jid Al Islam; and

14 WHEREAS, the founders chose as their group's name the Hausa term Giwayen Mata, which
15 literally translates as "Elephant Women," and is used to refer to leaders of women's
16 organizations in Nigeria; and

17 WHEREAS, the women of Giwayen Mata collectively share more than 50 years of
18 experience in modern, jazz, ballet, contemporary, African, African American, and Caribbean
19 dance forms, and sign language; and

20 WHEREAS, Giwayen Mata represents women of international origins at various stages of
21 womanhood; the ensemble seeks to uplift audiences with riveting performances that are
22 empowering, educational, enlightening, entertaining, and moving for all ages, ethnicities, and
23 genders; and

24 WHEREAS, Giwayen Mata's mission is to celebrate their lives as women and uplift their
25 communities and our planet while perpetuating the cultures of Africa and the African
26 Diaspora through the study, creation, teaching, and presentation of artistic media, including
27 dances, rhythms, songs, poetry, and prose around the word; and

28 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that the outstanding accomplishments of this
29 remarkable ensemble be appropriately recognized.

30 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
31 congratulate Giwayen Mata on the grand occasion of their 20th anniversary and extend to
32 them their most sincere best wishes for continued success.

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
34 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Giwayen Mata.