**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UPON THE PASSING OF WILLIAM BENJAMIN “BILL” WHITNEY OF GREENVILLE, TO CELEBRATE HIS LIFE, AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of William Benjamin “Bill” Whitney of Greenville on May 31, 2022, at the venerable age of eighty‑two; and

Whereas, born on August 17, 1939, in Maybinton, South Carolina, he was the third of six children and the firstborn son of Tinsley and Gracie (Henderson) Whitney. A member of Seekwell Baptist Church in Maybinton, Bill was a man for all seasons, a selfless, courageous gentle giant who loved to promote others’ advancement; and

Whereas, at age 13, he left his parents’ home to live with his uncle and aunt, Bill and Laura Whitney, who promised to finance his college education. By the age of 14, he was driving cars, digging graves, and supervising staff. Upon Uncle Bill’s death, young Bill was to have owned the funeral home. Instead, his uncle’s untimely passing and a change of ownership led to young Bill’s serving from 1962 to 1965 in the U.S. Army, where he attained the rank of sergeant; and

Whereas, Bill attended Sims High School in Union, graduating in 1957. His education continued at Benedict College, where he graduated in 1962 with a major in biology and a minor in chemistry. Over the course of his career, he also attended classes at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the University of Southern California; and

Whereas, Bill always had an entrepreneurial spirit. Thus, he transformed the funeral home building into Whitney Place, a 24‑bed residential care facility in Union. Thirty‑two years later, the facility is still thriving and providing hands‑on care to people in need; and

Whereas, from 1973 to 1979, Bill served as executive director of the Greenville Urban League, leaving that post to serve as executive assistant for CETA/JTPA under Governor Richard Riley. In 1991, Bill returned to the Upstate as president/chief executive officer of the Urban League of the Upstate and led that organization until 2006. During this time, he accomplished what he considered his true legacy, sending nearly 5,500 students to college and facilitating the development of Greenville’s Viola Street community; and

Whereas, this servant‑hearted man was a member of many boards, including the Benedict College Board of Trustees, Peace Center for the Performing Arts Board of Directors, Greenville Symphony Advisory Board, and Clemson University Board of Visitors. For his many years of service, he received the Order of the Palmetto, the highest civilian award given by the State of South Carolina; and

Whereas, on July 19, 1997, Bill married the love of his life, Yolande. They had planned on celebrating their twenty‑fifth anniversary this year. The couple enjoyed many years of traveling the globe and being surrounded by family; and

Whereas, Bill Whitney leaves to cherish his memory his loving wife, Yolande Owens Whitney; three children, William “Bill” Whitney (Deloris), James Whitney (Tiffany), and Nicole Creecy; three grandchildren, George Whitney, Olivia Whitney, and Ava Creecy; and a host of other family members and friends. He will be greatly missed. 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 William Benjamin “Bill” Whitney of Greenville, celebrate his life, and extend the deepest sympathy to his family and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mrs. Yolande Whitney for the family.

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