
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 322 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY HUGHES, IOVINO, FONTANA, KEARNEY, DINNIMAN,
KILLION, SANTARSIERO, J. WARD, BROWNE, BREWSTER, MENSCH,
TARTAGLIONE, BLAKE, PHILLIPS-HILL AND COSTA, APRIL 3, 2020

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, APRIL 3, 2020

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of April 2020 as "Jazz Appreciation Month"
2 in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, "Jazz Appreciation Month" (JAM) was created in 2002
4 at the Smithsonian Museum to herald and celebrate the
5 extraordinary heritage and history of jazz; and

6 WHEREAS, JAM is intended to stimulate and encourage
7 individuals of all ages to participate in jazz, including
8 studying the music, attending concerts, listening to recordings
9 and reading books about jazz; and

10 WHEREAS, This year JAM celebrates "Women in Jazz" to pay
11 homage to the dynamic impact and often overlooked contributions
12 women have made to the field of jazz as performers, conductors,
13 educators, producers and directors; and

14 WHEREAS, This year's featured artist is Toshiko Akiyoshi for
15 her work as an innovative artist who has made a unique and vital
16 contribution to the art of big band jazz as a pianist, band
17 leader and composer; and

1 WHEREAS, Akiyoshi, born December 12, 1929, in Manchuria,
2 returned to Japan following the end of World War II; and

3 WHEREAS, Akiyoshi began playing the piano at age six and
4 eventually started her first job as a musician in a dance-hall
5 band to satisfy her love of music; and

6 WHEREAS, Inspired by recordings of Teddy Wilson, Akiyoshi
7 immersed herself in the world of jazz music; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1952, Oscar Peterson discovered Akiyoshi while on
9 a Jazz at the Philharmonic tour in Japan and immediately
10 convinced his producer and manager Norman Granz to record her;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Thanks to her discovery and album recording,
13 Akiyoshi was able to study jazz at the Berklee College of Music
14 in Boston and later move to New York in 1959 where she played in
15 notable venues such as Birdland, the Village Gate, the Five Spot
16 and the Half Note; and

17 WHEREAS, Despite attempts to showcase her talents as a
18 composer and arranger for large ensembles, it was not until
19 1972, when she moved to Los Angeles, that she was able to form
20 the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra, an impressive 16-piece big
21 band featuring her husband, saxophonist and flutist Lew
22 Tabackin; and

23 WHEREAS, Akiyoshi, a critically-acclaimed artist, arranger
24 and composer, has become known for her unique incorporation of
25 traditional Japanese music with textural big band compositions;
26 and

27 WHEREAS, Akiyoshi has recorded 23 albums, received 14 Grammy
28 Award nominations and numerous international awards; and

29 WHEREAS, In 2007, Akiyoshi was awarded the title of National
30 Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master, joining other honorees such

1 as Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, Teddy Wilson, Miles Davis,
2 Herbie Hancock and Cecil Taylor; and

3 WHEREAS, Jazz is a vital part of American culture, has been a
4 gift to the world and is a part of the rich and diverse musical
5 background of this Commonwealth; therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the month of April 2020
7 as "Jazz Appreciation Month" in Pennsylvania and recognize
8 Toshiko Akiyoshi for her unique Japanese-infused contributions
9 to the world of jazz.