

A Proclamation  
By  
Governor Ronnie Musgrove

**WHEREAS**, the youngest daughter of eight children born to Nathaniel and Nancy Allen, Denise LaSalle learned to sing at an early age by listening to the Grand Ole Opry on the radio; and

**WHEREAS**, she spent her early years (age seven to thirteen) in Belzoni, Mississippi, then moved to Chicago to live with her oldest brother; and

**WHEREAS**, raised as a Baptist, she sang in the Zion Temple choir for many years and joined a female gospel singing group, “The Sacred Five,” and performed throughout metropolitan Chicago until 1961; and

**WHEREAS**, her first recording, “A Love Reputation,” was released in 1967 on the Tarpon record label, it climbed to the top of the charts in Chicago, second only to Aretha Franklin’s number one hit, “R-E-S-P-E-C-T;” and

**WHEREAS**, in November of 1971, “Trapped” had become her first certified gold record and was followed up with other solid hits such as “Now Run and Tell That,”—Denise LaSalle won the 1998 Living Blues Critic Award and was named the Female Blues Artist of the Year; and

**WHEREAS**, when her husband, James, announced that he had been called into the ministry, Denise decided to support her husband and fulfill her lifelong dream of returning to her gospel roots—with the release of “God’s Got My Back” in 1999, Denise LaSalle reached another musical milestone with its success as a crossover hit with R&B and gospel stations; and

**WHEREAS**, Denise LaSalle was moved once again, in the wake of the September 11, 2001, tragedies to write and record a song with the Jackson Central-Merry High School Choir—“There’s No Separation (of Church and State)” speaks of universal love and spirituality and celebrates the power of prayer in the lives of Americans:

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Ronnie Musgrove, Governor of the State of Mississippi, hereby proclaim

**Denise LaSalle**

as a 2002 honoree of the Jackson Music Awards **National Rhythm and Blues Diva** and commend you for your talents and accomplishments in the music industry.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi to be affixed.

DONE in the City of Jackson, July 15, 2001, in the two hundred and twenty-sixth year of the United States of America.

RONNIE MUSGROVE  
GOVERNOR