**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE UPON THE PASSING OF DONALD L. FOWLER OF COLUMBIA, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE, TO CELEBRATE HIS LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS, AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate were deeply saddened by the passing of Donald L. Fowler of Columbia, former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, on December 15, 2020, at the venerable age of eighty‑five; and

Whereas, born in Spartanburg on September 12, 1935, the young Don Fowler grew up in his hometown working in his father’s drycleaners. He received his bachelor’s degree in psychology from Wofford College, where he was student body president and a standout basketball player. He went on to earn his master’s and doctoral degrees in political science at the University of Kentucky; and

Whereas, he served for thirty years in the United States Army as an active duty officer and reservist, retiring in 1987. He was a member of Washington Street United Methodist Church and a lifetime member of the NAACP; and

Whereas, Don Fowler led the South Carolina Democratic Party from 1971 to 1980. Further, he oversaw the 1988 Democratic National Convention in Atlanta and, fulfilling what was said to be a lifelong ambition, he served as national chairman of the Democratic National Committee from 1995 to 1997; and

Whereas, this longtime icon and master of state Democratic Party politics was as adroit in the classroom teaching college students as he was overseeing political campaigns. He taught political science in the University of South Carolina College of Arts and Sciences for more than fifty years, inspiring countless alumni to engage in the political process and look across party lines for bipartisan understanding; and

Whereas, in addition, Mr. Fowler was president of Fowler Communications, Inc., a public and governmental relations firm; and

Whereas, tributes to Don Fowler’s life have come from those with whom he agreed politically, as well as those on the other side of the aisle. Democratic former President Bill Clinton, reflecting on his friend, said, “Don Fowler was a good man with a sharp mind and a big heart whose life embodied his commitment to opportunity and inclusion for all Americans”; and

Whereas, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster, a Republican, had these words of praise for Don Fowler: [He] was a “true gentleman in an area where it’s become the exception and no longer the rule. He had a wonderful passion for his students, his country, and State, and, of course, his beloved party. Peggy and I are praying for Carol, the Fowler family, and friends”; and

Whereas, predeceased in 1997 by his first wife, Septima Briggs, he leaves to cherish his memory his present wife of fifteen years, the former Carol Khare; his adult children, Donnie and Cissy; his grandchildren; and a host of other family members and friends. As a former student said of Don Fowler, “He really taught us the importance of civility in politics. Whether you were a Republican, a Democrat, a Libertarian, or a conservative, he taught us to respect each other’s political persuasion and to learn from it.” It is a worthy legacy. 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 Donald L. Fowler of Columbia, former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, celebrate his life and achievements, 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. Carol Fowler for the family.

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