

IN THE SENATE

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 107

BY STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 STATING THE FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND RECOGNIZING AND HONORING GENE  
2 HARRIS FOR HIS LIFELONG ACHIEVEMENTS AS A CELEBRATED JAZZ MUSICIAN  
3 AS WELL AS HIS CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STATE OF  
4 IDAHO.  
5

6 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

7 WHEREAS, Gene Harris was born in 1933 and moved to Boise in 1977, fully  
8 embracing Idaho as his home, and bringing many of the top jazz musicians in  
9 the world to play with him in Idaho. Gene Harris became a musical staple of  
10 Boise's nightlife, performing in venues including the Main Street Bistro,  
11 Peter Schott's Lounge, Ste. Chapelle Winery and the Boise River Festival,  
12 among others; and

13 WHEREAS, Gene Harris served as an ambassador for his adopted home state  
14 of Idaho with studio recordings and concert performances throughout the  
15 world, including performances in the United Kingdom, Austria, Switzerland,  
16 Japan, Korea, the Philippines, the Soviet Union, East and West Berlin, Mo-  
17 rocco, Budapest and Milan; and

18 WHEREAS, Gene Harris, with the Gene Harris All Star Big Band, earned a  
19 1989 Grammy Award nomination for Best Big Band Jazz Instrumental; and

20 WHEREAS, in 1989, 1990 and 1991, Gene Harris assumed the mantle of pi-  
21 anist and leader of three big bands that traveled the globe, featuring some  
22 of the greatest names in jazz, known as the Superband Concert Tour, under-  
23 written by a Philip Morris Jazz Grant; and

24 WHEREAS, Gene Harris vigorously promoted the arts in Idaho, receiving  
25 the Idaho Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 1990, presented by  
26 then-Governor Cecil D. Andrus; and

27 WHEREAS, in 1996, Gene Harris, working with local politicians, busi-  
28 nessmen, and artists, established the Gene Harris Endowment. The endowment  
29 is used to support scholarships for music students, a visiting jazz artist  
30 series, and the Gene Harris Jazz Festival, which has been an annual event  
31 since the spring of 1998. The idea for a festival began in the early 1990s  
32 when Gene and various other prominent musicians first discussed staging such  
33 an event to benefit music students and promote jazz, with the 20th annual  
34 Gene Harris Jazz Festival to be held April 5-7, 2017; and

35 WHEREAS, Gene Harris worked with former Governor Cecil Andrus and for-  
36 mer Governor Phil Batt to promote arts in the Gem State, devoting his time  
37 to fostering and sustaining music education for students in Idaho. He acted  
38 as a role model, friend and mentor to many aspiring musicians throughout the  
39 State of Idaho, including international jazz vocal star Curtis Stigers and  
40 the late piano virtuoso Paul Tillotson; and

41 WHEREAS, also in 1996, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., chose  
42 Gene Harris as Idaho's featured performer for State Days, a series of con-  
43 certs started during the center's 25th anniversary season to present a vari-

1 ety of musical artists from all 50 states, chosen to represent the cultural  
2 richness of America; and

3 WHEREAS, though Gene Harris died in 2000, he left behind a lasting  
4 legacy that has touched many people since his death and that will continue to  
5 do so.

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular Ses-  
7 sion of the Sixty-fourth Idaho Legislature, the Senate and the House of Rep-  
8 resentatives concurring therein, that we recognize and honor Gene Harris for  
9 his unparalleled talent as a jazz musician, his unrelenting dedication to  
10 the arts, and his commitment and contributions to education in the State of  
11 Idaho.