**South Carolina General Assembly**

125th Session, 2023-2024

**H. 4081**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

House Resolution

Sponsors: Reps. Hosey, Alexander, Anderson, Atkinson, Bailey, Ballentine, Bamberg, Bannister, Bauer, Beach, Bernstein, Blackwell, Bradley, Brewer, Brittain, Burns, Bustos, Calhoon, Carter, Caskey, Chapman, Chumley, Clyburn, Cobb-Hunter, Collins, Connell, B.J. Cox, B.L. Cox, Crawford, Cromer, Davis, Dillard, Elliott, Erickson, Felder, Forrest, Gagnon, Garvin, Gatch, Gibson, Gilliam, Gilliard, Guest, Guffey, Haddon, Hager, Hardee, Harris, Hart, Hartnett, Hayes, Henderson-Myers, Henegan, Herbkersman, Hewitt, Hiott, Hixon, Howard, Hyde, Jefferson, J.E. Johnson, J.L. Johnson, S. Jones, W. Jones, Jordan, Kilmartin, King, Kirby, Landing, Lawson, Leber, Ligon, Long, Lowe, Magnuson, May, McCabe, McCravy, McDaniel, McGinnis, Mitchell, J. Moore, T. Moore, A.M. Morgan, T.A. Morgan, Moss, Murphy, Neese, B. Newton, W. Newton, Nutt, O'Neal, Oremus, Ott, Pace, Pedalino, Pendarvis, Pope, Rivers, Robbins, Rose, Rutherford, Sandifer, Schuessler, Sessions, G.M. Smith, M.M. Smith, Stavrinakis, Taylor, Tedder, Thayer, Thigpen, Trantham, Vaughan, Weeks, West, Wetmore, Wheeler, White, Whitmire, Williams, Willis, Wooten and Yow

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Introduced in the House on March 7, 2023

Adopted by the House on March 7, 2023

Summary: Allendale Co SCOPE

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

3/7/2023 House Introduced and adopted ([House Journal‑page 6](h:\hj\20230307.docx))

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[03/07/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/4081_20230307.docx)

A house RESOLUTION

TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND Willa Marian Jennings, Larry O’Neal Priester, and Bernard Brown AND TO HONOR THE MEMORY of the LaTE Maggie Gadson and THE LATE Cleo Smokes, ALL OF WHOM WERE PARTICIPANTS IN THE Allendale County SCOPE AND WHO WERE UNJUSTLY ACCUSED AND CONVICTED.

Whereas, during the summers of 1965 and 1966 under the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a bold voter education rights’ project came to one hundred twenty counties in six Southern states, an effort known as the Summer Community Organization and Political Education Project (SCOPE); and

Whereas, the goals of SCOPE included preparing formerly disenfranchised African Americans for voting and, if necessary, for organizing demonstrations and protests to help put political pressure on the United States Congress, should the proposed Voting Rights Bill of 1965 be met with congressional resistance and stalling or even a filibuster; and

Whereas, Allendale County was one of the sites of SCOPE in the summer of 1965. Many SCOPE participants in Allendale County were arrested on several occasions after attempting to register to vote at the county courthouse. Five of those arrested were known as the “Allendale Five”: Maggie Gadson and Cleo Smokes, both now deceased, and Willa Marian Jennings, Larry O’Neal Priester, and Bernard Brown. These were charged with disorderly conduct and inciting a riot among other charges; and

Whereas, the Allendale Five were all indicted, tried, convicted by an all-white jury, sentenced to one‑year terms, and fined one hundred dollars. Their sentences were commuted during the Johnson Administration via the Justice Department prior to the president’s signing of the Voting Rights Act into law on August 6, 1965; and

Whereas, Willa Marian Jennings was only sixteen years old at the time of her arrest. Since then, she has continued to serve as a community activist, educator, and political leader, and most recently she was elected to the Allendale County Council. 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 commend Willa Marian Jennings, Larry O’Neal Priester, and Bernard Brown and honor the memory of the late Maggie Gadson and the late Cleo Smokes, all of whom were participants in the Allendale County SCOPE and who were unjustly accused and convicted.

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

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