**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR THE REVEREND DR. BERNARD JOSEPH GADSDEN, SR., PASTOR OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF JAMES ISLAND, FOR HIS THIRTY YEARS OF GOSPEL MINISTRY AT FIRST BAPTIST, TO CONGRATULATE HIM ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT, AND TO WISH HIM GOD’S RICHEST BLESSINGS AS HE CONTINUES TO SERVE THE LORD.

Whereas, it is with great pleasure that the South Carolina Senate honors those individuals who give tirelessly of themselves to nurture the souls of men. The Reverend Dr. Bernard Joseph Gadsden, Sr., pastor of First Baptist Church of James Island, stands among their number as an outstanding minister of the Gospel, one much admired by colleagues, congregation, and area residents at large; and

Whereas, the son of the Reverend Jeronica Gadsden and Mrs. Mae Gadsden, Dr. Gadsden was born in Bolton and in 1965 graduated from Wallace High School of St. Andrews Parish. He continued his education and received an associate’s degree in general business and civil engineering from Trident Technical College, a bachelor’s degree in organizational management from Voorhees College, a master’s degree in theology from Cummins Theological Memorial Seminary in Summerville, and an honorary doctorate in humane letters from Canaan Bible College in North Charleston; and

Whereas, in 1964, Dr. Gadsden became a member of Red Top’s New Hope Baptist Church, where he served as Sunday school superintendent, Sunday school teacher, choir member, assistant church secretary, member of the Pastor’s Aide Board, chairman of the Program Committee, member of the New Hope Board of Deacons, and associate minister; and

Whereas, heeding the call of his country, he served in the U.S. Army from 1969 to 1971. Pastor Gadsden was ordained in 1983 and, having been elected pastor of First Baptist Church of James Island in 1984, began his thirty years of faithful service there in 1985; and

Whereas, because he believes strongly in active participation in the community, Pastor Gadsden expresses that belief through membership in several organizations. These include the NAACP (North Charleston branch), South Carolina Black Voters Participation, Sea Island Community Development Fund Board of Directors (chair), Canaan Bible College Board of Directors, James Island Outreach Board of Directors, James Island Interfaith Action Committee (vice‑chair), and Old Ashley Baptist Association (executive ministry and treasurer); and

Whereas, in recognition of his spirit of excellence and dedicated service, Dr. Gadsden has been granted numerous honors, among them the New Hope Baptist Church Distinguished Service Award and First Baptist Church Dynamic Leadership Award; and

Whereas, Dr. Gadsden is the devoted husband of Georgetta Parker Gadsden, and they are the proud parents of one son, Bernard J. Gadsden, Jr.; and

Whereas, on the occasion of his retirement, Dr. Gadsden’s church family will gather to honor him at a celebratory event to be held Sunday, April 26, 2015; and

Whereas, the Senate, cognizant of his many years of spiritual nourishment of the people of South Carolina, takes great pleasure in expressing grateful thanks to Dr. Gadsden and in wishing him God’s best as he continues to run the race the Lord has set before him. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, honor the Reverend Dr. Bernard Joseph Gadsden, Sr., pastor of First Baptist Church of James Island, for his thirty years of Gospel ministry at First Baptist, congratulate him on the occasion of his retirement, and wish him God’s richest blessings as he continues to serve the Lord.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to the Reverend Dr. Bernard Joseph Gadsden, Sr.

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