**South Carolina General Assembly**

124th Session, 2021-2022

**S. 1359**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

Senate Resolution

Sponsors: Senator Reichenbach

Document Path: l:\council\bills\rm\1511cm22.docx

Introduced in the Senate on June 15, 2022

Adopted by the Senate on June 15, 2022

Summary: Mayor Frank Willis, sympathy

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

6/15/2022 Senate Introduced and adopted ([Senate Journal‑page 22](file:///h:\sj\20220615.docx))

View the latest [legislative information](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=1359&session=124&summary=B) at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[6/15/2022](file:///p:\pprever\2021-22\1359_20220615.docx)

**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE UPON THE PASSING OF FRANCIS E. “FRANK” WILLIS OF DARLINGTON AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the South Carolina Senate was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Francis E. “Frank” Willis of Darlington on June 10, 2022, at the age of eighty; and

Whereas, born in Bennettsville on October 19, 1941, Frank Willis was the son of Horace Eugene and Mary Frances Willis. He was raised in Darlington, where he learned the importance of community and of helping others. In 1964, he graduated from the University of South Carolina with a bachelor’s degree in psychology, followed by an honorary doctorate awarded to him by Francis Marion University in 2008; and

Whereas, the young Frank joined his father’s construction business, Willis Construction, building foundations for roads, particularly in the Pee Dee area. In time, he became involved in economic development through Florence County Progress and the Florence County Economic Development Authority. Due to his leadership, Florence County was able to convince Honda to construct its manufacturing facility in Timmonsville; and

Whereas, this visionary man had a passion for addressing unmet needs in the community, which ultimately led him to run for mayor of Florence, a city he loved and in which he saw much potential. Having won his election, Mayor Willis faithfully served Florence from 1995 to 2008; and

Whereas, during his tenure as mayor, Frank Willis was known as a consensus‑ and coalition‑builder and as a practical problem‑solver, one committed to the process of economic and community development. Mayor Willis laid much of the groundwork for the growth and stability that Florence and the surrounding areas currently enjoy; and

Whereas, Mayor Willis’ father was involved in building Darlington Raceway. Because of his father, Mayor Willis had a lifelong love of the raceway and of racing as a sport, as well as an appreciation of their economic impact in the Pee Dee. Mayor Willis also respected the sacrifices of veterans and their families. To that end, he spearheaded the effort to build the Florence Veterans Park to honor Florence’s military veterans; and

Whereas, Mayor Willis considered his service to Florence as his crowning achievement and enjoyed mentoring and creating opportunities for those who would continue building and sustaining the community; and

Whereas, he leaves to cherish his memory his wife, Marguerite; a brother, Johnny; a sister, Martha Ray; a nephew, Thomas Ray; a sister‑in‑law, Lee Elmore; nieces Marguerite and Sara Lawton Elmore and Laurin Groover; and a host of other family members and friends. Frank Willis will be remembered as a fine man, a loyal friend, and a true Southern gentleman who met every person with graciousness and respect. He will be greatly missed. 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 Francis E. “Frank” Willis of Darlington and extend the deepest sympathy to his family and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mrs. Marguerite Willis for the family.

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