**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE JACKSON BRANCH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH OF BRUNSON ON THE OCCASION OF ITS HISTORIC ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY AND TO COMMEND THE CHURCH FOR A CENTURY AND A HALF OF SERVICE TO GOD AND THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, having been founded in 1868, Jackson Branch Missionary Baptist Church of Brunson is celebrating its historic one hundred fiftieth anniversary in 2018; and

Whereas, Jackson Branch was organized during the Reconstruction era in the 1860s, following the Civil War. It was a time when blacks and whites worshipped together, but blacks were required to sit in the back of the church or in the galleries during services. After emancipation, blacks withdrew and created their own churches on land they purchased by pooling their resources; and

Whereas, unlike some churches created in its founding era, Jackson Branch possesses written accounts of its early days. Excerpts from the 1936 records of Deacon D.J. Meyers state that Miller Swamp Missionary Baptist Church, located in Sycamore, was one of the churches in this rural area where blacks and whites worshipped together. People had to travel many miles by foot and wagon to attend services. In 1868, a small group of black and white Christians attending Miller Swamp, led by the Reverends Daniel Walker (founding pastor), Stephney Sanders (second pastor), Ham Dowling, and Robert Bowers, decided to build a church in the upper part of Beaufort County, which is now known as Hampton County. Thus, the foundation of Jackson Branch Missionary Baptist Church was laid; and

Whereas, since that humble beginning, Jackson Branch has been blessed with many God‑driven ministers to serve as shepherds of the flock, its current pastor being the Reverend C.A. Graham; and

Whereas, currently, the church occupies its fourth structure since its establishment in 1868. The Cope and Harvey families built the second structure, and James Sanders’ construction company built the third. The present structure, built by Elmer McQuire and Professional Builders Construction Company, was completed on October 16, 2004; and

Whereas, the history of Jackson Branch Missionary Baptist Church has not been without trial and hardship. On August 22, 2002, one of the oldest oak trees on church property was struck during a lightning storm, igniting a fire that destroyed over ninety percent of the church. However, the congregation held to its faith, remembering the encouraging words of the Lord in Revelation 3:8: “I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.” Temporary space for worship was kindly provided by sister churches until a new sanctuary could be built; and

Whereas, to mark its milestone sesquicentennial anniversary, the church has set apart a special celebratory time, Saturday, October 6, and Sunday, October 7, 2018; and

Whereas, Jackson Branch Missionary Baptist Church has been a beacon of light and a community worship center in the Brunson area for one hundred fifty years, and, God willing, will continue its godly heritage for many more years of worship and service. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and congratulate Jackson Branch Missionary Baptist Church of Brunson on the occasion of its historic one hundred fiftieth anniversary and commend the church for a century and a half of service to God and the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Jackson Branch Missionary Baptist Church.

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