**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UPON THE PASSING OF EDNA SMITH PRIMUS OF COLUMBIA AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HER FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Edna Smith Primus of Columbia on November 29, 2019, at the age of seventy‑five; and

Whereas, Edna was educated in the public school systems of Yemassee and Varnville. She attended Mather High School and Mather Junior College in Beaufort, a private boarding school founded by Rachel Crane Mather in 1867 to educate newly freed female African Americans. Edna was an exemplary student and valedictorian of her class; and

Whereas, she went on to attend the University of South Carolina, from which she graduated in the Class of 1966 with her bachelor’s degree. Edna was destined for greatness. She didn’t stop at her undergraduate degree; she went on to further her education at the University of South Carolina School of Law, from which she received her juris doctorate, graduating in the Class of 1972. Edna became the first black woman to graduate from the university’s school of law; and

Whereas, Edna also became one of South Carolina’s most prominent, loving, and caring attorneys. She worked over thirty years with South Carolina Legal Services, where she poured her heart, soul, and dedication into serving those who were underprivileged. Her accomplishments were exceptional. Early in her career, she was sanctioned by the South Carolina Supreme Court for her volunteer work as an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) lawyer. She argued and won her case in the United States Supreme Court. Edna met with women who had been forced to consent to sterilization in order to receive the state’s Medicaid benefits. She educated and informed the women that the forced sterilizations were not legal and offered to help them attain justice. In this, she showed her tremendous character and willingness to help while never looking for anything in return; and

Whereas, Edna was an exceptional mentor to the up‑and‑coming attorneys at Palmetto Legal Services. She was a faithful choir member and member of the National Honor Society. She offered free legal assistance at the YMCA, and she was an active advocate of the Fatherhood Initiative. Edna was also a member of the ACLU. She was a part of the Black Lawyers Association, active with the NAACP, and parliamentarian to the Mather Alumni Association. As a weekly volunteer, Edna offered free legal advice on *Ask a Lawyer*, a radio talk show. She was president of her neighborhood association and the Satchel Ford School Association, to name just a few of her community activities; and

Whereas, at an early age, Edna joined First African Baptist Church in Yemassee. She was a faithful servant of Greater St. Luke Baptist Church and the head trustee there for many years until she became ill and no longer able to perform her duties. Edna always put God first in everything she did; and

Whereas, in 1975, Edna was united in holy matrimony to the love of her life, Marcellous Primus. This union was blessed with one beautiful daughter, LaCelle Primus; and

Whereas, preceded in death by her loving husband, parents, and most of her siblings, Edna Smith Primus leaves to cherish her memory her beloved daughter, LaCelle Primus; three dear grandchildren; one loving brother; and a host of other family members and friends, all of whom share the grief caused by her departure but rejoice that she is resting with the Lord. She will be greatly missed. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, express their profound sorrow upon the passing of Edna Smith Primus of Columbia and extend the deepest sympathy to her family and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to LaCelle Primus for the family.

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