**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UPON THE PASSING OF WILLIE B. OWENS, SR., OF ORANGEBURG COUNTY 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 Willie B. Owens, Sr., at the age of eighty‑three on Friday, August 5, 2022; and

Whereas, born in Branchville on November 8, 1938, he was the son of the late Bennie C. Owens and Lillie Ruth Warren Owens. Reared in a loving family with his twin brother and two sisters, he graduated from Wilkinson High School in 1956; and

Whereas, Mr. Owens became a member of McBranch Baptist Church in Branchville at an early age and served there faithfully; and

Whereas, he earned a bachelor’s degree in agriculture in 1960 and a master’s degree in education in 1966 from then South Carolina State College. He earned an education specialist degree from The Citadel and completed further study at Clemson University and the University of South Carolina; and

Whereas, Mr. Owens served as the executive director of Voorhees College Community Development Corporation, assistant vice president for Academic Administration and director for Professional and Continuing Studies at Claflin University, and assistant vice president for Academic Affairs at Voorhees College. He served Bamberg‑Ehrhardt High School as its principal, director of transportation, and a teacher of agriculture. He was the director of Future Farmers of America Camp in Orangeburg, director of Vocational Programs for Bamberg School District One, and a teacher of agriculture for Richard Carroll High School; and

Whereas, he served the citizens of Orangeburg County District 7 as their county council representative, and two of his proudest accomplishments as a member of Orangeburg County Council were spearheading the building of Whittaker Community Center and the erection of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument at the Orangeburg County Courthouse; and

Whereas, a life member of the NAACP, Mr. Owens was a member of the South Carolina Association for Community Developers, National Association of Student Affairs Professionals, South Carolina Task Force for the Study of School Incentive Programs as mandated by the South Carolina School Improvement Act of 1984, South Carolina Department of Education Advance Placement Advisory Committee, Orangeburg Calhoun Technical College Area Commissioners, and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity; and

Whereas, he served as president of South Carolina AA Athletic Association and chairman of the Regional Medical Center Board of Trustees and of Orangeburg County Peoples Assault on Drugs; and

Whereas, together with his beloved wife of fifty‑nine years, Arminta P. Owens, he reared three fine children: Dr. Derrick Chase Owens, of Dallas, Texas; Willie B. Owens, Jr., of Branchville, and Greg T. Nell of Atlanta, Georgia. His children blessed him with the affection of two loving granddaughters, Lauren B. Nell and Jessica M. Nell; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are grateful for the life and legacy of Willie B. Owens and for the example of service and excellence 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 Willie B. Owens, Sr., of Orangeburg County 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 Willie B. Owens, Sr.

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