**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE UPON THE PASSING OF THE HONORABLE STEPHAN P. MICKLE, SR., OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA, AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate were deeply saddened by the passing of the Honorable Stephan P. Mickle, Sr., of Gainesville, Florida, on January 26, 2021, at the age of seventy‑six; and

Whereas, a native of New York City, Stephan P. Mickle came into this world on June 18, 1944. After his formative years in Daytona Beach, Florida, and Camden, South Carolina, Stephan moved with his parents to Gainesville, Florida, a city he would call home for the rest of his life. In his college years, he transferred to the University of Florida (UF) and, along with six other African American students, integrated the school in 1962. In 1965, he became the first African American at UF to earn an undergraduate degree, followed by a master’s degree at the same institution. After entering the UF College of Law, he met and married Evelyn Moore and became the second African American to earn a law degree at UF; and

Whereas, upon completing law school, Stephan worked in the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington, D.C., and in 1972 returned to Gainesville. He served as a professor of law at the University of Florida, a position he held for several decades until he became professor emeritus. In 1973, he also established a successful law practice, becoming the first African American to practice law in the history of Alachua County, Florida, since Reconstruction; and

Whereas, in 1979, Stephan Mickle became the county’s first African American county court judge. He served in this position until appointed in 1984 as the first African American circuit court judge in the Eighth Judicial Circuit of Florida. In 1993, he became the first African American and only lawyer from the Eighth Judicial Circuit to serve on the First District Court of Appeal in Tallahassee. In 1998, he took up his duties as the first African American United States district court judge in the history of the United States Northern District of Florida. In 2009, he became the district’s chief judge; and

Whereas, dedicated to his university and community, Judge Mickle served them in many ways. He was a founding member of the Association of Black Alumni and served as its first president. He served on the UF National Alumni Association Board of Directors. A man of faith, he was a dedicated lifetime member of Mount Carmel Baptist Church, where he chaired the board of trustees, taught Sunday School, and served with the men’s and marriage ministries. He also was a life member of the NAACP; and

Whereas, Judge Mickle was an active member of the bar and judiciary and held many leadership roles, among them president of the U.S. District Judges Association of the Eleventh Circuit. For his service, he received numerous awards, including the Conference of County Court Judges’ Distinguished Leadership Award and the National Bar Association’s Heman Sweatt Award. He also was the first African American to receive the UF Distinguished Alumnus Award. Further, Judge Mickle was a member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and a 1974 graduate of Leadership Gainesville; and

Whereas, Judge Mickle leaves to cherish his memory his beloved wife of fifty‑two years, Evelyn Moore Mickle; his three children, Stephanie, Amy Grace, and Stephan II, as well as a nephew/son, Cotie W. Jones; his five grandchildren, Gabrielle, Stephan III, Jaelin, Courtney, and CJ; and a host of other family members, friends, and professional colleagues. He will be remembered always as a man of grace and integrity. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, express profound sorrow upon the passing of the Honorable Stephan P. Mickle, Sr., of Gainesville, Florida, 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. Evelyn Moore Mickle for the family.

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