**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UPON THE PASSING OF THE HONORABLE CLEMENTA CARLOS PINCKNEY OF RIDGELAND, TO CELEBRATE HIS LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS, AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are deeply saddened by the untimely death of the Honorable Clementa Carlos Pinckney of Ridgeland, senior pastor of Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston and member of the South Carolina Senate. Attacked by a gunman while leading a prayer meeting and Bible study at Emanuel AME, he and eight of his fellow church members were slain on June 17, 2015; and

Whereas, Clem Pinckney was born the son of John Pinckney and the late Theopia Stevenson Pinckney on July 30, 1973. Early showing his commitment to the Christian roots implanted in him, he began preaching at the age of thirteen and was first appointed pastor at eighteen. A fourth‑generation minister, he was named pastor of Emanuel AME in 2010; and

Whereas, just one year after graduating magna cum laude from Allen University in 1995, this Princeton University Research Fellow (summer 1994) was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives and became, at the age of twenty‑three, the youngest African American elected to the this great state’s legislature. In furtherance of his education, he earned his master’s degree in public administration from the University of South Carolina in 1999 and later his master of divinity at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. In 2000, he was elected to the South Carolina Senate; and

Whereas, during his years in the Senate, Clem Pinckney, a nineteen‑year state legislator, proved his worth as a member of the Banking and Insurance, Corrections and Penology, Education, Finance, and Medical Affairs committees and championed causes important to him. He fought to expand Medicaid and supported public education. He helped bring to fruition the South Carolina Healthy Bucks program, which provides vouchers for the purchase of healthy foods at the farmer’s market. He strongly opposed voter ID legislation he felt would hinder some of South Carolina’s citizens from exercising their right to vote. Most recently, he spoke eloquently and provided leadership for the provision of body‑worn cameras for law enforcement officers in this State; and

Whereas, in short, Clem Pinckney focused on using the pulpit in his church and the floor in the state Senate to advocate for the least among us: those struggling to find jobs, those sick and in need of health care, and the schoolchildren in Jasper County. He wasn’t overbearing about it; the booming baritone voice that matched his tall stature was always kept at an even keel, and his approach was always humble as he gave voice to some of the state’s poorest residents without seeking personal credit; and

Whereas, all his life, Clem Pinckney found his God a rock he could lean on. To strengthen His servant for his life’s work, the Lord blessed Clem with the strong support of a fine family: his dear wife, Jennifer Benjamin Pinckney, whom he married on October 23, 1999, and his two delightful daughters, Eliana and Malana; and

Whereas, Clementa Pinckney leaves to cherish his memory and carry on his legacy his devoted wife and children and a host of other relatives and friends, including his colleagues in the South Carolina House of Representatives; and

Whereas, knowing that Senator Pinckney would not want this body to remember him without also remembering the sorrow of his congregation, the House wishes to express its heartfelt grief to Mother Emanuel AME Church, one of the oldest African‑American churches in the United States, in its loss of nine much‑loved members; and

Whereas, these words written with a sure hope by the Apostle Paul truly may be said of Clem Pinckney, a choice servant of the Lord Jesus Christ: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (II Timothy 4:7‑8. KJV); and

Whereas, Clementa Carlos Pinckney’s integrity, generosity of spirit, and general enthusiasm for life, work, his God, family, and friends were unmatched, and he will be remembered as a humble public servant and beloved South Carolina statesman. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, express their profound sorrow upon the passing of the Honorable Clementa Carlos Pinckney of Ridgeland, celebrate his life and achievements, and extend the deepest sympathy to his family and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mrs. Jennifer Pinckney, Miss Eliana Pinckney, Miss Malana Pinckney, and Mr. John Pinckney for the family.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑