**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UPON THE DEATH OF FORMER SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE SPEAKER REX LYLE CARTER OF GREENVILLE AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives were deeply saddened to learn of the death of former South Carolina House Speaker Rex Lyle Carter of Greenville on June 9, 2014, at the venerable age of eighty‑eight; and

Whereas, a native of Honea Path in Anderson County and longtime resident of Greenville, Rex Carter was a son of the late Daniel Brooks Carter and Eunice Young Carter Forrester. He demonstrated leadership abilities at a young age, serving as student body president at Parker High School; and

Whereas, heeding the call of his country, Mr. Carter served in World War II with the U.S. Coast Guard in both the Atlantic Theater and Pacific Theater (1943‑1946). He was a member of Augusta Road Baptist Church for fifty‑seven years, where he long served as a Sunday School teacher and deacon; and

Whereas, in 1950, he earned a bachelor’s degree from Erskine College, afterwards immediately entering the University of South Carolina and in 1952, completing his juris doctor. Once again, he served as student body president. He started the law firm of Carter, Smith, Merriam & Traxler, P.A., that same year and continued as a senior partner in the firm until his death; and

Whereas, Rex Carter firmly believed in serving the people of his State, and his convictions led him into many years of public service. He represented Greenville County in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1953 to 1980. This lifelong Democrat was elected Speaker Pro Tem in 1957, and in 1973, Speaker of the House, succeeding Speaker Solomon Blatt, who had held the post for forty‑four years; and

Whereas, one of Mr. Carter’s top aides, credited him with “a large measure of the legislative reforms of that era. Under Speaker Carter, the House developed its first professional research staff, initiated regular orientation sessions for new members, which are now mandated by the state constitution. He was a major supporter of the construction of the first legislative office buildings in the Capitol Complex, and he brought computerized information into the State House so the public and news media could track the progress of legislation. He was truly a transitional figure in the state’s legislative history, taking it from the horse-and-buggy days into the era of technology and professionalism. He was entirely in step with the reform movements of state legislatures that were sweeping the country in the 1970s. He brought South Carolina into the modern era”; and

Whereas, in recognition of his spirit of excellence and dedicated service to the people of South Carolina, Rex Carter was granted many honors, among them an honorary doctor of laws from the University of South Carolina and others from The Citadel and Erskine College. He was presented the Erskine College Algernon Sidney Sullivan Award in 2006, and the Order of the Palmetto from Governor Dick Riley. In addition, Mauldin Road in Greenville County was renamed Rex L. Carter Boulevard after his retirement from the South Carolina Legislature; and

Whereas, preceded in death by an infant daughter, Katrina Floride, in 1957, Rex Carter leaves to cherish his memory his wife, Floride Gulledge Carter, originally from Wedgefield in Sumter County, whom he met when she was a senior at Converse College and married six months later; three children, Lucy Ault (Gary), Kim Johnson (Hank), and Rex L. Carter, Jr. (Ginger); five grandchildren, Carter Massingill, Jessica Johnson, Hayes Johnson, Rex Carter III, and Wells Carter; and a host of other relatives and friends. He will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, express their profound sorrow upon the death of former South Carolina House Speaker Rex Lyle Carter of Greenville and extend the deepest sympathy to his family and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Mrs. Floride Gulledge Carter.

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