**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF PROMINENT AFRICAN AMERICAN OPERA SINGER AND RESTAURATEUR ALEXANDER SMALLS.

Whereas, a South Carolina native, Alexander Smalls was born in Spartanburg in February 7, 1952, to Johnnie Mae Smalls and Alexander Smalls, Sr. Having graduated from Spartanburg High School in 1970, Alexander Smalls enrolled at Wofford College before transferring to the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, where he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in opera in 1974. In further pursuit of musical training, he attended the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, between 1974 and 1977; and

Whereas, following the completion of his university education, this classically trained baritone toured professionally as an opera singer. As a member of the Houston Grand Opera, he performed in George Gershwin’s opera, *Porgy and Bess*, which earned Grammy and Tony Awards in 1977; and

Whereas, Smalls studied opera and the culinary arts in Europe, and, upon returning to the United States in the late 1970s, founded his own catering business, Small Miracle. In 1994, he launched his first restaurant, Café Beulah, a New York City establishment specializing in Southern revival cooking that combined Gullah and international cuisines; and

Whereas, in 1996, Smalls opened Sweet Ophelia’s, a casual dining venue featuring late‑night live entertainment in New York City’s SoHo neighborhood. He went on to open The Shoebox Café, an upscale Southern bistro in New York City’s Grand Central Terminal. Smalls founded a second catering business, Smalls & Co., which served a celebrity clientele that included Denzel Washington, Spike Lee, and Toni Morrison. In 2012, Smalls established Harlem Jazz Enterprises, and, in partnership with Richard Parsons, opened two restaurants in Harlem in 2013, Minton’s and The Cecil; and

Whereas, over the course of his career, Alexander Smalls has made television appearances on NBC, CNN, ABC, CBS, and the Food Network. He also has served as a contributor to *Food & Wine*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The New York Daily News*, *The Atlanta Journal‑Constitution*, and *Crain*’*s New York Business*. In addition, Smalls authored the memoir and cookbook *Grace the Table: Stories and Recipes From My Southern Revival*, which features a foreword from jazz musician Wynton Marsalis. Among other service activities, he joined the board of The Harlem School of the Arts in 2014. 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 prominent African American opera singer and restaurateur Alexander Smalls.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Alexander Smalls.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑