**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND THE HONORABLE BILLY C. COLEMAN OF SALUDA COUNTY FOR HIS OUTSTANDING PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, it is with great pleasure that the members of the South Carolina General Assembly honor individuals who freely give of their time and resources for the good of others; and

Whereas, the Honorable Billy C. Coleman, a lifetime resident of Saluda County and former member of the South Carolina Senate, has contributed valuable public and community service to the citizens of the Palmetto State and is thereby worthy of praise; and

Whereas, born in 1916, he was the son of Annie and Ben Coleman of Saluda County. Because his father was blind and his mother was a schoolteacher, he started school when he was four. At the age of eight, he was helping butcher cows and pigs and riding with his daddy in a horse and buggy to sell the meat in Saluda. As his father’s “eyes,” Billy learned well how to describe what he saw; and

Whereas, on their dairy farm, the Coleman family drank the milk from their cows, ate the meat from their smokehouse, and enjoyed the eggs from their chickens. They harvested the vegetables from their garden and the apples, grapes, pears, and figs from their vines and trees. So young Billy worked like an adult; and

Whereas, in the evening when their work was done, the Colemans would sit on the porch, and if he had been anywhere that day, Billy would come home and entertain them with his stories. Further, the slow, quiet life of that time left him hungry for fellowship, so when neighbors came by and begged the family to sit down and tell them all the news, he gladly obliged; and

Whereas, his homelife created three strong facets of his personality: his amazing storytelling abilities, his extremely strong work ethic, and his love for the company of his neighbors and friends. These factors were to inform his life and work, along with Bible passages like Isaiah 40:31a: “…They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles…” John 15:13 also had special meaning for “Mr. Billy,” as many called him: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends”; and

Whereas, a graduate of the University of South Carolina School of Law, Billy Coleman began a solo law practice in 1938. In 1939, he became a partner in the firm of Griffith & Coleman, also serving over the years at several additional posts. These include attorney for Saluda County (1950‑1985), cattle farmer and co‑owner of the Saluda Feedlot and Leesville Stockyard and bookkeeper for the Saluda County Stockyard auctions (1945‑1984), and Saluda County Veterans Affairs officer (1946‑1980); and

Whereas, Billy Coleman represented Saluda in the South Carolina Senate from 1941 to 1943 but the young senator relinquished his post to serve in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was in charge of twenty‑seven landing boats during several invasions, including D‑Day at Normandy. At home on leave in 1944, he married Lula Cornelia Snyder, a schoolteacher. The couple were blessed with four daughters, Claire, Caren, Nancy Ann, and Julia; and

Whereas, after the war, Billy returned to Saluda, where he continued his law practice and endeared himself to the community by the extensive amount of *pro bono* work he performed. He constantly carried legal documents to the homes of people who were no longer ambulatory and met with families at the Saluda Nursing Center whenever his help was requested. He probably made more house calls to the seriously ill, elderly, or incapacitated than a country doctor. He also assisted young couples just starting out and young boys in trouble. To him, the client’s race or social status made no difference; he was always there whenever help was needed. He never sent bills for these services, which he donated gladly; and

Whereas, in other community arenas, Mr. Coleman is a member of St. Paul’s Methodist Church (past trustee and steward), Saluda Lion’s Club (past president), and American Legion Post 65 (past commander), among other organizations; and

Whereas, Billy Coleman is known for having helped so many in Saluda County with the wide variety of problems life presents. He worked at his profession until the last day of 2007, at which time he retired from his private law practice and from a legal career that had spanned seventy years; and

Whereas, the members of the General Assembly recognize that the success of the State of South Carolina and the strength of its communities depend, in great measure, upon the dedication of individuals like the Honorable Billy C. Coleman who use their talents and resources to serve others. Well done, Mr. Billy! Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize and commend the Honorable Billy C. Coleman of Saluda County for his outstanding public and community service to the people of South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the Honorable Billy C. Coleman.

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