**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO REMEMBER AND CELEBRATE THE LIFE OF JENNIE LAVONIA WILLIAMS KITTY OF BEAUFORT COUNTY AND TO EXTEND DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HER LOVING FAMILY AND HER MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives were saddened to learn of the death of Jennie Lavonia Williams Kitty at the age of ninety on March 4, 2021; and

Whereas, born in Port Royal on July 4, 1930, Jennie Kitty was the daughter of the late Thelma Williams and Jacob Williams. She graduated from Robert Smalls High School and continued studies in nursing at Penn Center on St. Helena to become a credentialed nurse midwife, delivering thirty‑nine children during her career; and

Whereas, after a while in New York City, she returned to the Lowcountry, where she met and married her beloved husband, the late Deacon Renty “Busby” Kitty, Sr. They reared nine fine children: Harold Williams of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Robert “Brother Kitty,” Brenda “MeMe” Kitty, Reverend Dr. Renty Kitty, Jon Kitty, Bryant Kitty, and John Kitty, all of Bluffton, as well as the late Roberta Kitty and the late Marie Kitty Jones; and

Whereas, her children blessed her with the affection of twenty‑two grandchildren: Renoldo Jenkins, Anita Dunn, Harold Lee Williams, Jr., Recardo Kitty, Nicole Carriado, Beau Kitty, Jalanah Kitty, Bryant Kitty, Arthur Kitty, Makiba Kitty White, Dimitrious Howell, Renty Kitty III, Jennifer Kitty King, Jamerson Kitty, Jamison Kitty, Rhonda Williams, Trena Jones, Ely Jones, Willie Jones, Brenda Jones, Ebony Jones, as well as the late Bobby Frazier. She was delighted to see the continuation of her loving family legacy in twenty‑eight great‑grandchildren and even further in five great‑great‑grandchildren; and

Whereas, at the age of twelve, she trusted Christ while attending Bethlehem Baptist Church in Port Royal, and in 1952, she joined Zion Baptist Church in Bluffton and faithfully served as president of the Senior Choir and Missionary board, as founder and president of the Women’s Ministry, and on the Ushers’ Board and Auxiliary boards at First Zion Missionary Baptist Church; and

Whereas, whenever she was delivering a child and found herself in unfamiliar or dangerous circumstances, she would call Dr. Donald Gatch, a native Nebraskan who moved to the Lowcountry to care for the desperately underserved communities. He would come immediately, even if it meant traveling quickly to a nearby island. He was her anchor during such times as she worked to keep mothers and babies safe throughout delivery and birth; and

Whereas, Dr. Gatch once found himself threatened by the Ku Klux Klan with a warning that his family was in danger. He knew he could depend on Mrs. Kitty, just as she had relied on him. At his call, she got word out, and thirty armed Blacks stood watch over the clinic where Dr. Gatch was sleeping. His wife and children were protected by spending the night in Jennie Kitty’s home; and

Whereas, after serving twenty‑seven years with the State of South Carolina as a nurse aide along with Mrs. Jane Pitts, Sarah Hooks, and Dr. Donald Gatch, Mrs. Kitty retired; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is grateful for the example of sacrifice and loyalty Jennie Kitty set for all who knew her, whose lifelong motto was, “If I can help somebody as I travel along the way, then my living shall not be in vain.” 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 Jennie Kitty of Beaufort County and extend their 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 Jennie Lavonia Williams Kitty.

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