**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEMORATE THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CIVIL‑RIGHTS SIT‑IN AT MCCRORY’S IN ROCK HILL THAT TOOK PLACE ON JANUARY 31, 1961, AND TO HONOR THE “FRIENDSHIP NINE,” WHO CHOSE IMPRISONMENT OVER A FINE AS THE PRICE OF PROTEST AT THAT EVENT.

Whereas, on January 31, 1961, students from Friendship Junior College and others picketed McCrory’s on Main Street in Rock Hill to protest the segregated lunch counters at the business. They walked in, took seats at the counter, and ordered hamburgers, soft drinks, and coffee; and

Whereas, at the time, it was illegal for blacks to eat at the same lunch counter as whites. This form of protest against the law, known as a “sit‑in,” had started the year before in Greensboro, North Carolina, and spread throughout the South; and

Whereas, the students were refused service and ordered to leave. They refused to do so and were arrested; and

Whereas, the next day, ten were convicted of trespassing and breach of the peace and sentenced to serve thirty days in jail or pay a $100 fine. One man paid the fine, but the remaining nine, eight of whom were Friendship students, chose to take the sentence of thirty days’ hard labor at the York County Prison Farm; and

Whereas, the effect was electric. The idea of being jailed for nothing more than asking to buy food focused more attention on the protests. The Friendship Nine’s choice of jail time over a fine or bail marked a first in the civil-rights movement and sparked the “jail, no bail” strategy that came to be emulated in other places; and

Whereas, it is entirely appropriate for the House of Representatives, remembering the sacrifice and historic choice of the Friendship Nine, to pause in their deliberations to honor these courageous men, who include John Gaines, Thomas Gaither, Clarence Graham, W.T. “Dub” Massey, Willie McCleod, Robert McCullough, James Wells, David Williamson, Jr., and Mack Workman. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the civil‑rights sit‑in at McCrory’s in Rock Hill that took place on January 31, 1961, and honor the “Friendship Nine,” who chose imprisonment over a fine as the price of protest at that event.

Be it further resolved that copies of this resolution be presented to the Friendship Nine.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑