**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME THE PORTION OF NORTH MCQUEEN STREET IN THE CITY OF FLORENCE FROM ITS INTERSECTION WITH WEST LUCAS STREET TO ITS INTERSECTION WITH WEST SUMTER STREET “REVEREND EDWARD HEZEKIAH THOMAS WAY” AND ERECT APPROPRIATE MARKERS OR SIGNS ALONG THIS PORTION OF HIGHWAY CONTAINING THIS DESIGNATION.

Whereas, the Reverend Edward Hezekiah Thomas was born on March 15, 1917, the son of the late Tommie and Mary Charles Thomas. He entered eternal life on June 11, 1999. Educated in the public schools of Florence County, he received further training through the Civilian Conservation Corps, the federal public works program established during the Great Depression that put millions of young adults to work; and

Whereas, Reverend Thomas was married to Lillian McCoy and together they were blessed with six children. He was trained for the ministry at the Interdenominational Theological Seminary through Benedict and Morris colleges. He was an assistant pastor at St. Beulah Missionary Baptist Church, assistant and later pastor at Carver Street Baptist Church, ending his ministerial duties as pastor at Central Baptist Church, all in Florence County; and

Whereas, Reverend Thomas devoted his life’s work to civic affairs and community involvement. Recognizing that “a voice not connected to a vote is yet silent,” he is credited with establishing voter registration drives which led to an influx of African Americans to the polls. He was a staunch supporter of and participant in the Palmetto Voters Association and later the Voter Education Project; and

Whereas, a life member of the NAACP, Reverend Thomas served as president of the Florence chapter during the tumultuous years of desegregation and served as youth advisor to many of the community’s young people, who later became influential leaders in the state’s Pee Dee area and the nation; and

Whereas, other civic activities were devoted to Morris College and Benedict College alumni associations; Manna House, a non‑profit organization that provides food and services to the less fortunate; the Pee Dee Community Action Agency; and the local Boys and Girls Club. Reverend Thomas also served the Florence and Darlington counties’ Baptist Educational Singing Convention, the Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina, and the Pee Dee District Baptist Convention; and

Whereas, an astute businessman and state Notary Public, Reverend Thomas was a licensed broker‑in‑charge for the Middleton Agency, a contractor who built homes throughout Florence County, and a teacher for the community action agency’s “Project T‑Square,” which trained young people in brick masonry and carpentry. He also was a board member of Statewide Homes Foundation, established by the late Reverend I. DeQuincey Newman, a former state senator and field secretary of the South Carolina NAACP, to provide housing for low‑income residents; and

Whereas, it is fitting and proper that we pay homage to Reverend Edward Hezekiah Thomas for his dedicated service and contributions to Florence County by naming a portion of North McQueen Street in his honor. Now, therefore,

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

That the South Carolina General Assembly request the Department of Transportation name the portion of North McQueen Street in the City of Florence from its intersection with West Lucas Street to its intersection with West Sumter Street “Reverend Edward Hezekiah Thomas Way” and erect appropriate markers or signs along this portion of highway containing this designation.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Department of Transportation.

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