House Resolution 1171

By: Representatives Bruce of the 61st and Jackson of the 68th

A RESOLUTION

Recognizing and commending Otis Williams; and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, Otis Williams, baritone vocalist and member of the legendary R&B group the Temptations, was born on October 30, 1941, in Texarkana, Texas, to Hazel Louise Williams and Otis Miles and later relocated to Detroit, Michigan, with his mother; and

WHEREAS, he attended Detroit's Northwestern High School where he became classmates with future Temptations Melvin Franklin and Richard Street; and

WHEREAS, as an adolescent, he became interested in music and joined with fellow classmates to form singing groups such as Otis Williams and the Siberians, the El Domingoes, and the Distants, and, while a member of the Distants, he sang baritone alongside Melvin Franklin and Al Bryant and was the co-writer of the group's hit song, *Come On*; and

WHEREAS, his fame with the Distants became short lived once the group received an offer from the president of Motown Records, Berry Gordy; and

WHEREAS, in 1961, he witnessed the Primes, an R&B group consisting of future Temptations members Paul Williams and Eddie Kendricks, perform live and was encouraged to ask them to join with him, Melvin Franklin, and Al Bryant in the creation of the Elgins; and

WHEREAS, the group later changed their name to the Temptations, auditioned for Berry Gordy, and was offered a recording contract on the spot; and

WHEREAS, the band members are known for their choreography, distinct harmonies, and dress style and having sold tens of millions of albums, the Temptations are among the most successful groups ever in popular music; and

WHEREAS, although he would never sing lead on any of the group's songs, he has been featured on all of the group's albums and, after the death of original group member Melvin Franklin in 1995, he became the longest-tenured Temptation; and

WHEREAS, in 1989, Otis Williams was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a member of the Temptations; and

WHEREAS, beyond his musical talents, in 1988 he coauthored a book, *The Temptations*, with Patricia Romanowski and, in 1998, NBC aired a two-part miniseries based on the book; and

WHEREAS, lives with his wife, Goldie, in Los Angeles, California; and

WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that the outstanding accomplishments of this remarkable and distinguished citizen be appropriately recognized.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that the members of this body recognize and commend Otis Williams and honor him for his impressive body of work.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to Otis Williams.