**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE GEORGE FUNERAL HOME OF AIKEN AT THE CELEBRATION OF ITS ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY AND TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND ITS OUTSTANDING LEGACY AND FINE PROFESSIONAL TRADITION IN SERVING FAMILIES FOR A CENTURY WITH DIGNITY AND COMPASSION.

Whereas, on July 7, 2020, George Funeral Home of Aiken will celebrate its centennial anniversary of quality professional service to the citizens of Aiken County; and

Whereas, the business was founded in 1920 by D.M. George. Before its founding, Mr. George worked for Powell Hardware, located on Laurens Street in downtown Aiken, which, in addition to hardware items, sold coffins and tombstones. Members of the George family invented a process for making gravestones out of cement and dubbed the product artificial stone. D.M. wanted to start a business dedicated to handling funeral services, so in 1913 or 1914 he left his family to attend the Cincinnati School of Embalming. They purchased a house in Aiken on Richland Avenue and at that location opened one of the first funeral homes in South Carolina; and

Whereas, D.M. George’s three sons, Albert, Edward, and Otto, were involved in the business, but it was Albert, a decorated World War II veteran, who was most active in it. As the only funeral home in Aiken, the business had outgrown the Richland Avenue house by 1948. Therefore, in that same year, the family purchased the business’s current building at 211 Park Avenue; and

Whereas, once part of the famous “Winter Colony” of Aiken, the spacious house at 211 Park boasted more than 8,500 square feet, with three floors and a full basement. It contained two kitchens for servants to prepare meals for family and guests. At the start of World War II, the house was used by the U.S. Army as a lodge for traveling soldiers and government workers. Entertainers would visit to put on performances for the soldiers, and during one of those visits, Jimmy Stewart did a watercolor drawing of one of the house’s many beautiful sitting rooms. That picture still hangs in the funeral home today; and

Whereas, moreover, George Funeral Home is known today for its many antiques. In the 1940s, many people traded furniture and valuables, rather than paying for a funeral. Among the lovely antiques the funeral home acquired in this way is an old grandfather clock built in England between 1750 and 1780. It still keeps perfect time. Other noteworthy pieces are a large cabinet made in France during the 1850s and a beautiful European chandelier from the early 1900s; and

Whereas, D.M. George died in 1949, and his son Albert ran the business until his death in 1976. The business was then entrusted to Joseph McClellan, a longtime employee of the George family, who operated the funeral home as sole shareholder. Upon his retirement, the business was sold to Ray and Alicia Visotski. In the summer of 2000, George Funeral Home became the first funeral home in Aiken to operate its own crematory; and

Whereas, in 2018, George Funeral Home was purchased by Cody L. Anderson, a lifelong Aiken County resident and funeral director and only the fourth individual owner of this historic business. Mr. Anderson’s commitment to the Aiken community is evidenced by his involvement in the community and his dedication to the unparalleled service synonymous with the George name; and

Whereas, notwithstanding the expansions and changes of time, the commitment established by the George family in 1920 remains the same. Over one hundred years after it was founded, George Funeral Home is still caring for families and celebrating lives; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House is profoundly grateful for the worthy legacy of George Funeral Home, and the members honor the distinguished service that has defined this business over its century‑long ministry to families at times of loss. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate George Funeral Home of Aiken at the celebration of its one hundredth anniversary and recognize and commend its outstanding legacy and fine professional tradition in serving families for a century with dignity and compassion.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to George Funeral Home.

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