

2023 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 349

Celebrating the life of Wes Freed.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 16, 2023
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 20, 2023

WHEREAS, Wes Freed, an accomplished visual artist, musician and beloved member of the Richmond community whose work with the celebrated Southern rock band Drive-By Truckers and other acts earned him considerable fame and renown, died on September 4, 2022; and

WHEREAS, a native of the Shenandoah Valley, Wes Freed graduated from Fort Defiance High School before studying art at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, the city he would call home for the rest of his life; and

WHEREAS, Wes Freed sang and played guitar in many noteworthy Richmond bands over the years, including the alternative country band Dirt Ball, the Shiners, the Mag Bats, the Mutant Drones, and Mudd Helmet; and

WHEREAS, while performing with his various bands, Wes Freed illustrated posters to promote their concerts, developing a signature style and drawing the attention of other musicians and artists; and

WHEREAS, after meeting members of the Drive-By Truckers in 1997, Wes Freed supplied the album cover artwork for their breakout 2001 release *Southern Rock Opera*, starting a partnership that would span ten albums and become recognized as one of the most successful collaborations in modern rock n' roll history; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Gothic symbolism and iconic figures that Wes Freed used on Drive-By Truckers' albums became hallmarks of his distinctive and highly original aesthetic; and

WHEREAS, many of Wes Freed's best known works from his career as a visual artist were recently memorialized in 2019 in the publication *The Art of Wes Freed - Paints, Posters, Pin-ups and Possums*; and

WHEREAS, Wes Freed will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his loving partner, Jackie, and by numerous other family members, friends, and fans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of Wes Freed, a true embodiment of rock n' roll and a cherished member of the Richmond community whose art will inspire others for many years to come; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Wes Freed as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for his memory.

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