**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR ISAAC SAMUEL “I. S.” LEEVY JOHNSON, AMONG THE FIRST THREE AFRICAN AMERICANS TO SERVE IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SINCE RECONSTRUCTION, AND TO EXPRESS PROFOUND APPRECIATION FOR HIS SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO HIS PROFESSION AND TO THE PALMETTO STATE.

Whereas, it is altogether fitting that the South Carolina House of Representatives should pause in its deliberation to acknowledge I. S. Leevy Johnson, one of the first African Americans elected to serve in the state’s General Assembly since the turn of the twentieth century and the end of Reconstruction; and

Whereas, the son of O. J. Johnson and Ruby Leevy, I.S. Leevy Johnson was born in Columbia on May 16, 1942, and graduated from C. A. Johnson High School in Columbia in 1960; and

Whereas, seeking to become a licensed mortician, he enrolled at the University of Minnesota and resumed his education at Benedict College where he earned a bachelor’s degree in 1965; and

Whereas, although Mr. Johnson was not the first African‑American student to be admitted to the University of South Carolina School of Law, he was the first to complete the entire law curriculum while enrolled there; and

Whereas, on July 6, 1968, he married his beloved wife, Doris Wright of Columbia, and this union was blessed with two fine children; and

Whereas, in 1970, Mr. Johnson was elected as a Democrat for the South Carolina House of Representatives where he became a founding member of the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus; and

Whereas, referring to the period after the United States Civil War from 1865 to 1877, and during which efforts were made to address the inequities caused by slavery and the reentry of the eleven seceded states into the union, the Reconstruction era led to a politically mobilized black community in the South with white allies. In the modern era, African‑American leaders, such as Mr. Johnson, emerged to renew the work of those Reconstruction leaders; and

Whereas, he became the first African‑American attorney to sit in the House of Delegates, the governing body of the South Carolina Bar, and in June of 1985, he was elected to serve as the first black president of the South Carolina Bar; and

Whereas, a long‑standing member of the board of trustees at Benedict College, Mr. Johnson has been active in the South Carolina Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, as well as the National Urban League, and he was honored with induction into the South Carolina Black Hall of Fame in 1993; and

Whereas, with a reputation for being among the best trial lawyers in the State, he is a full partner in the Columbia law firm of Johnson, Toal & Battiste; and

Whereas, today Mr. Johnson inspires new generations of South Carolinians while he continues to practice law and run the family’s funeral home business. 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 honor Isaac Samuel “I. S.” Leevy Johnson, among the first three African Americans to serve in the General Assembly since Reconstruction, and express profound appreciation for his significant contributions to his profession and to the Palmetto State.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Isaac Samuel “I.S.” Leevy Johnson.

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