**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE JAMES E. GRAY FOR EXTRAORDINARY DEDICATION TO HIS COMMUNITY AND TO THE BUILDING OF KILLIAN PARK IN RICHLAND COUNTY.

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is pleased to learn that James Gray will be honored by the Richland County Recreation Commission with the unveiling of his portrait for his leadership in establishing Killian Park in Richland County; and

Whereas, born on August 18, 1925, James Gray was educated at Free Hope and Bethel schools in Blythewood and Booker T. Washington in Columbia; and

Whereas, he served his country with distinction in the United States Army as a sergeant from 1943‑1946 during World War II in France, Germany, Wales, and Belgium. He was a Bronze Star recipient; and

Whereas, upon his return to the Midlands, Mr. Gray attended Patterson Barber College from 1946‑1947 and the GI Agriculture School at Bethel High School from 1948‑1952; and

Whereas, he worked at Moncrief Army Hospital at Fort Jackson from 1952‑1980, where he worked as a shop steward from 1960‑1970, and he retired with thirty‑one years of federal service. He also was a part‑time farmer growing crops and livestock; and

Whereas, Mr. Gray served as the steward of Free Hope African Methodist Episcopal Church in Blythewood from 1952‑1960 and was ordained as a deacon at Blythewood’s Round Top Baptist Church in 1969. He was a member of the Fairfield County Baptist Association from 1963‑1985, and he is a 32 Degree Mason with the Free Will Lodge of the York Rite; and

Whereas, he coached Little League baseball at Fort Jackson from 1956‑1959 and sandlot ball in the Killian and Greenview communities from 1960‑1966. He also served as the Scout leader for Cub Scout Explorers at Free Hope Independent Church in Killian from 1958‑1966; and

Whereas, from 1957‑1966, Mr. Gray served as the vice president of the Bethel High School Parent/Teacher Organization. During the integration of Richland County School District 2 schools, Mr. Gray served on the Title 1 Advisory Committee from 1970-1974 and the school board’s Advisory Committee from 1976‑1982; and

Whereas, in 1965, James Gray founded the Killian Community Club and served as its president from 1965‑1975; and

Whereas, Mr. Gray was instrumental in establishing Killian Park in Blythewood which has served the public since 1970; and

Whereas, in 1984, he became a charter member of Senior Catering, Inc., in Little Mountain, which provides meals statewide to the elderly and underprivileged. He continues to serve on its board; and

Whereas, Mr. Gray served on the Title XX Aging Committee of the Central Midlands Regional Planning Council from 1976‑1986 and on the South Carolina Commission on Aging Advisory Committee from 1980‑1986. He served as a poll manager for Killian precinct from 1993‑2008; and

Whereas, although he could not participate in any visible political activity due to the Federal Hatch Act, he was involved actively in the Civil Rights Movement and worked closely with his brother‑in‑law, the late Reverend C. J. Whitaker; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly are pleased to honor those who, like James Gray, tirelessly devote themselves to the betterment of their communities and the citizens of our great State. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize James E. Gray for extraordinary dedication to his community and to the building of Killian Park in Richland County.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to James E. Gray.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑