

February 21, 2019

Dear Representative O'Malley and Transportation Committee Members:

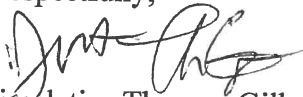
Please accept this letter of support for Michigan House Bill 4060, introduced by Representative Leslie Love, that will designate a portion of the M-10 highway in Detroit the Aretha L. Franklin Memorial Highway. The state's support of this memorial highway is a meaningful acknowledgement of the contributions of this soul legend, civil rights icon and our Queen of Soul—Ms. Aretha L. Franklin.

Aretha Franklin's name is synonymous with R-E-S-P-E-C-T. She is the Queen of Soul, Michigan's musical matriarch, a daughter of Detroit, and an Ambassador to the world. From presidents to kings, Ms. Franklin's music, philanthropy and service has been appreciated and recognized. Ms. Franklin has received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, National Arts Medal, a Kennedy Center Honor, was voted 'Most Popular Female Artist in America' by the 2018 YouGov U.S. Poll, and was the first woman to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Ms. Franklin's years of hit songs from gospel, soul, rock and even opera have endeared her to fans across the globe. It is my hope that her home state of Michigan will, join with others around the world, in honoring this legend. Words cannot adequately describe the impact she has had on the lives of so many people. Therefore, R.E.A.L. is honored to serve as the fundraising coordinator and fiduciary for the memorial highway sign campaign. The memorial highway designation is a fitting tribute to a woman who earned the moniker "Queen of Soul" and she wore it like a crown.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Jimalatice Thomas-Gilbert
President