**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE REVEREND NORRIS TURNER OF GREENWOOD COUNTY ON THE OCCASION OF HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY AND TO WISH HIM A JOYOUS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AND MANY YEARS OF CONTINUED HEALTH AND HAPPINESS.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is delighted to learn that Reverend Norris Turner of Greenwood County will celebrate his eightieth birthday on Saturday, March 19, 2016, surrounded by family and friends; and

Whereas, born in 1936 in the Town of Troy, South Carolina, Norris Turner was one of six children in the family of Johnnie and Helen Chiles Turner. His mother taught him to sing at an early age, songs such as “Jesus Loves Me” and “Come to Jesus”; and

Whereas, after touring and recording with the Golden Stars and the well‑known Spiritualaires, he went to live with an uncle in Brooklyn, New York, where he studied for six months at the music school of the American Guild of Variety Artists and landed a professional singing job with the famous Selah Singers; and

Whereas, besides numerous civic programs and benefits, Mr. Turner performed with Selah in the Apollo Theater, Carnegie Hall, and the Copacabana; for President Eisenhower; and on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. He even traveled with the ensemble to London, England; and

Whereas, when he was once offered a gig singing secular pop songs at the Palms Café in New York City, his mother scolded him harshly, reminding him that he had been “born in the church.” After declining the engagement, he rode the subway home to Brooklyn and composed his celebrated song, “They Call Me Crazy”; and

Whereas, he returned to his native Greenwood and married his beloved Ella Mae in 1960, now retired from her work as a social security administrator, and he remained there because he preferred to be home with her and their two daughters, Cassandra and Sharon, both singers, than on the road; and

Whereas, in 1962, Mr. Turner joined Mount Moriah Baptist Church in Greenwood where he organized a choir and became its principal soloist; and

Whereas, during this time, he cultivated his ability to write songs and developed a friendship with Hoyt Sullivan who ran Hoyt Sullivan Enterprises, a recording business out of Greenwood. Mr. Sullivan produced Norris Turner’s six music albums: *Stop Get Religion* in 1968, *Give God a Chance* in 1970, *Let*’*s Get Together with the Lord* in 1971, *Stand Up for Jesus* circa 1973, *The Great Masterpiece* circa 1975, and *I Want to Be Ready* circa 1979; and

Whereas, after this last recording, Reverend Turner heard the call to become a pastor and went into the ministry in 1980. He studied at Morris College and took courses at the Interdenominational Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. He was ordained in 1982 and later became the pastor of Gethsemane Baptist Church where he still serves; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are pleased to honor this son of South Carolina at the celebration of his eightieth birthday and join with his family and friends in congratulating him on reaching this extraordinary milestone. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate Reverend Norris Turner of Greenwood County on the occasion of his eightieth birthday and wish him a joyous birthday celebration and many years of continued health and happiness.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Reverend Norris Turner.

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