**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE REVEREND EDDIE GASTON, JR., UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AS THE PRESIDING ELDER OF THE NEW MANNING DISTRICT OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE CENTRAL CONFERENCE, TO COMMEND HIS MANY YEARS OF EXEMPLARY MINISTRY, AND TO WISH HIM MUCH HAPPINESS AND FULFILLMENT IN ALL HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are pleased to learn of the retirement of Reverend Eddie Gaston, Jr., presiding elder of the New Manning District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Central Conference, after over forty years of outstanding ministry; and

Whereas, born in Fairfield County, Eddie was the firstborn son of Eddie Gaston, Sr., and Rosa Mae Gaston. He was educated at McCrery Liston High School in Blair and graduated as a part of the Class of 1964, shortly before he was drafted into the United States Army. He served in the army for three years, including one year in Korea, and was honorably discharged in 1969; and

Whereas, in 1976, following his service with the military, Reverend Gaston was called into the gospel ministry. To prepare, he enrolled at Allen University in Columbia. Through diligent study, he earned a Bachelor of Arts in sociology and social work. He continued his education by enrolling in the Lutheran Southern Seminary, where he received a Master of Divinity with a concentration in counseling. He also furthered his studies in family counseling at the University of South Carolina at Spartanburg, has attained five units of Clinical Pastoral Education, and has been certified as a clinical chaplain with the Association of Clinical Chaplains; and

Whereas, with a deep heart for the gospel, Reverend Gaston has spent over forty years in ministry. He has been the pastor of Mt. Olive AME Church in Columbia, Pine Grove AME Church in Gaston, First AME Church in Spartanburg, St. Peter AME Church and Mt. Zion AME Church in Walterboro, St. John AME Church in Cottageville, Beards Chapel AME Church and Mt. Zion AME Church in Charleston, and St. James AME Church in Summerville. He has since been serving as the presiding elder of the New Manning District of the AME Church in the Central Conference; and

Whereas, with a large and giving heart, Reverend Gaston also has shared his valuable time and talents with the community as a member on the board of directors, as well as a minority member and treasurer, of the Lowcountry Council of Governments. He also served as program administrator for the summer feeding program for Hampton and Colleton counties; and

Whereas, an entrepreneurial spirit, Reverend Gaston has found success in many areas through the years, including a daycare center, radio station, group home, and stain glass shop; and

Whereas, profoundly blessed, Reverend Gaston has been married to his wife, Barbara, for over fifty years and has been blessed with four children, seven grandchildren, and one great‑grandchild; and

Whereas, grateful for his commitment and leadership to the people of South Carolina through his ministry and service, the South Carolina House of Representatives takes great pleasure in wishing him all the best as he enters retirement and trusts that he will find much enjoyment in the more leisurely pace of the days ahead. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate Reverend Eddie Gaston, Jr., upon the occasion of his retirement as the presiding elder of the New Manning District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Central Conference, commend his many years of exemplary ministry, and wish him much happiness and fulfillment in all his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Reverend Eddie Gaston, Jr.

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