**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO REQUEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME THE PORTION OF INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 26 IN ORANGEBURG COUNTY BETWEEN EXIT 145 AND 154 “KAREN J. WILLIAMS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY” AND ERECT APPROPRIATE MARKERS OR SIGNS ALONG THIS PORTION OF HIGHWAY THAT CONTAIN THE WORDS “KAREN J. WILLIAMS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY, FIRST FEMALE JUDGE AND CHIEF JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES 4TH CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS”.

Whereas, the Honorable Karen Johnson Williams, an Orangeburg native and a University of South Carolina Law School graduate, was a pioneer in the South Carolina legal community when she was the first woman judge appointed to the United States 4th Circuit Court of Appeals and as she rose to also be the first woman to serve as the court’s Chief Judge; and

Whereas, Judge Williams, who graduated from Orangeburg public schools, received her B.A. degree in 1972 from Columbia College and in 1977, after teaching in the public schools, entered law school, one of only three mothers there, graduating in 1980 among the top of her class; and

Whereas, in 1992, after twelve years of practicing law in Orangeburg with her husband, Charles H. Williams, her father‑in‑law, the late Senator Marshall B. Williams, and Senator Brad Hutto, her appointment to the United States 4th Circuit Court of Appeals was made by President George H. W. Bush; Judge Williams served with honor and distinction on the court for seventeen years and was highly respected as a legal scholar; and

Whereas, dedicated to justice and the rule of law, Judge Williams was equally devoted to her husband and family of four children and nine grandchildren and to her faith as a devout Christian; throughout her career she juggled many roles, faced innumerable challenges, and fulfilled countless demands, all the while, excelling in all that she undertook; and

Whereas, Karen Williams was known for her elegance, dignity, and grace and also for her modesty, never seeking the limelight but often in the public eye for her remarkable life and illustrious career, as demonstrated when she spoke of “being amazed and humbled by her achievements”; and

Whereas, her family and community and our State and nation lost a truly distinguished South Carolinian on November 2, 2013, when the Honorable Karen J. Williams, who had stepped down in 2009 from the federal bench and her position as Chief Judge after having been diagnosed with the early stages of Alzheimer’s, passed away at the age of 62; and

Whereas, it is very fitting and proper for the members of the South Carolina General Assembly to recognize and honor the memory of such a remarkable, beloved daughter of South Carolina by naming a portion of Interstate Highway 26 in Orangeburg County in her honor. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly request the Department of Transportation name the portion of Interstate Highway 26 in Orangeburg County between Exit 145 and 154 “Karen J. Williams Memorial Highway” and erect appropriate markers or signs along this portion of highway that contain the words “Karen J. Williams Memorial Highway, First Female Judge and Chief Judge of the United States 4th Circuit Court of Appeals”.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Department of Transportation.

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