**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND ISAIAH OWENS FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE IN THE MORTUARY PROFESSION FOR FORTY‑FOUR YEARS AND FOR THE COMPASSION AND KINDNESS HE HAS RENDERED TO HIS COMMUNITY.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are pleased to commend Isaiah Owens for his many years of noteworthy contributions to his community; and

Whereas, born and reared in Branchville, Isaiah Owens was the eighth child of Willie Mae Owens and the late Clifton Owens; and

Whereas, he received his primary education in the Orangeburg County School District and graduated from Lockett High School; and

Whereas, intrigued by funerals even at an early age, young Isaiah would regularly hold funerals to bury dead animals on the farm where he lived. The funerals involved hitching a horse and buggy for the funeral cortege and imitating what he observed at various funerals, even preaching the funeral himself; and

Whereas, his interest in funeral work grew, and in 1969 he graduated from the American Academy McAllister Institute of Funeral Services to become a licensed funeral director. Today he is a master of his craft, managing and owning Isaiah Owens Funeral Services in New York City and Owens Funeral Services in Branchville; and

Whereas, affectionately known to his friends as The Prophet, Mr. Owens acted on a vision he had when John F. Kennedy, Jr., along with his wife and her older sister, met his untimely and tragic death on July 16, 1999. He held a memorial service for the Kennedys in his chapel and placed a register book outside his Harlem‑based funeral home that gave members of the Harlem community an opportunity to express their condolences to the Kennedy family. The memorial service received live coverage on CNN; and

Whereas, after the amazing outpouring of heart‑warming tributes paid to the deceased by fellow New Yorkers, Isaiah’s “A Time for Healing” crusade was organized; and

Whereas, Mr. Owens has received numerous awards for his outstanding contributions to the community, including The Children of Gwendolyn Bland Day Care presented by the Office of the President of the Borough of Manhattan, C. Virginia Fields; an award from Sardis Baptist Church signed by New York Mayor Giuliani; and an award from his peers at the First District of the National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association; and

Whereas, together with his beloved wife, Lillie Owens, he has reared six fine children; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives appreciates the professional standard of excellence set by Isaiah Owens and honors this distinguished son of the Palmetto 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 commend Isaiah Owens for his outstanding service in the mortuary profession for forty‑four years and for the compassion and kindness he has rendered to his community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Isaiah Owens.

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