



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2022-1761, **Version:** 1

A Resolution recognizing legendary country performing artist and songwriter Jeannie Seely on her fifty-fifth anniversary as a member of the Grand Ole Opry.

WHEREAS, growing up on a farm outside of Townville, Pennsylvania, Jeannie Seely was a precocious talent who went from singing with her mother to performing on local radio by age eleven and appearing on local television by age sixteen; and

WHEREAS, after a stint in California, Ms. Seely moved to Nashville with only fifty dollars and a Ford Falcon to her name; however, within a month, Porter Wagoner hired her as the female singer for his road and television series; and

WHEREAS, on September 16, 1967, Ms. Seely saw her childhood dream come true when she became a member of the Grand Ole Opry; the first Pennsylvania native to be invited to become a member, she was also the first female to regularly host Opry segments; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Seely's big break came when a recording contract was offered by Monument Records and she recorded her legendary song "Don't Touch Me" soon after, and it debuted on the country music charts, where it stayed for over five months; and

WHEREAS, it was for "Don't Touch Me" that Ms. Seely was honored with the 1966 Grammy Award for Best Country Vocal Performance by a Female, to become the third female country artist to receive the coveted award; and

WHEREAS, today, "Don't Touch Me" is considered a standard in country music; Ms. Seely's recording of the song is ranked No. 97 in the book Heartaches By the Number: Country Music's 500 Greatest Singles and included in the book The Stories Behind Country Music's All-Time Greatest 100 Songs; several notable artists across genres have gone on to record the song, including Tammy Wynette, George Jones, and Etta James; and

WHEREAS, after the success of her debut single, Ms. Seely began singing and touring with Jack Greene; the two would become one of the most successful duos and road shows in country music history, doing much to promote country music to wider audiences around the world; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Seely has penned songs for other artists over the years, including Merle Haggard, Ray Price, Ernest Tubb, and Lorrie Morgan; rhythm and blues artist Irma Thomas scored a national pop hit with Jeannie Seely's song "Anyone Who Knows What Love Is"; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her success in the music industry, Ms. Seely is quite an accomplished actress; she has appeared in several major stage productions, including Always, Patsy Cline and The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas; she also appeared in Willie Nelson's movie Honeysuckle Rose and sang on the film's platinum-selling soundtrack; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 Ms. Seely received a Star on the Music City Walk of Fame; and

WHEREAS, on December 19, 2019, Ms. Seely was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of the Arts Degree from

Lincoln Memorial University; and

WHEREAS, on August 14, 2020, Ms. Seely released her 17th album entitled "An American Classic" on Curb Records; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Seely has always taken an interest in and supported her community by serving on the Donelson-Hermitage Chamber of Commerce Board, AFTRA-SAG Board of Directors, Opry Trust Fund Board, been an avid supporter of the Hip Donelson Lost & Found Animal Rescue Group, always participated in the annual Christmas Parade, often as Grand Marshall, and even performed the leading role in "Could It Be Love" at The Larry Keeton Community Theatre; and

WHEREAS, aptly known as "Miss Country Soul" for her deeply moving vocals, Ms. Seely has graced the stages of the historic Ryman Auditorium and the Grand Ole Opry House for five decades now, and it is most fitting that she be recognized on this special occasion; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council recognize Jeannie Seely on her illustrious career in country music and congratulate her on her fifty-fifth anniversary as a member of the Grand Ole Opry.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as recognizing legendary country performing artist and songwriter Jeannie Seely on her fifty-fifth anniversary as a member of the Grand Ole Opry.

Section 2. The Metropolitan Council Office is directed to prepare a copy of this Resolution to be presented to Jeannie Seely.

Section 3. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.