**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR DR. MATILDA ARABELLA EVANS FOR A LIFETIME OF EXEMPLARY SERVICE AND TO REMEMBER HER MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND LIVES OF THOSE IN THIS GREAT STATE.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives take great pleasure in honoring those who give their lives for the betterment of their community and whose contributions make the Palmetto State a better place to live, like Dr. Matilda Arabella Evans; and

Whereas, born in Aiken on May 13, 1872, Matilda Arabella Evans was the oldest of three children born to Anderson and Harriet Evans. She attended the Schofield Industrial School and Oberlin College’s preparatory school before enrolling in the Women’s Medical College of Pennsylvania where she earned a medical degree in 1897; and

Whereas, upon obtaining her medical degree, Dr. Evans moved to Columbia, became the first African American woman licensed to practice medicine in the State, and established a successful medical practice. Well known for her discretion and professionalism, Dr. Evans was able to treat both Black and White patients, causing her services to be in great demand. Patients sought her out from as far away as Georgia and North Carolina; and

Whereas, Dr. Evans practiced obstetrics, gynecology, and surgery, and cared for patients in her own home until 1901, when she established the Taylor Lane Hospital, the first hospital in Columbia to admit Black patients. The hospital also served as a training school for African American nurses and physicians, including graduates of Harvard Medical School; and

Whereas, Dr. Evans later established a second hospital, St. Luke’s Hospital and Training School for Nurses in Columbia, that she directed until 1918; and

Whereas, a civic leader in her community, Dr. Evans worked tirelessly in the Columbia community to improve the lives of African Americans. She established a community health organization as well as a recreational facility for African American children. In addition, she conducted a survey of Black school‑age children in Columbia and found serious problems with their health care and she used the results to implement routine health examinations in schools. These results have served as the basis for a permanent examination program with the South Carolina public school system; and

Whereas, Dr. Evans believed health care should be a fundamental right and a governmental responsibility. She advocated for public health care and petitioned the State Board of Health of South Carolina to provide free vaccines for Black children. In 1916, she created the Negro Health Association of South Carolina with a goal of placing a Black nurse in each county. Two years later, during World War I, she was appointed to the Volunteer Medical Service Corps of the United States Army; and

Whereas, Dr. Evans’ work with poor communities encouraged her to found the Columbia Clinic Association in 1930, which provided health services, such as vaccinations and check‑ups, and health education to impoverished families. In addition, she founded the Good Health Association of South Carolina to provide health education to the community; and

Whereas, in 1922, Dr. Matilda Evans became the only Black woman in the country to serve as the president of a state medical association when she became president of the Palmetto State Medical Society. She also served as a regional vice president of the National Medical Association and established the Negro Health Journal of South Carolina, a weekly newspaper publication that educated families throughout the State on proper health care procedures and sanitation; and

Whereas, charity, compassion, and a love of children were the hallmarks of Dr. Evans’ career. Incredibly, she found time to raise eleven children who needed a home, taught them respect, cleanliness, and manners, and provided them all with the opportunity for a college education; and

Whereas, after a lifetime of dedicated and unparalleled service, the community suffered a devastating loss when Dr. Evans passed away on November 17, 1935. Her legacy lives on through the annual Matilda Evans Award given to outstanding physicians by Prisma Health Richland Hospital; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives greatly appreciate the dedication and commitment that Dr. Matilda Arabella Evans has shown in serving the people and the State of South Carolina. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor Dr. Matilda Arabella Evans for a lifetime of exemplary service and remember her many contributions to improving the health and lives of those in this great State.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Dr. Matilda Arabella Evans.

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