

By: Raymond

H.R. No. 564

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Pianist Bobbie Nelson has been playing music for
2 virtually her entire life, and today, after nearly eight decades as
3 a performer, she is continuing to enrich the proud musical legacy of
4 Texas; and

5 WHEREAS, Bobbie Nelson was born on New Year's Day 1931 in
6 Abbott; her parents divorced early in her childhood, and she and her
7 younger brother, Willie, were raised by their grandparents, William
8 and Nancy Nelson, who instilled in both children a deep love of
9 music; at the age of five, she learned to play keyboards from her
10 grandmother, first on the family pump organ and later on a piano her
11 grandfather bought for \$35; after her brother learned the guitar,
12 the siblings began performing gospel songs together at school
13 events and at the local Methodist church; and

14 WHEREAS, In her early teens, Ms. Nelson got her start as a
15 touring musician, playing piano on the revival circuit with a
16 traveling preacher; at 16, she married Bud Fletcher, who organized
17 and managed the Nelson siblings' first band, Bud Fletcher and the
18 Texans; she and her husband became the parents of three sons, but
19 after their marriage ended, she lost custody of her children for a
20 time because the courts disapproved of her occupation of playing
21 music in honky-tonks; her career was put on hold as she fought to
22 reunite her family, though she was able to put her talents to use
23 after being hired as a demonstrator for the Hammond Organ Company;
24 following stints in Fort Worth and Austin, she relocated to

1 Nashville to be near her brother, who had begun building a
2 reputation as one of country music's best songwriters; both Bobbie
3 and Willie returned to Texas in the early 1970s and have considered
4 themselves Austinites ever since; and

5 WHEREAS, Ms. Nelson started performing on her brother's
6 recordings, including his 1975 breakthrough album *Red Headed*
7 *Stranger*; through the decades, "Sister Bobbie," as Willie
8 affectionately calls her, has also been a key member of his touring
9 band, Family, delighting audiences with her skill in a variety of
10 musical idioms; in 2007, she released her first solo album, a
11 collection of pop and country standards called *Audiobiography*, and
12 in 2014, she and her brother released *December Day*, an album
13 inspired by their informal jam sessions on the tour bus; and

14 WHEREAS, From her early days of playing the pump organ in her
15 grandparents' parlor to her performances in recording studios and
16 on concert stages around the world, Bobbie Nelson has built a
17 sterling reputation as a skilled and intuitive keyboard player, and
18 her role as an integral member of Willie Nelson and Family has
19 earned her an honored place among the beloved musicians of the Lone
20 Star State; now, therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
22 Legislature hereby commend Bobbie Nelson for her long and
23 illustrious career and for her contributions to Texas music; and,
24 be it further

25 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
26 prepared for Ms. Nelson as an expression of high regard by the Texas
27 House of Representatives.