**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE UPON THE PASSING OF WILLIAM L. BONNER OF DETROIT, MICHIGAN, CHIEF APOSTLE OF THE CHURCH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST OF THE APOSTOLIC FAITH, AND TO EXTEND THEIR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS LOVING FAMILY AND HIS MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate were saddened to learn of the death of Chief Apostle William L. Bonner at the age of ninety‑three on Friday, April 3, 2015; and

Whereas, born in 1921 in Bolden County, Georgia, Bishop Bonner’s ministry began in the 1940s under the tutelage of the late Bishop Robert C. Lawson, founder of the Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith; and

Whereas, Bishop Bonner earned a doctor of divinity from the Church of Christ Bible Institute in New York City; and

Whereas, he began his service to the church as pastor of Green Avenue Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Brooklyn, New York, and at his death, he was pastoring churches in Detroit, Michigan; New York City; Washington, D. C.; Jackson, Mississippi; and Columbia, South Carolina; and

Whereas, upon the death of Bishop Lawson in 1961, Bishop Bonner became the pastor of the Greater Refuge Temple in Harlem, New York City, the assembly’s mother church with three thousand members; and

Whereas, in 1989, Bishop Bonner founded the Refuge Temple of Washington, D. C., and broke ground for the Refuge Temple of Columbia in 1993, which was organized with only twenty‑two members. Within three years, it had grown to seven hundred members; and

Whereas, his ministry in Columbia also grew to include the church’s Family Life Center, Retirement Community, and the W. L. Bonner Bible College; and

Whereas, an international body of one hundred and fifty‑five churches in 1961, the Churches of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith kept the charge of their founder Bishop Lawson to “Add thou to it”; and

Whereas, under the energetic leadership of Bishop Bonner as the chief apostle and senior prelate, the assembly has grown to over five hundred churches and missions throughout the world; and

Whereas, together with his beloved wife, the late Ethel Mae Smith Bonner, he reared two fine children, William Lee Bonner, Jr., and Ethel Mae Bonner Archer; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate are grateful for the life and legacy of Bishop William L. Bonner and for the example of sacrifice and leadership he set for all who knew him. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, express their profound sorrow upon the passing of William L. Bonner of Detroit, Michigan, Chief Apostle of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Church, and extend their deepest sympathy to his loving family and his many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Chief Apostle William L. Bonner.

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