**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF FAMED AFRICAN AMERICAN ENTERTAINER JAMES BROWN, A NATIVE OF BARNWELL.

Whereas, James Joe Brown, Jr., was born on May 3, 1933, in Barnwell to Joe and Susie Brown. His father, looking for work, moved the family to Augusta, Georgia. Growing up, the young James was heavily influenced by jazz and rhythm‑and‑blues, two musical types dominated by African Americans. Other influences were the circuses and traveling shows with their variety of acts, both singing and dancing; and

Whereas, after unsuccessful attempts at boxing and baseball, James formed a gospel group called the Swanees with his pal Johnny Terry. The Swanees shifted toward the popular mid‑1950s “doo‑wop” style and away from gospel, changing their name to the Famous Flames, for which James sang lead and played drums. Their song “Please, Please, Please” was released as a single in 1956 and sold a million copies. By 1960, the group had become the James Brown Revue and was generating proto‑funk dance hits like “(Do the) Mashed Potato.” James was deemed the “King of Soul” at the Apollo Theater, New York City’s black music capital; and

Whereas, James Brown proceeded over the years to burn up the charts with singles like “Papa’s Got a Brand New Bag,” “I Got You (I Feel Good),” “It’s a Man’s Man’s Man’s World,” “Cold Sweat,” “Funky Drummer,” and many others; and

Whereas, the increasingly militant stance of many African American activists in the late 1960s led James—by now among an elite group of influential African Americans—to flirt with the Black Power movement. Even so, the singer generally counseled nonviolence and won praise from President Lyndon B. Johnson (1908‑1973) when a broadcast of his words helped head off a race riot. He was also saluted by Vice President Hubert Humphrey (1911‑1978) for his pro‑education song, “Don’t Be a Dropout.” His music began to incorporate more obvious political messages, many of which stated his belief that African Americans needed to take control of their economic destinies; and

Whereas, in 1986, he was inducted into the Rock ‘n’ Roll Hall of Fame. “Living in America” earned him a Grammy Award for best R&B performance by a male artist; and

Whereas, James Brown was famed for commenting, “I came from nothing, and I made something out of myself,” in a *New York Times* interview. He also declared, “I dance and I sing and I make it happen. I’ve made people feel better. I want people to be happy”; and

Whereas, in 2004, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer but successfully fought the disease. By 2006, it was in remission, and the popular singer, then 73, began a global tour dubbed the Seven Decades of Funk World Tour. Late in the year while at a routine dental appointment, James Brown was diagnosed with pneumonia. He was admitted to the hospital for treatment but passed away from heart failure a few days later in the early hours of Christmas Day; and

Whereas, the legacy James Brown left us may be summed up in these words, which express his attitude to life: “Be who you are, believe in it, and you can accomplish whatever you want to accomplish.” Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, honor the life and achievements of famed African American entertainer James Brown, a native of Barnwell.

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