**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE THE REVEREND DR. RICHARD F. DOZIER, SR., UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AS FOUNDING PASTOR OF NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A) IN COLUMBIA, AND TO HONOR HIM FOR HIS FORTY‑TWO YEARS OF PASTORAL SERVICE TO GOD AND THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, it is with great pleasure that the South Carolina Senate honors those individuals who give tirelessly of themselves to succor the souls of men; and

Whereas, the Reverend Dr. Richard F. Dozier, Sr., founding pastor of Northminster Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) in Columbia, stands among their number as an outstanding minister of the Gospel, one much admired in his roles as pastor and community volunteer; and

Whereas, born and raised in Saluda County, the young Richard prepared himself for the Gospel ministry by taking his bachelor’s degree at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina, his master’s degree at Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia, and his doctorate at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. He has since completed numerous continuing‑education courses, including training at the United States Army Chaplain’s School in New Jersey; and

Whereas, Reverend Dozier served Catawba and Yadkin presbyteries as a student minister while in seminary. In May 1967, he was ordained a Presbyterian minister by the Catawba Presbytery. In September 1968, he was called by the Fairfield‑McClelland Presbytery to be the organizing minister of a new church‑development project in Columbia, and from that call to evangelism developed Northminster Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which Reverend Dozier has so faithfully served as pastor for forty‑two years; and

Whereas, under his leadership, Northminster has become an organizational force for many spiritual, social, and political activities in the North Columbia community, and church members have learned through his tutelage that if they want to maintain a believable testimony in the community, they must strive to live the deeds on Monday that they proclaim in creeds on Sunday; and

Whereas, this dynamic pastor served, in addition to his work at Northminster, twelve years as a South Carolina Army National Guard chaplain, the first African American to fill this position; and

Whereas, as an active leader in his denomination, Dr. Dozier has served as moderator of the Trinity Presbytery and of the Synod of the South and has chaired the Synod’s Mission and Ministry Division. He has been president of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Greater Columbia, president of the South Carolina Christian Action Council, and a member of the African‑American Advisory Committee to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Presently, he serves as a board member of Concerned Black Clergy of South Carolina; and

Whereas, not one to neglect support of his community, Dr. Dozier is one of the founders and developers of Harbison New Town, located along I‑26 west of Columbia, and served four terms as a commissioner of the Richland County Recreation Commission. He is currently president of the North Columbia Development Foundation, president of the Eau Claire Development Corporation of North Columbia, and a member of the steering committee of the NAACP’s Columbia branch. In addition, he is involved with the Family to Family Initiative spearheaded by the Richland County Department of Social Services in an effort to reduce the number of children flowing into foster care, reduce substance abuse, and stem gang violence and activity; and

Whereas, for his many accomplishments, Dr. Dozier has received numerous awards and honors, among them Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary’s Outstanding Alumnus Award and the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Greater Columbia’s Outstanding Pastoral Leadership to the Community Award. In 2003, he was awarded the NAACP of South Carolina’s President’s Award for Civic and Community Work; and

Whereas, Dr. Dozier considers one of his crowning achievements as having had the good sense to marry his beloved wife, the former Bessie Jeannette Smith, and with her to raise two wonderful sons, Richard, Jr., and Anthony, who have given their parents the joy of five grandchildren; and

Whereas, noted as a humble, courageous man of Christian character, one of whom it truly may be said, “Well done, good and faithful servant,” Richard F. Dozier, Sr., has demonstrated to others how to be “steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.” To honor his many years of ministerial service, Northminster Presbyterian Church will host a retirement celebration on Saturday, May 22, as well as a special worship service on Sunday, May 23; and

Whereas, the Senate, cognizant of his many years of spiritual nourishment of the people of South Carolina, wishes to express its grateful thanks to Dr. Dozier and wish him God’s best as he retires from the pastorate and continues to run the race the Lord has set before him. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, congratulate the Reverend Dr. Richard F. Dozier, Sr., upon the occasion of his retirement as founding pastor of Northminster Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Columbia, and honor him for his forty‑two years of pastoral service to God and the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to the Reverend Dr. Richard F. Dozier, Sr.

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