**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR HATTIE AND MAJOR BETHEA OF DILLON, FOR A LIFETIME OF OUTSTANDING AND DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE DILLON COMMUNITY AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM FOR SIXTY YEARS AS THE OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF MAJOR’S CLEANERS, INC.

Whereas, it is altogether fitting that the South Carolina House of Representatives should pause in its deliberations to commend the lifelong service of Hattie and Major Bethea; and

Whereas, born in Robeson County, North Carolina, Major Bethea was reared by his loving grandmother and by his mother and step‑father, who early modeled a work ethic that shaped young Major’s life; and

Whereas, after graduating from high school in Baltimore, Maryland, he joined the United States Army in 1944 and served during World War II and in the Philippines. He was honorably discharged and completed Denmark Technical College on the G. I. Bill; and

Whereas, Hattie McDuffie, his future wife, was living in Little Rock, South Carolina, where her mother ran a small restaurant, when she met Major Bethea; and

Whereas, on March 18, 1947, the young couple married, and together they reared six fine children, who have blessed their parents with the affection of thirteen grandchildren and ten great‑grandchildren. Hattie and Major Bethea have celebrated sixty‑eight years of loving marriage to one another; and

Whereas, a professional tailor by trade, Major Bethea has owned and operated the same dry cleaning, laundry, and alterations business in Dillon since 1955. Although he started in a small rented facility, his business has successfully grown at three different locations and since 1993 has served the public on East Calhoun Street; and

Whereas, faithful members of McCoy’s Chapel United Methodist Church in Little Rock, the Betheas have been deeply involved in the church’s ministry and activities, she as a pianist and in music ministry and he as a certified lay speaker‑preacher with the United Methodist Church. He even returned to the Philippines in 1993 on a missionary trip, and two years later he ministered in Israel; and

Whereas, Mr. Bethea was recognized for serving on the board of directors of the South Carolina Association of Regional Councils Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments for twenty‑five years, and was one of thirty-two South Carolinians who were selected Businessmen of the Year in 2001 by the *Wall Street Journal*; and

Whereas, among his numerous honors for civic, religious, and commercial involvement, he was honored with induction into the Pee Dee Black Hall of Fame and received an invitation in 2007 to attend the President’s Dinner with President of the United States George W. Bush; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives appreciates the vibrant legacy that Hattie and Major Bethea have contributed to the family, church, community, and business, and the members commend them for sixty years of faithful service with integrity. 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 Hattie and Major Bethea of Dillon for a lifetime of outstanding and dedicated service to the Dillon community and congratulate them for sixty years as the owners and operators of Major’s Cleaners, Inc.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Hattie and Major Bethea.

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