**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO CONVEY THE DEEPEST SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPON THE DEATH OF WILLIAM L. BONNER OF DETROIT, MICHIGAN, CHIEF APOSTLE OF THE CHURCH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST OF THE APOSTOLIC FAITH, AND TO OFFER THEIR SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO HIS LOVING FAMILY AND HIS MANY FRIENDS.

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

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

Whereas, in preparation for his lifelong ministry, Bishop Bonner received a doctor of divinity from the Church of Christ Bible Institute in New York City; and

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

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

Whereas, Bishop Bonner founded the Refuge Temple of Washington, D. C., in 1989, and broke ground for the Refuge Temple of Columbia in 1993, which was organized with only twenty‑two members, but in three years, it had increased more than thirtyfold; and

Whereas, also growing in scope, his ministry at the Refuge Temple of Columbia expanded to include the church’s Family Life Center, Retirement Community, and the W. L. Bonner Bible College; and

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

Whereas, under the robust 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, he and his beloved wife, the late Ethel Mae Smith Bonner, reared two outstanding children, William Lee Bonner, Jr., and Ethel Mae Bonner Archer; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly appreciate the life and legacy of Bishop William L. Bonner and the example of faith and resolve he demonstrated for all those who would follow in his footsteps. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, express their deepest sorrow upon the death of William L. Bonner of Detroit, Michigan, Chief Apostle of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Church, and offer their sincere condolences 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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