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1 HR157
2 PSHW9EE-1
3 By Representative Hall
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4 HR _____ MOURNING THE DEATH AND CELEBRATING THE MUSICAL LEGACY
5 OF DAVID THOMAS GALLAHER.

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7 WHEREAS, with great sadness, we note the passing of
8 David Thomas Gallaher in Huntsville, Alabama, on February 6,
9 2026, yet we also celebrate an abundant life that ended at
10 the age of 79; and

11 WHEREAS, a man of unquestionable musical talent,
12 "Microwave Dave," a professional musician who gained his
13 nickname from his three-piece guitar trio called Microwave
14 Dave & the Nukes, endeavored to instill within young people
15 a lifelong passion for music and education, the very things
16 that defined his own journey; and

17 WHEREAS, born in Chicago, Dave grew up immersed in
18 music, singing in children's choirs and learning to play
19 trumpet, French horn, ukulele, guitar, and accordion; he
20 moved with his family to Atlanta during high school and
21 began performing in a Beatles tribute band called the
22 Cavaliers; while attending college at Georgia State
23 University, he played with a band called the Majestics, even
24 providing backup for a young Aretha Franklin; and

25 WHEREAS, his invitation to tour England as a member
26 of singer Billy Stewart's band was intercepted by the
27 Vietnam War; Dave was drafted and served as an aerial
28 photograph interpreter for the United States Air Force; his

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29 decision to devote his entire life to being a full-time
30 musician occurred in the middle of a firefight; while the
31 Jeep he was riding in drove through flying bullets, Dave
32 made a vow to himself that if he survived the war, he would
33 do what he loved, and that was play music; and

34 WHEREAS, upon his honorable discharge from the Air
35 Force as a sergeant in 1971, he used his GI Bill to enroll
36 in the prestigious Berklee College of Music in Boston;
37 however, he soon joined a band and left school before
38 finishing his studies; and

39 WHEREAS, following several years of touring,
40 including time based in Nashville, Dave moved to Huntsville
41 in 1982 and returned to his blues and R&B roots; in 1989, he
42 formed Microwave Dave & the Nukes, building an international
43 following over three decades; the group performed in venues
44 ranging from local clubs to international festivals and
45 stadiums, backed blues legends Jerry "Boogie" McCain and Bo
46 Diddley, and became a fixture at events such as Daytona's
47 Bike Week; one of the band's better-known tracks, "Highway
48 49," even drew praise from author Stephen King; and

49 WHEREAS, for decades, Dave's unmistakable voice and
50 deep knowledge of blues music resonated across the airwaves
51 as host of "Talkin' the Blues," which aired on WJAB 90.9 FM
52 at Alabama A&M University and WLRH 89.3 FM at The University
53 of Alabama in Huntsville; through the program, he introduced
54 listeners to traditional blues greats such as B.B. King,
55 Muddy Waters, Candy Kane and Howlin' Wolf, while celebrating
56 contemporary artists and preserving the genre's rich

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57 history; and

58 WHEREAS, in 2015, Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle
59 proclaimed June 28 to be, in perpetuity, "Microwave Dave
60 Day," and each year, the festivities have included local
61 musicians, food, and fun; the establishment of Microwave
62 Dave Day inspired the formation of The Microwave Dave Music
63 Education Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that works with
64 local musicians, educators, and music teachers to support
65 and promote music education in North Alabama; for the past
66 10 years, the Foundation has worked closely with teachers to
67 create grade-level appropriate lesson plans, allowing local
68 musicians to teach, entertain, and welcome questions; each
69 year, the Microwave Dave Music Education Foundation, in
70 partnership with Valley Conservatory, awards four
71 scholarships to students in North Alabama, and each
72 scholarship pays for a full year of music lessons for a
73 budding musician; and

74 WHEREAS, Huntsville has even become the unofficial
75 cigar box guitar capital of the United States, largely
76 because of Dave; for more than 20 years, he played various
77 cigar box guitars at nearly all of his regular gigs around
78 town, perhaps most notably his Lowebow, on which he
79 delivered a deep, moving rendition of "You Got to Move";
80 that same guitar became a centerpiece when he visited
81 schools across North Alabama, sharing the history of the
82 blues with children; and

83 WHEREAS, Dave was preceded in death by his parents,
84 Tom and Barbara Gallaher, and sister, Gail; survivors

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85 include his daughter; three grandsons; brother, Tom; and a
86 niece; he also leaves behind his spiritual family at The
87 Episcopal Church of the Nativity in Huntsville; he was long
88 in the habit of stopping by that sacred space alone, after a
89 late-night gig; and

90 WHEREAS, Dave made it a way of life to bring his
91 virtuosic musicianship into classrooms, civic gatherings,
92 hospice bedsides, and large medical institutions; he was a
93 working musician who loved his work; now therefore,

94 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
95 LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That the death of David Thomas
96 Gallaher is recorded with deep sadness, and this resolution
97 is offered in tribute to his life and service to others; may
98 his soul and his voice continue to resonate in our hearts,
99 and in the lives of the students he inspired forever.