**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS PROFOUND SORROW UPON THE PASSING OF SERGEANT MAJOR ERNEST NICODEMUS COLDEN, SR., TO CELEBRATE HIS LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS, AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate were deeply saddened by the death of Sergeant Major Ernest Nicodemus Colden, Sr., on Saturday, April 3, 2021, at the venerable age of ninety‑six; and

Whereas, born June 28, 1924, Ernest was the fifth child of the late Samuel Colden and Elizabeth Singleton Colden; and

Whereas, in December of 1948, Ernest began his military journey as the last draftee from Jasper County. He graduated from basic training with the 365th Infantry Regiment at Fort Dix, New Jersey. Throughout his career he received assignments with the 839th Engineer Aviation Battalion; 20th Soldiers Category Army with the Air Forces in Okinawa, Japan; 8th Army Engineering School in Maizuru, Japan; 822nd Engineer Aviation Battalion; 550th Ordnance Maintenance at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; 1169th Engineer Battalion in Korea; 8234th AG Admin Center in Yokohama, Japan; 65th Artillery Regiment at Ravenna Center in Cleveland, Ohio; 2nd Infantry Division at Fort Benning, Georgia; V Corps in Frankfurt, Germany; Army Engineer Center at Fort Belvoir, Virginia; Military Assistance Command in Vietnam; 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; and he culminated his career of thirty years at Fort Stewart, Georgia; and

Whereas, in addition to his illustrious military career, he founded one of the first black chapels on a military base, Chapel Six in Fort Campbell, Kentucky. He also authored his autobiographical book, *Thirty‑Five Cents: The Worth of a Man*, which will be published as soon as the summer of 2021; and

Whereas, he was a member of many organizations and associations throughout his life including the Democratic party and the Martin L. King, Jr., Garden of Light, as well as being a member of Veterans Affairs, the NAACP of the 100 Majors of Color, and the Jasper County chapter of 100 Black Men; and

Whereas, blessed with a large family, Ernest was married on January 16, 1954, to the love of his life, Mrs. Catherine (Holcombe) Colden. They were blessed with seven beautiful children, six of whom preceded him in death; and

Whereas, a man of faith, he was baptized on July 10, 1938, and was thereafter added to the church roll of the Mt. Hope Baptist Church in Martin. He served the church on the usher board and as a teacher for the intermediate Sunday school class. In 1980, he joined the Saint Phillip Baptist Church Pocotaligo Community. In 1981, he was ordained as a deacon, and in 1994, he was elected chairman of the board of deacons. He served faithfully in this role until his health prevented him from doing so; and

Whereas, he leaves to cherish his memory his wife of sixty‑seven years, Mrs. Catherine Colden; his son Herman (Elmetta) Witherspoon; his daughter‑in‑law, Levetta Davis; his adopted family, the Willis Family; his adopted granddaughter Patricia Rhett; and a host of grandchildren, great‑grandchildren, friends, and other family. He will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, express profound sorrow upon the passing of Sergeant Major Ernest Nicodemus Colden, Sr., celebrate his life and achievements, and extend the deepest sympathy to his family and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mrs. Catherine Colden and the family of Sergeant Major Ernest Nicodemus Colden, Sr.

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