**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE UPON THE PASSING OF REVEREND DR. EVELYN GELZER STEVENS AND TO EXTEND THEIR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HER FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Reverend Dr. Evelyn Gelzer Stevens on July 19, 2017; and

Whereas, Reverend Dr. Evelyn Gelzer Stevens was born on March 7, 1937 in Walterboro to the late Reverend Mack and Lela Daniels Gelzer. She was the fifth of seven children; and

Whereas, Reverend Dr. Stevens graduated from Colleton Training School; attended Palmer College, Baptist College, and South Carolina State University; received bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate degrees in theology from Gulf Coast Seminary; and received an honorary doctorate degree in religious education from Gulf Coast Seminary; and

Whereas, a woman dedicated to serving others, Reverend Dr. Stevens was the founder and pastor of Friendship Liberty Baptist Church for twenty years. She also did domestic work in Florida and worked in business in New York. In Walterboro, she was employed with the Colleton County School District as a secretary, teacher’s aide, bus driver, and substitute teacher; and

Whereas, a devoted Christian, Reverend Dr. Stevens was also affiliated with other churches, including Friendship Baptist Church of Yalaha, First Baptist Church of Brooklyn, and Wesley United Methodist Church of Walterboro; and

Whereas, a leader in her community, Reverend Dr. Stevens was a Girl Scout Troop Leader, a member of the Colleton County branch of the NAACP, and a member of the CTS/CHS Alumni Association. She was also politically active in several elections in Colleton County; and

Whereas, Reverend Dr. Stevens was preceded in death by her husband, the late Deacon Kalip Stevens, and her daughter, Janifer Stevens; and

Whereas, she leaves to cherish her memory her children, Anna Stevens Bright and Dianna Stevens McNeil. She will be missed. 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 Reverend Dr. Evelyn Gelzer Stevens and extend their deepest sympathy to her family and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Reverend Dr. Evelyn Gelzer Stevens.

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