**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UPON THE PASSING OF DR. ROBERT C. EDWARDS, OF PICKENS COUNTY, PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF CLEMSON UNIVERSITY, AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Robert C. Edwards, of Pickens County, President Emeritus of Clemson University, on December 4, 2008, at the venerable age of ninety‑four; and

Whereas, Dr. Edwards was born in Fountain Inn on March 25, 1914, to John Thaddeus and Effie Cook Edwards; and

Whereas, in preparation for his life’s work, he entered Clemson College as a freshman at age fifteen and graduated in 1933 with a Bachelor of Science in textile engineering. After a successful career in the textile industry, he returned to Clemson in 1956 as the university’s first vice president for development. He became acting president in 1958 and was elected president by the trustees on April 9, 1959, a position he held for twenty‑one years; and

Whereas, the eighth and longest‑serving chief executive of Clemson, Dr. Edwards presided over an era of phenomenal growth and monumental events that shaped the future of the institution, such as the graduation of Clemson’s first female students and the enrollment of its first black students. With strong, steady, and visionary leadership, he piloted Clemson through the transition from a small, all‑male military college to a major co‑educational, integrated university; and

Whereas, at his retirement, Dr. Edwards had personally awarded twenty‑eight thousand seven hundred fifty diplomas, which represented more than seventy percent of all undergraduate degrees and all the doctorates awarded in Clemson’s history to that time. He was recognized as a take‑charge businessman and skilled negotiator who shared a special bond with students, and his love of Clemson sports was legendary, having been founded in the days when he served as manager for the school’s football team as a student and later when he served as IPTAY president from 1954 to 1955. He missed only one of the two hundred forty‑two football games Clemson played during his presidency; and

Whereas, Dr. Edwards, a member of Clemson United Methodist Church, was known in his community for doing “great deeds”, but he was also known in his family for doing small deeds with great love and generosity; and

Whereas, having been preceded in death by his beloved wife, Louise Odom Edwards, and by his son, Robert Cook Edwards, Jr., he leaves daughter Nancy Edwards Reid and her husband, Bill; daughter‑in‑law Sandra Edwards Waggoner; and a host of grandchildren, great‑grandchildren, and other relatives; and

Whereas, in addition to his public works, Dr. Edwards has left a praiseworthy legacy of service and love to his God, his family, and his friends. He will be remembered with affection and gratitude for many years to come. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, express their profound sorrow upon the passing of Dr. Robert C. Edwards, of Pickens County, President Emeritus of Clemson University, and extend the deepest sympathy to his family and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Mrs. Nancy Edwards Reid for the family.

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