**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR WILLIE JENNINGS FOR HIS DEDICATED COMMUNITY SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF ORANGEBURG COUNTY AND FOR HIS OUTSTANDING CAREER IN BUSINESS AND TO WISH HIM MUCH CONTINUED SUCCESS AND FULFILLMENT IN THE DAYS AHEAD.

Whereas, it is with great pleasure that the South Carolina House of Representatives recognizes those individuals who give tirelessly of themselves to the welfare of this great state’s citizenry. Having spent his entire life working to enhance the lives of others, Willie Jennings of Orangeburg County exemplifies such South Carolinians; and

Whereas, born in Orangeburg to sharecropper farmers William and Nettie Wannamaker Jennings, Willie Jennings grew up as the eldest of four children. After the accidental death of his father, the young Willie assumed the role of chief provider for the family. In time, he married the former Georgia Ann Shuler, and at the time of her passing in December 2016, the couple had celebrated sixty years of marriage. Mr. Jennings is the father of three, Steven, Barry, and Vida, and he also lovingly parented Robert Jackson and Paul Morais. His children have made him a joyful grandfather and great‑grandfather; and

Whereas, having left school at an early age to help support his family, Willie Jennings was for years a farmer and an employee of Hygrade Meat Packing Company. As an employee, he always had a vision of becoming a business owner. First, it was an Esso filling station and then a restaurant. With hard work, he grew his business to Jennings Enterprises, consisting of a gas station, car dealership, auto repair shop, restaurant, barber shop, and beauty salon. Since then, he has expanded into property management and established Jennings Mini Mall, which is home to a number of businesses; and

Whereas, in his young days, Mr. Jennings became a member of Jones Chapel Baptist Church. Since that time, he has served actively as a member of the choir, usher board, and in many other capacities, and he is always lending a helping hand to the less fortunate. In further service to his church, the teenaged Willie became interested in serving on the trustee board with his father. After having served as an apprentice trustee under the guidance of the senior Mr. Jennings, Willie officially became a member of the Jones Chapel Baptist Church Board of Trustees at nineteen. He has served as board chairman for more than forty years; and

Whereas, his community service is extensive and of long standing. He is an avid supporter of the South Carolina State University Athletics Department, Criminal Justice Support Organization, and AKA Sorority. He provided funds to develop housing for the elderly and hosted a give‑away of Thanksgiving turkeys to communities in five counties. He has provided free car services to the students of South Carolina State University and Claflin University and has mentored several students at Jones Chapel; and

Whereas, in recognition of his committed service to the people of Orangeburg County, Willie Jennings has been granted numerous honors. In 2016, Orangeburg’s Mayor Butler and employees of Jennings Mini Mall recognized Mr. Jennings as a successful businessman who has provided employment and service for nearly half a century in the Orangeburg area. In further recognition of this servant‑leader, Jones Chapel Baptist Church will honor Mr. Jennings at a special celebration on Sunday, March 26, 2017; and

Whereas, the members of the House of Representatives recognize that the success of the State of South Carolina, the strength of its communities, and the vitality of American society as a whole depend, in great measure, upon the dedication of individuals like Willie Jennings who use their talents and resources to serve others. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, honor Willie Jennings for his dedicated community service to the people of Orangeburg County and for his outstanding career in business and wish him much continued success and fulfillment in the days ahead.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Willie Jennings.

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