**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR EVANGELIST MELISSA CANNON, UPON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT AFTER THIRTY YEARS OF EVANGELISM AND MEANINGFUL PRISON MINISTRY, AND TO WISH HER CONTINUED SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS IN ALL HER FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, it is altogether fitting that the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives should pause in their deliberations to commend Evangelist Melissa Cannon for three decades of ministry to those often forgotten by society; and

Whereas, born and raised in Darlington County, Melissa Cannon attended the public schools there, and she completed further studies at Gloryland College and Morris College Extension in Florence; and

Whereas, in 1953, she married her beloved husband, the late Dozier Cannon, Jr., and they were blessed with one fine son, Jerry Lewis Cannon. Mrs. Cannon was employed at General Electric and also enjoyed being a caregiver to others; and

Whereas, a member of Peaceful Baptist Church for thirty‑one years, Evangelist Cannon answered a call in 1985 to serve as an evangelist and pray for God’s people. In 1987, she heard God’s call to begin a prison ministry at Palmer Pre‑Release Center in Florence and then at the Darlington Prison Farm where she faithfully ministered; and

Whereas, in 1989, she was certified and licensed at Peaceful Baptist Church as an evangelist, starting her prison‑ministry crusade with five members from Peaceful Baptist Church; and

Whereas, Evangelist Cannon joined Divine Destiny in 2004, where she was honored as Mother of the Church and served as prayer coordinator in 2005, and members from Divine Destiny and other churches joined the Prison Ministry Team. In 2009, she was ordained as a certified, licensed elder; and

Whereas, for more than three decades, she has served God’s people with singing, praying, praising, baptizing, testifying, mentoring, and ministering to the men at Palmer Pre‑Release Center and to those in the surrounding communities. Along the way, other faithful servants have assisted, such as Evangelist Bernice Baccus, a dedicated partner in the ministry; and

Whereas, Evangelist Cannon was honored with the Distinguished Service Award from Palmer Pre‑Release Center and as the South Carolina Department of Corrections Volunteer of the Year, both in 1995, and with an award from the Black Family Exposition in 2008 for a Lifetime of Service; and

Whereas, in the words of her Savior, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you…: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me….I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me”; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to commend citizens who give of themselves to their communities, like Melissa Cannon, and the members wish her continued enjoyment in her well‑earned retirement. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor Evangelist Melissa Cannon, upon the occasion of her retirement after thirty years of evangelism and meaningful prison ministry, and wish her continued success and happiness in all her future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Evangelist Melissa Cannon.

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