**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE BISHOP FREDERICK CALHOUN JAMES, THEOLOGIAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS ONE HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY AND TO WISH HIM A JOYOUS CELEBRATION AND YEARS OF CONTINUED HEALTH AND HAPPINESS.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that Bishop James of Richland County will celebrate his one hundredth birthday on April 7, 2022; and

Whereas, born in Prosperity on April 7, 1922, he was the son of Rosa Lee Gray James and Edward James. After graduating from Drayton Street High School in Newberry and in preparation for his life’s vocation, he earned a bachelor’s degree in history and English from Allen University in 1943, and a master of divinity degree from Howard University School of Religion in 1947. He also studied at Union Theological Seminary in New York; and

Whereas, Bishop James returned to South Carolina in 1947 to serve as pastor of Wayman African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Winnsboro. He also served as pastor of Chappelle Memorial AME Church in Columbia and Mt. Pisgah AME Church in Sumter, a position that he held for nineteen years; and

Whereas, a professor at Allen University in Columbia, and later Dean of Allen’s Dickerson School of Theology, he championed civil rights as a community and state social and political leader. In 1960, he was elected as consultant/director of Social Action of the AME Church, forming a close friendship with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1963, he became president of the historic Effective Sumter Movement; and

Whereas, in 1967, Reverend James led the sponsorship of the first 221(d) Rent Supplement Housing Project in South Carolina. In 1969, he initiated the first 221(h) Home Ownership Project in the State. He served as the first African‑American Congressional District member of the Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services and the Department of Social Services in the State, and from 1987 to 1992, he served as a member and vice chair of the Columbia Housing Authority and was vice president of the South Carolina Christian Action Council; and

Whereas, in 1972, Bishop James was elected to the AME bishopric, assigned as the presiding bishop of the AME Church in South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Namibia, and Mozambique. Headquartered in Cape Town, South Africa, he established schools, a publishing house, and churches. In 1976, he was assigned as bishop in Arkansas and Oklahoma, forming a lifelong friendship with then attorney Bill Clinton, and in 1984, he was assigned to the 7th Episcopal District in South Carolina. In these positions, he built housing projects, strengthened schools, and led Shorter College in North Little Rock and Allen University in Columbia to full accreditation; and

Whereas, in 1992, Bishop James became ecumenical bishop and chaplaincy endorsement officer of AME Church International, and in 1993, he was given major fiscal and reconciliation duties as bishop of the Second Episcopal District of the AME for Maryland; Washington, D.C.; Virginia; and North Carolina. In 1994, he was a member of President Clinton’s delegation to attend the inauguration of President Nelson Mandela, and in 1998 he accompanied President Clinton on an official visit to South Africa. He served on the White House Advisory Board on Historical Black Colleges and Universities, the United States State Department’s Advisory Board on Religious Freedom and as national vice president of the Interfaith Alliance; and

Whereas, among many other accolades, he was awarded the state’s highest civilian honor in 2003, The Order of the Palmetto, for his significant contributions to South Carolina. Now therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate Bishop Frederick Calhoun James, Civil Rights leader and theologian, on the occasion of his one hundredth birthday and wish him a joyous celebration and years of continued health and happiness.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Bishop Frederick Calhoun James.

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