**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR RIDGELAND BAPTIST CHURCH AND TO CELEBRATE WITH THE STAFF AND MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH THEIR ONE HUNDRED TWENTY‑FIVE YEAR HISTORY AS A CONGREGATION FAITHFULLY SERVING GOD AND THEIR COMMUNITY.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are pleased to learn that Ridgeland Baptist Church of Jasper County is celebrating its quasquicentennial anniversary with Homecoming on Sunday, February 26, 2017; and

Whereas, on February 28, 1892, Ridgeland Baptist Church was organized as a mission of Great Swamp Baptist Church in the Ridgeland community, known for its thriving lumber and turpentine industries that had developed there; and

Whereas, some residents in the community interested in beginning a Baptist witness began to meet in the local Masonic Hall for worship with Reverend W. H. Dowling as the congregation’s first pastor until the original building, a small frame structure, was erected on what is now the southeast corner of Main Street and Highway 17 in Ridgeland; and

Whereas, over the years, other buildings were built and dedicated in 1926, 1950, 1963, and 1991, but on December 26, 1995, fire destroyed the church’s sanctuary, as well as two educational buildings, and severely damaged the fellowship hall. Due to the valiant efforts of firemen from Ridgeland and surrounding towns and counties, especially the ladder‑truck from the Marine Corps Air Station in Beaufort, the fellowship hall was not destroyed; and

Whereas, as the congregation prayed and sought God’s direction, the church purchased approximately fifteen acres one mile west of the downtown site and began to organize, plan, and construct new facilities on the property; and

Whereas, on February 28, 1999, just three short years after the devastating fire, the one hundred seven year old church, dedicated its new facilities with no debt remaining; and

Whereas, in 2002, a new and larger fellowship hall was erected and more classroom and educational space was created; since then various remodels have been completed and a delightful and accommodating ball field has been added to the complex; and

Whereas, during the one hundred twenty‑fifth anniversary celebration, Reverend David Newton will be the guest speaker, and the congregation will bury a time capsule that will remain in place until the one hundred fiftieth anniversary celebration of Ridgeland Baptist Church in 2042. The capsule will contain pictures and historical information to be shared with future generations; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to celebrate the century and a quarter that Ridgeland Baptist Church has served God and helped to build the Kingdom of Christ, and the members appreciate the congregation’s vital legacy in the Ridgeland community and beyond. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor Ridgeland Baptist Church and celebrate with the staff and members of the church their one hundred twenty‑five year history as a congregation faithfully serving God and their community.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑