**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE LATE HONORABLE RANDOLPH “BUSTER” MURDAUGH, JR., SOLICITOR OF THE FOURTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT FROM 1940 TO 1986 AND DISTINGUISHED SON OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, it is altogether fitting that the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives pause in their deliberations to consider the significant contributions and noteworthy legacy of the Honorable Randolph “Buster” Murdaugh, Jr., solicitor of the Fourteenth Judicial Circuit from 1940 to 1986; and

Whereas, Randolph Murdaugh, Jr., affectionately known to his friends and family as Buster, was born in Varnville on January 15, 1915. The son of Randolph and Etta Harvey Murdaugh, Buster became the second representative of a three‑generation line of Murdaughs serving as Fourteenth Circuit solicitor; and

Whereas, for more than eighty‑five years, anyone accused of a crime in the counties of this circuit dealt with one of these Murdaughs: Randolph, Sr., a Hampton attorney elected solicitor in 1920; Randolph, Jr., or “Buster,” elected to fill his father’s place in 1940 after the senior Randolph was killed in a train wreck; and Buster’s son, Randolph III, or “Randy,” who was elected solicitor in 1986. Randy Murdaugh retired in 2005, thus ending the Murdaugh line of solicitors; and

Whereas, in preparation for his life’s work, Buster Murdaugh earned his law degree at the University of South Carolina and returned to Hampton County in 1938 to practice law. He also began giving gratis assistance to his father in his duties as solicitor. After his father died two years later, Buster Murdaugh ran for his father’s office and won; and

Whereas, by the time Buster had completed his career as solicitor, he had served in that office for forty‑eight years, making him the longest‑serving solicitor in the country at that time; and

Whereas, he saw this lowcountry region go through the transition from fishing and farming communities to a region of far more development and business activity. As the economy picked up, so did the level of sophisticated criminal activity. In response, Buster Murdaugh dealt with this situation professionally and with dispatch; and

Whereas, he enjoyed investigating crimes of all kinds and developed a strong antipathy for repeat offenders and those he believed had committed murder or theft. He was tough on such criminals, but he was fair, working to throw out cases based on flimsy evidence and willing to change his mind when new and revealing evidence came to light; and

Whereas, his reputation gave him a ninety percent success rate in negotiating guilty pleas or convictions in the cases he took on; In 1986, he decided to retire and support his son, Randy, as his replacement in the upcoming election for solicitor; and

Whereas, although he died in February 1998, Buster Murdaugh’s legacy remains fresh in the minds of many appreciative South Carolinians. In commemoration of his long and illustrious service, his portrait now hangs in the foyer of the Hampton County Courthouse not far from a commemorative plaque in the courtroom itself; and

Whereas, for nearly half a century, the State of South Carolina enjoyed the benefit of the dedication and experience of Buster Murdaugh, and the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are grateful for the extraordinary contributions of this remarkable man to his community and to our great State. 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 the life and public service of the late Honorable Randolph “Buster” Murdaugh, Jr., solicitor of the Fourteenth Judicial Circuit from 1940 to 1986 and distinguished son of South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to the family of the Honorable Randolph “Buster” Murdaugh, Jr.

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