



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Menendez".

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20510

**HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF WHITNEY ELIZABETH  
HOUSTON  
FEBRUARY 17, 2012**

M. President, I rise today to honor the life of Whitney Elizabeth Houston who passed away on Saturday, February 11, 2012. Whitney Houston was a shining star born in the great city of Newark, New Jersey, whose life will be celebrated locally and globally by her family and friends.

Whitney followed in the footsteps of her mother and began performing as a soloist in the junior gospel choir at the New Hope Baptist Church in Newark, where her first solo performance was "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah." Later she became the first woman of color to grace the cover of Seventeen Magazine and was also featured in layouts in the pages of Glamour, Cosmopolitan, and Young Miss.

In 1983, Clive Davis, head of Arista Records, helped start Whitney's recording career and she went on to begin her meteoric rise to fame, with Rolling Stone praising her as "one of the most exciting new voices in years," while The New York Times called her debut, self-titled album "an impressive, musically conservative showcase for an exceptional vocal talent."

In 1986, a year after the initial release of her debut album, Whitney topped the Billboard 200 albums chart and stayed there for 14 weeks with the final single, "Greatest Love of All," which became one of her biggest hits. The album became the first album by a female to yield three number one hits.

Whitney Houston is recognized as the most awarded female musical artist of all time, having received 2 Emmy Awards, 6 Grammy Awards, 22 American Music Awards, and 30 Billboard Music Awards. She also holds numerous other distinctions, including the best selling single by a female artist in music history, first solo act to sell more than 1,000,000 copies of an album within a 1-week period, the only artist to chart 7 consecutive number one Billboard Hot 100 hits. She also had the best selling movie soundtrack of all time, "The Bodyguard."

Beyond her professional career, Whitney Houston demonstrated her commitment to humanitarianism as a supporter of Nelson Mandela and the anti-apartheid movement, refusing to do business with agencies that did business with the then-apartheid South Africa. She also founded the Whitney Houston Foundation for Children, an organization that cared for the homeless and children with cancer and AIDS. And during the 2009–2010 academic school year, the Whitney E. Houston Academy of Creative and Performing Arts became a thriving, arts-focused institution that provides expanded educational opportunities for the student body and surrounding community.

There are many reasons why America will never forget Whitney Houston, but one of the most memorable was her performance of "The Star Spangled Banner" at Super Bowl XXV on January 27, 1991. That performance was so powerful that it was later released as a commercial single and the video of her performance reached the top 20 on the Billboard Hot 100, making her the only person to turn the national anthem into a pop hit of that magnitude.

M. President, it is with immense sadness but great honor that I recognize, commend, and celebrate the life and legacy of Whitney E. Houston, a star of New Jersey who went on to shine bright across the globe. I extend my deepest condolences to Whitney's mother Cissy Houston, daughter Bobbi Kristina, her other family members and friends, and to her millions of fans.

I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my statement be included in the record.