**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE UPON THE PASSING OF EUGENE BEDFORD ROSS OF MARLBORO COUNTY AND EXTEND THEIR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS LARGE AND LOVING FAMILY AND HIS MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate were saddened to learn of the death of Eugene Bedford Ross at the age of ninety on January 31, 2020; and

Whereas, the son of the late Harry F. and Edith Fife Ross, Eugene Ross was born in Hermanville, Mississippi, and graduated from Crystal Springs Consolidated High School in 1947 as an all‑star high school athlete, lettering all four years in football, basketball, tennis, and track; and

Whereas, he attended Copiah Lincoln Junior College in Mississippi until 1948, when he enlisted in the United States Air Force and completed training at Lackland Air Force Base; and

Whereas, during the Korean War, Mr. Ross served with distinction as a drill instructor and was honorably discharged in 1951, whereupon he moved to Washington, D. C., and was employed with Proctor and Gamble as a sales representative; and

Whereas, during his tenure with Proctor and Gamble, he submitted patent ideas which led to the development of two major products, blue Cheer laundry detergent and Pepsodent striped toothpaste; and

Whereas, Mr. Ross and his younger brother, Richard, enrolled at the University of Georgia in 1956 to become pharmacists. Each quarter one worked two shifts in their uncle’s drug store in Elberton, Georgia, and the other one attended classes The next quarter they switched roles until Gene obtained his bachelor’s degree in pharmacy at the age of thirty‑three; and

Whereas, after graduation, he moved his family from Elberton to Laurens and began his professional pharmacy practice as the founder of Eureka Drug Stores, Inc. His brother Richard joined him later, and they subsequently acquired eleven drug stores and remained lifelong business partners; and

Whereas, in 1964, the company expanded to include retail pharmacy operations in the states of North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, and during his career Mr. Ross was licensed to practice in those states. By 1982, Eureka Drug Stores, Inc., had become the eighth largest filler of prescriptions in the entire United States; and

Whereas, the oldest practicing pharmacist in South Carolina until his retirement, Mr. Ross served families with their pharmacy needs for over fifty-four years and across more than three generations. He helped to revolutionize retail drug store practices by introducing the concept of leased pharmacy departments, negotiating volume discounts based on purchases, and introducing the Palmetto State to a retail drug store that remained open every day of the year; and

Whereas, an inventor holding numerous product patents, including Dr. Ross’ Old Fashioned Liniment, EZ Sock ID, and the Heatbelt hand‑warming device, he was recognized in 1980 by the national publication *Drug Store Topics* for his innovative business ideas; and

Whereas, a member of First United Methodist Church of Laurens, Marlboro Country Club, and Lakeside Country Club, Mr. Ross was a passionate golfer, known affectionately by fellow golfers as “Button” and “Slingshot.” He set low score records in several South Carolina amateur tournaments; and

Whereas, together with his beloved Elizabeth Ross, he reared five fine children: Jean Ross Polinski, Susan Ross Graves, Richard F. Ross, Patricia N. Ross, and Lindsay Ross Kirn. They blessed him with the affection of six adoring grandchildren: Ashley Grothe, Christopher Hocker, Lauren McCoy, Ross Graves, Rachel Feliciano, and Lillian Kirn. He had the joy of four great‑grandchildren; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate are grateful for the life and legacy of Eugene Ross, entrepreneur, philanthropist, pharmacist, and avid golfer, and for the example of excellence and service 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 Eugene Bedford Ross of Marlboro County and extend their deepest sympathy to his large and loving family and his many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Eugene Bedford Ross.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑