COMMITTEE REPORT

May 7, 2014

**H. 5207**

Introduced by Rep. Bannister

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Read the first time May 6, 2014.

**THE COMMITTEE ON**

**INVITATIONS AND MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS**

To whom was referred a Concurrent Resolution (H. 5207) to request that the Department of Transportation name the portion of Augusta Street in the City of Greenville from its intersection with Mauldin Road, etc., respectfully

**REPORT:**

That they have duly and carefully considered the same and recommend that the same do pass:

LISTON D. BARFIELD for Committee.

**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO REQUEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME THE PORTION OF AUGUSTA STREET IN THE CITY OF GREENVILLE FROM ITS INTERSECTION WITH MAULDIN ROAD TO ITS INTERSECTION WITH SOUTH CHURCH STREET “DAVID H. WILKINS BOULEVARD” AND INSTALL APPROPRIATE MARKERS OR SIGNS ALONG THIS PORTION OF HIGHWAY INDICATING THIS DESIGNATION IN RECOGNITION OF FORMER SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO CANADA DAVID H. WILKINS’ YEARS OF HARD WORK AND SERVICE TO HIS COMMUNITY, STATE, AND COUNTRY.

Whereas, born on October 12, 1946, the son of the late William Walter Wilkins and the late Evelyn Wilkins, David H. Wilkins of Greenville learned the importance of public service early on; and

Whereas, David H. Wilkins earned his undergraduate degree from Clemson University, his law degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law, and served in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserves; and

Whereas, he was a member of the South Carolina House of Representatives for twenty‑five years and at the time of his election in December of 1994 was the first Republican‑elected Speaker of any state legislative body in the South since Reconstruction; and

Whereas, David H. Wilkins quickly rose to a position of leadership in the House serving with distinction as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee for six years and then as Speaker Pro Tempore for two years before his historic election as Speaker; and

Whereas, this consummate Republican with superior intellect from the upstate also managed to build a reputation of generosity and fairness to members from both sides of the aisle and is universally respected as a result; and

Whereas, over the years he guided the House through such complex issues as welfare reform, property tax relief, education accountability, the creation of LIFE scholarships, judicial reform, government restructuring, redistricting, truth in sentencing, Confederate flag removal from the State House, major tort reform, medical malpractice reform, and criminal domestic violence reform; and

Whereas, David H. Wilkins was also instrumental in crafting historic ethics reform and played a crucial role in the turbulent fight to ban video poker in the State; and

Whereas, during his tenure as Speaker, he continuously upheld the integrity of the House of Representatives and is known for the professionalism, energy, dedication, and determination with which he conducted the business of the House; and

Whereas, during his tenure as Speaker, he guided the course of the House for over a decade through both good and bad financial times, and he will always be remembered for his appreciation and support of the House staff even as other state agencies were forced to furlough employees; and

Whereas, he served as state chairman of the Bush‑Cheney ‘04 campaign and as co‑chair of the campaign in 2000; and

Whereas, David H. Wilkins was appointed by the President to the Board of Visitors to the United States Academy at West Point in 2002 and served for three years; and

Whereas, a close friend and colleague of President George W. Bush, he was selected to serve as Ambassador to Canada and served his country in this capacity from June 29, 2005 until January 20, 2009; and

Whereas, during his tenure, as Ambassador he helped to resolve some of the highest profile issues between Canada and the United States, including the decades‑old softwood lumber trade dispute. He is known on both sides of the border as an honest broker who worked for solutions on the toughest issues ‑ energy, national security, the environment, trade and travel ‑ impacting millions of citizens in both countries; and

Whereas, after meritorious and successful service to our country as Ambassador to Canada, he returned to his home state and continued to pursue his career in public service and as a distinguished member of the South Carolina Bar; and

Whereas, Ambassador David H. Wilkins is a partner at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP and chairs the Public Policy and International Law practice group, which focuses primarily on representing businesses on both sides of the US‑Canadian border and offers experience on a wide range of strategic bilateral issues; and

Whereas, in 2010, Wilkins was tapped by Governor Nikki Haley to chair her government transition team and played a key role in helping her form her new administration; and

Whereas, he currently serves as chairman of the Clemson University Board of Trustees, as well as on the board of directors for Resolute Forest Products, Porter Airlines, and the Greenville Chamber of Commerce; and

Whereas, David H. Wilkins also serves as general counsel for the U.S. Endowment for Forestry & Communities, Inc.; and

Whereas, he and his wife Susan Wilkins are the loving and proud parents of two grown sons, James and Robert, a daughter-in-law, Stephanie, and two grandchildren, Whit and Clary, and currently reside in their beloved City of Greenville, South Carolina; and

Whereas, it would be fitting and proper to recognize former Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives and United States Ambassador to Canada David H. Wilkins by having the portion of Augusta Street in the City of Greenville from its intersection with Mauldin Road to its intersection with South Church Street named in his honor. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the General Assembly request that the Department of Transportation name the portion of Augusta Street in the City of Greenville from its the intersection with Mauldin Road to its intersection with South Church Street as the “David H. Wilkins Boulevard” and install appropriate markers or signs along this portion of highway indicating this designation in recognition of former Speaker of the House of Representatives and United States Ambassador to Canada David H. Wilkins’ years of hard work and service to his community, state, and country.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to David H. Wilkins, his family, and the Department of Transportation.

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