**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UPON THE PASSING OF REVEREND JOHN L. MELTON III AND TO EXTEND THEIR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS LARGE AND LOVING FAMILY AND HIS MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives was saddened to learn of the death of Reverend John L. Melton III at the age of sixty‑one on Tuesday, December 21, 2021; and

Whereas, born in Cheraw on April 1, 1960, John L. was a son of Jackie Melton and the late John Laney “White Rat” Melton, Jr., and he grew up in a loving family with his sisters, Sharron Breeden Melton and Ella Recci Rock; and

Whereas, at an early age, John L. joined Cheraw Fire Department and Cheraw Rescue Squad as a volunteer, following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. After graduating from Cheraw High School, he became an EMT for Darlington County EMS and later served as a paramedic; and

Whereas, he rose through the ranks at Cheraw Fire Department to become the training officer and then fire chief from 2001 to 2013. A lifetime member of Cheraw Rescue Squad, he was instrumental in the creation of Darlington County Fire District; and

Whereas, for more than thirty‑five years, Fire Chief Melton inspired firefighters across the State, serving as an instructor with the South Carolina Fire Academy; and

Whereas, after his retirement from Cheraw Fire Department he continued to serve as a volunteer with the department and became the Career and Technology Education (CATE) program instructor for fire science and for the introduction to public safety course at Cheraw High School, mentoring numerous young people; and

Whereas, Chief Melton’s passion for SCUBA diving also led him to become a diving instructor, introducing many to the world under the water. He enjoyed spending time outdoors hunting, fishing, camping with his wife and family, and gardening; and

Whereas, an avid photographer from his youth, he operated a photography business for over thirty years; and

Whereas, a humble servant of the Lord and a man’s man, Reverend Melton led the Lower Macedonia Baptist Church youth ministry for many years, before being called to serve as pastor of Wallace Baptist Church. He helped the congregation to grow over the last ten years, leading many people to the Lord. He served as a member of the Pee Dee Baptist Association and often led mission trips and took charge of projects throughout the community; and

Whereas, he orchestrated community events like free movies on the big screen at the church, and he and a group of men built and donated wheelchair ramps for needy people on the weekends; and

Whereas, together with his wife of thirty‑eight years, Mary Lynn Melton, he reared four fine children: John L. “Ethan” Melton IV of Chesterfield, Michelle Hancock of California, Genia Curlington of Florence, and J. J. Melton of Laurel Hill, North Carolina; and

Whereas, Reverend Melton’s children blessed him with the affection of nine adoring grandchildren: Vannessa Oldland; Amber Hancock; Erica, Hannah, and Haley Piner; Houston Laney Medlin; and Jackson, Sarah, and Brenlee Curlington. He had the joy of meeting his first great‑grandchild, Jacob Oldland; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are grateful for the life and legacy of John L. Melton and for the example of sacrifice and service he set for all who knew him. 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 Reverend John L. Melton III and extend their deepest sympathy to his large and loving family and his many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Reverend John L. Melton III.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑