**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE THE REEDY RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION ON THE OCCASION OF ITS ONE HUNDRED TWENTY‑EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY AND TO WISH ITS MEMBERS WELL AS THEY CONTINUE TO SERVE THE LORD.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the Reedy River Baptist Association will celebrate its one hundred twenty‑eighth anniversary on June 29, 2013; and

Whereas, although its earliest records are no longer available, a historical account has been compiled from verbal accounts, borrowed data, and minutes of the Reedy River Baptist Association’s annual sessions. These sources reveal that about twenty years after the Emancipation Proclamation of Negro slaves, the Reedy River Association was organized to benefit those without the opportunity to pursue formal education; and

Whereas, several churches in the lower part of Greenville County envisioned the need for spiritual enlightenment and formalized training, realizing that “no people can grow any stronger than the unity of converted hearts and the wisdom of educated minds.” Thus, being led by the Holy Spirit and having been exposed to the conflicts and successes experienced by the Enoree River Baptist Association (organized in 1868), they came together to organize an association for the purpose of promoting the Kingdom of Christ, sharing their Baptist beliefs, and building an institution that would enable their sons and daughters to learn how to read and write; and

Whereas, the Reedy River Baptist Association was organized at Bethlehem Baptist Church on September 12, 1885, with the Reverend P.L. Morris as the first moderator. Reedy Fork, Flat Rock, Union, Mt. Pleasant, Cedar Grove, St. Matthew, Reedy River, Poplar Springs, Shady Oak, Bethlehem, and Thessalonial Baptist churches constituted the grand body; and

Whereas, in the minutes of the 1907 session (the earliest minutes available), the Reverend L.W. Simpson was recorded as having been elected moderator. Also recorded and approved in the 1907 minutes was a report of the executive board. They had met in July 1907 at Union Baptist Church and submitted plans to build a high school in Simpsonville “to educate the sons and daughters of the Reedy River Association.” Upon recommendation of the Reedy River High School trustees, the executive board approved the purchase of a new school building for the high school; and

Whereas, Martin Webb Learning Center was established in Greenville, and a building was later purchased there as a joint effort of the Enoree, Greenville Baptist, North Enoree, and Reedy River Baptist associations. Also, contributions to the Baptist colleges and college students greatly increased. The Reedy River Baptist Association’s churches continue to give strong support to black institutions of higher learning in South Carolina; and

Whereas, truly the Lord has blessed the association, presently led by Dr. Phillip M. Baldwin as moderator, and has enabled it to survive the past, serve the present age, and forge new pathways for the future. Standing on the faith and strength of its early pastors and church members, Reedy River Baptist Association “press [es] toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14); and

Whereas, the Reedy River Baptist Association has been a beacon of light in this great State for one hundred twenty‑eight years, and, God willing, will continue its godly heritage in many more years of service. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate the Reedy River Baptist Association on the occasion of its one hundred twenty‑eighth anniversary and wish its members well as they continue to serve the Lord.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to the Reedy River Baptist Association.

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