**South Carolina General Assembly**

118th Session, 2009-2010

**S. 732**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

Senate Resolution

Sponsors: Senator Lourie

Document Path: l:\council\bills\gm\24337ab09.docx

Introduced in the Senate on April 21, 2009

Adopted by the Senate on April 21, 2009

Summary: Charles Luther Sifford

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

4/21/2009 Senate Introduced and adopted [SJ](file:///h:\SJ%20Archive\2009\04-21-09.docx)‑10

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[4/21/2009](file:///p:\pprever\2009-10\732_20090421.docx)

**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR CHARLES LUTHER SIFFORD OF KINGWOOD, TEXAS, FOR HIS OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE FIELD OF PROFESSIONAL GOLF, AND TO CONGRATULATE HIM FOR A LIFETIME OF SUCCESS AND FOR OVERCOMING STRONG RACIAL BARRIERS IN THAT SPORT.

Whereas, born in Charlotte, North Carolina, on June 2, 1922, Charles Sifford, often called the Jackie Robinson of golf, became a trailblazing African American professional golfer; and

Whereas, at the age of ten, he began to caddie for golfers at the Carolina Country Club in Charlotte where he learned to play golf before hours and on days when the club was closed to players; and

Whereas, because Sifford’s game had so improved by 1939 that he drew the attention of members who did not appreciate this talent in an African American, the club owner suggested that he leave the club as a caddy for his own protection; and

Whereas, he moved to Philadelphia where he perfected his game on the public courses available to him and joined the United Golf Association Tour, and between 1948 and 1960, he won the Negro National Open six times; and

Whereas, as early as 1952, he attempted to qualify for a Professional Golf Association (PGA) tour event, but was denied even though he used an invitation obtained by the former heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis; and

Whereas, in 1960, a California lawsuit caused the PGA to strike the “Caucasian only” clause from its regulations, and Charles Sifford became the first African American to receive an official PGA Approved Players card on a one‑year trial basis; and

Whereas, still he endured humiliation and racial prejudice in the form of heckling, racial epithets, and even threats on his life, and the card did not always gain him admittance onto courses as it should have and rarely to accompanying lockers or restaurants; and

Whereas, at the age of thirty‑eight, his card enabled him to play in his first official PGA tournament in Greensboro, North Carolina, where he managed to place second in the face of overwhelming prejudice and earned a prize of seven hundred dollars; and

Whereas, over the years he accrued almost three hundred fifty thousand dollars as a PGA pro in addition to his other winnings and those well into his forties when most players would have retired from the game; and

Whereas, after earning more than 1.2 million dollars on the PGA Tour and Senior PGA Tour, in 2004, Charles Sifford became the first African American inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame, and in 2006, this high school graduate received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from St. Andrews University; and

Whereas, it gives the members of the South Carolina Senate great pleasure in acknowledging the significant contributions of Charles Sifford to the game of golf, to the African American community and to his fellow man. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and honor Charles Luther Sifford of Kingwood, Texas, for his outstanding leadership among African Americans in the field of professional golf, and congratulate him for a lifetime of success and for overcoming strong racial barriers in that sport.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Charles Luther Sifford.

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