

Senate Resolution 711

By: Senator Harbison of the 15th

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending Reverend Rhodell Lewis; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, for decades, Reverend Rhodell Lewis served as a distinguished radio
3 personality and interdisciplinary champion of African American music and cultural affairs;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, June is African American Music Appreciation Month, created by President
6 Jimmy Carter in 1979, to foster an appreciation for the global uniqueness of Black secular
7 music (jazz, blues, pop, and rhythm & blues) and spiritual music (Gospel); and

8 WHEREAS, Black radio personalities, jewels of betterment, since 1929 have brought forth
9 Scripture-based spirituals that convey God's word in psalms and hymns, expressing faith and
10 hope, and secular radio personalities have brought forth world-relevant music on street life,
11 romance, and social consciousness; and

12 WHEREAS, during the pioneering years of Black radio, Black deejays played the music of
13 soul singers, songwriters, and musicians whose talents were marginalized or excluded by the
14 indifference of mainstream radio and who otherwise had no measure of opportunity to
15 broadly display their distinctive gifts; and

16 WHEREAS, quick-witted, entertaining, informative, and humorous, these magnanimous
17 radio personalities on a daily basis affected African Americans from coast to coast reaching
18 audiences that included the literate and illiterate; the churched and unchurched; the white
19 collared and blue collared; the well-employed, underemployed, and unemployed; the young
20 and old; from all walks of life; and

21 WHEREAS, these preeminent women and men of radio broadcasting, part and parcel of their
22 listening audiences, served as social engineers on the front line of progress, promoting causes
23 such as civil rights, social and personal responsibility, voting registration, economic
24 development, academic achievement, and collective awareness; and

25 WHEREAS, pioneering Black deejays went beyond the call of duty as intelligentsia, as
26 voices for the voiceless; they went beyond the realm of music, bringing forth news and views
27 when Black news and views did not exist elsewhere and offering perspectives that enhanced
28 the dreams, hopes, and well-being of listening audiences throughout Georgia and this
29 country; and

30 WHEREAS, the members of this body and the members of the Georgia Legislative Black
31 Caucus join WCEG Network Incorporated in saluting Black radio personalities in
32 recognition of their global and cultural impact and call upon all Georgians to study, reflect
33 on, and celebrate African American music.

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
35 recognize and commend Reverend Rhodell Lewis for his service and contributions to African
36 American music and cultural affairs.

37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
38 to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to the family of
39 Reverend Rhodell Lewis.