House: Pendarvis, Alexander, Anderson, Bamberg, Brawley, Clyburn, Dillard, Garvin, Gilliard, Govan, Henderson-Myers, Henegan, Hosey, Howard, Jefferson, J.L. Johnson, K.O. Johnson, King, Matthews, McDaniel, McKnight, J. Moore, Murray, Parks, Rivers, Robinson, Rutherford, Tedder, Thigpen, Weeks, R. Williams, S. Williams

Attorney: Ravenel

Drafting Assistant: Moore/Charlton

Date: February 8, 2022

Doc Name: L:\Council\Bills\GM\24645VR22.DOCX

**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF LEVI PEARSON, PLAINTIFF IN LEVI PEARSON V. CLARENDON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION, AND TO COMMEND HIS REMARKABLE COURAGE TO SECURE EQUAL TREATMENT FOR HIS CHILDREN AND GENERATIONS TO FOLLOW.

Whereas, it is altogether fitting and proper that the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives should pause in their deliberations to commend the life of Levi Pearson, a courageous son of the Palmetto State, who pursued justice for families in Clarendon County; and

Whereas, Levi was married to Viola Pearson, and the couple had three children, James, Eloise, and Daisy, who walked nine miles to school each day; and

Whereas, Levi and Viola Pearson and other families in the Davis Station area collected about nine hundred dollars to buy a used school bus for transporting their children to and from school; and

Whereas, the bus often broke down, and the county board of education would not support maintenance or provide gas for the bus, although almost seventy‑four percent of the county’s school population was African American. The county provided thirty school buses for white students, but none for black students; and

Whereas, in 1947, Levi Pearson courageously filed a lawsuit to secure a school bus to be paid for and maintained by the county; and

Whereas, in response to the suit, the board of education alleged Mr. Pearson did not have the right to sue because he paid taxes in a district other than District 26, the district where his children attended school. The court dismissed his action erroneously, as Levi Pearson had property that was partially in District 26; and

Whereas, white business owners retaliated by cutting off his credit at the local store and refusing to lease harvesting equipment to him; and

Whereas, despite this pressure, Levi Pearson served as president of the newly‑formed NAACP branch in Clarendon County, but he eventually left South Carolina for the North because of white intimidation. 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 character of Levi Pearson, plaintiff in Levi Pearson v. Clarendon County Board of Education, and commend his remarkable courage to secure equal treatment for his children and generations to follow.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Levi Pearson.

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