**South Carolina General Assembly**

125th Session, 2023-2024

**H. 4767**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

House Resolution

Sponsors: Reps. Howard, Alexander, Anderson, Atkinson, Bailey, Ballentine, Bamberg, Bannister, Bauer, Beach, Bernstein, Blackwell, Bradley, Brewer, Brittain, Burns, Bustos, Calhoon, Carter, Caskey, Chapman, Chumley, Clyburn, Cobb-Hunter, Collins, Connell, B.J. Cox, B.L. Cox, Crawford, Cromer, Davis, Dillard, Elliott, Erickson, Felder, Forrest, Gagnon, Garvin, Gatch, Gibson, Gilliam, Gilliard, Guest, Guffey, Haddon, Hager, Hardee, Harris, Hart, Hartnett, Hayes, Henderson-Myers, Henegan, Herbkersman, Hewitt, Hiott, Hixon, Hosey, Hyde, Jefferson, J.E. Johnson, J.L. Johnson, S. Jones, W. Jones, Jordan, Kilmartin, King, Kirby, Landing, Lawson, Leber, Ligon, Long, Lowe, Magnuson, May, McCabe, McCravy, McDaniel, McGinnis, Mitchell, J. Moore, T. Moore, A.M. Morgan, T.A. Morgan, Moss, Murphy, Neese, B. Newton, W. Newton, Nutt, O'Neal, Oremus, Ott, Pace, Pedalino, Pendarvis, Pope, Rivers, Robbins, Rose, Rutherford, Sandifer, Schuessler, Sessions, G.M. Smith, M.M. Smith, Stavrinakis, Taylor, Thayer, Thigpen, Trantham, Vaughan, Weeks, West, Wetmore, Wheeler, White, Whitmire, Williams, Willis, Wooten and Yow

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Introduced in the House on January 10, 2024

Adopted by the House on January 10, 2024

Summary: Drink Small, blues artist

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

1/10/2024 House Introduced and adopted ([House Journal‑page 8](h:\hj\20240110.docx))

View the latest  [legislative information](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=4767&session=125&summary=B)  at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[01/10/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/4767_20240110.docx)

A house RESOLUTION

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR BISHOPVILLE NATIVE DRINK SMALL, AMERICAN SOUL BLUES AND ELECTRIC BLUES GUITARIST, PIANIST, SINGER, AND SONGWRITER, FOR HIS LONG AND SUCCESSFUL CAREER.

Whereas, born on January 28, 1933, Drink Small’s musical journey began in a family deeply rooted in the world of music. His sharecropper parents, themselves musicians, laid the foundation for their son’s lifelong passion for music; and

Whereas, the young musician experienced a challenging early life, including a severe back injury at the age of 8, which ended his days picking cotton but ignited his love for music. Despite setbacks, Drink Small persevered, teaching himself to play the guitar on his uncle’s one-string guitar and crafting makeshift instruments, such as a guitar strung with an old inner tube; and

Whereas, during his youth, his musical talent and dedication led him to organize a local gospel group, the Six Stars, and in high school he continued to hone his skills by performing with a professional gospel group, the Golden Five. In 1955, Drink Small’s journey took a significant turn when he moved to Columbia to play guitar with another gospel group, the Spiritualaires. From there, he embarked on a journey that included performances at the Apollo Theater in Harlem and collaborations with iconic artists like Sam Cooke, the Staple Singers, and the Harmonizing Four; and

Whereas, his musical influences were diverse, ranging from gospel and blues legends like Sister Rosetta Tharpe and Blind Boy Fuller to television shows such as *Soul Train* and *The Lawrence Welk Show*. These influences shaped his unique musical style, which drew from Piedmont blues, gospel, rhythm and blues, boogie-woogie, Delta blues, and Chicago blues traditions; and

Whereas, Drink Small transitioned from gospel to secular music in the 1950s, and his reputation as one of the best guitarists in gospel music served as a solid foundation for his successful career in the blues genre; and

Whereas, his remarkable mastery of multiple musical styles, deep blues voice, and charismatic stage presence earned him a devoted following among college students in the Carolinas, and he performed at countless institutions of higher learning, nightclubs, roadhouses, and blues clubs; and

Whereas, Drink Small’s contributions to music extended beyond the stage, as he wrote hundreds of songs and even started his own record label, Bishopville Records, in the 1970s; and

Whereas, he graced renowned events such as the Chicago Blues Festival and King Biscuit Blues Festival, at which he shared the stage with legendary artists, including Little Milton, Bobby “Blue” Bland, and Koko Taylor; and

Whereas, Drink Small’s music transcended borders, as he toured nationally and internationally, performing at three world’s fairs and delighting audiences with his distinctive brand of blues. This remarkable musician, known as the “Blues Doctor,” was also a cherished figure in the South Carolina music community, among which he closed the first Pee Dee Blues Bash in 2009 and participated in the television documentary series *Carolina Stories*; and

Whereas, Drink Small’s extraordinary contributions to the world of music and his enduring impact on the blues genre prove him worthy of high praise. May his music continue to inspire, uplift, and connect people from all walks of life while helping to keep the blues alive for generations to come. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor Bishopville native Drink Small, American soul blues and electric blues guitarist, pianist, singer, and songwriter, for his long and successful career.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Drink Small.

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