**South Carolina General Assembly**

125th Session, 2023-2024

**H. 4788**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

House Resolution

Sponsors: Rep. King

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Introduced in the House on January 10, 2024

Adopted by the House on January 10, 2024

Summary: Charles S. Chestnut III, Civil Rights leader, sympathy

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

1/10/2024 House Introduced and adopted ([House Journal‑page 21](h:\hj\20240110.docx))

View the latest  [legislative information](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=4788&session=125&summary=B)  at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[01/10/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/4788_20240110.docx)

A house RESOLUTION

TO REMEMBER AND CELEBRATE THE LIFE OF Charles S. Chestnut III, Civil Rights leader, former Alachua County School Board member, and Alachua County Commissioner, AND TO HONOR HIS REMARKABLE COntributions TO the cause of Civil Rights.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives were saddened to learn of the death of Charles S. Chestnut III at the age of eighty‑three on December 4, 2023; and

Whereas, a 1958 graduate of the former all‑Black Howard High School in Ocala, Florida, Mr. Chestnut attended what is now Bethune Cookman University in Daytona Beach, and in 1961, he earned a degree from Eckels School of Mortuary Science in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and

Whereas, in 1963, he marched with the two hundred thousand people on Washington to hear the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., deliver his iconic “I Have a Dream” speech; and

Whereas, Mr. Chestnut played a pivotal role in the history of Gainesville and the larger story of North Central Florida. He returned from Philadelphia to work in the family funeral home with a desire to have an impact on the Jim Crow South; and

Whereas, as a local leader in the Civil Rights movement, he coordinated sit‑ins with friends at the whites‑only counters of Woolworth’s, McCrory’s, and other local drugstores. He held a lifetime membership in the NAACP and served as president of the Alachua County NAACP Youth Council. He worked to secure equal access to public accommodations for the Black residents of Alachua County and actively focused on voters’ rights with a campaign to register Blacks to vote; and

Whereas, a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, he was a faithful lifetime member of Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church of Gainesville, and proudly served in the United States Army; and

Whereas, a lifelong Civil Rights and business leader, Mr. Chestnut owned Chestnut Funeral Home and was the first African American member of the Alachua County School Board, serving from 1976 to 1992; and

Whereas, from 1992 to 2000, he served as a member of the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners and was married to Gainesville City Commissioner Cynthia Moore Chestnut for more than forty years. He was blessed with five children, including Alachua County Commissioner Charles “Chuck” Chestnut IV and local businessman and attorney Chris Chestnut; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are grateful for the life and legacy of Charles Chestnut and for the example of sacrifice and service 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, remember and celebrate the life of Charles S. Chestnut III, Civil Rights leader, former Alachua County School Board member, and Alachua County Commissioner, and honor his remarkable contributions to the cause of Civil Rights.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Charles S. Chestnut III.

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