**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE UPON THE PASSING OF JANIE BELLE BLACK FIELDS OF GREENVILLE COUNTY AND TO EXTEND DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HER LARGE AND LOVING FAMILY AND HER MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate were saddened to learn of the death of Janie Belle Black Fields at the age of ninety‑five on Thursday, September 29, 2022; and

Whereas, born in Greenville on May 15, 1927, she was the third of six children of the late Mamie Sweeney Black and Joe Nathan Black, Sr. Before her passing, Mrs. Fields was the oldest bloodline of both the Sweeney and Black families, the last of her generation, which was the third generation from slavery; and

Whereas, she attended Greenville County Schools and graduated from Fountain Inn Negro High School in 1946 and attended Bettis Academy and Junior College in Trenton to study nursing; and

Whereas, together with her husband of eighteen years, Joe Fields, Jr., she reared five fine children: the late Joe Fields III; Imogene Fields Clarke of Columbia; Clara Elizabeth Fields Redmond of Conyers, Georgia; the late David Phillip Fields; and Sheralyn Ann Fields Smith of Pelzer. Her children blessed her with the affection of nine grandchildren and thirteen great‑grandchildren; and

Whereas, after moving to Charleston with her husband, Mrs. Fields began almost two decades of employment as a cook at the Charleston Naval Base in 1950 and enrolled in the Naval Cooking School from 1963 to 1965, later receiving a Certificate for Culinary Preparation and Sanitation. Before moving back to Greenville in 1969, she recommended fifty African American women for employment at the base; and

Whereas, for twenty years, she was employed by the Union Carbide Corporation in Greenville as a capacitor inspector before retiring in 1989 from the newly named Kemet Corporation; and

Whereas, after her retirement, Mrs. Fields attended foster parenting classes at Greenville Technical College and received a license from the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) to serve as a foster parent. She fostered over sixty children through DSS, whom she fed, cared for, and taught the ways of God. When her health caused her to retire from being a foster mother, some of her foster children still visited her and regarded her as Mama Fields; and

Whereas, a faithful member of Reedy Fork Missionary Baptist Church in Simpsonville, Mrs. Fields participated in church choirs and organizations throughout her life and was blessed to be the second oldest in its congregation. She had been a member of the Rocky Creek Lodge #51 of the Working Benevolent State Grand Lodge of South Carolina since 1951; and

Whereas, helping to establish a Sweeney Family Reunion Planning Committee, she reconnected with her family’s roots and served for eight years as the first Sweeney Family Reunion president; and

Whereas, because Mrs. Fields straightened hair for her children, other adults, and neighborhood children, she served as an unofficial neighborhood beautician; and

Whereas, during hard times, she would tell her children that one day “God will bless us with so much food that we will not be able to eat it all,” and when those days came, she gave food away from her overloaded shelves and freezer to other families; and

Whereas, the South Carolina Senate is grateful for the life and legacy of Janie Fields and for the example of sacrifice and faith she set for all who knew her. 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 Janie Belle Black Fields of Greenville County and extend deepest sympathy to her large and loving family and her many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Janie Belle Black Fields.

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