**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEMORATE THE TWO HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY OF CHARLESTON NATIVE DANIEL ALEXANDER PAYNE, DISTINGUISHED AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH TEACHER, PREACHER, AND BISHOP, AND TO DECLARE APRIL 1, 2011, “BISHOP DANIEL A. PAYNE HOMECOMING OF AN EXTRAORDINARY EDUCATOR DAY.”

Whereas, Daniel Alexander Payne was born free in Charleston on February 24, 1811, of African, European, and Native American descent; and

Whereas, when young Daniel was eight years old, he attended the Minor’s Moralist Society School for two years and was instructed by Mr. Thomas S. Bonneau for three years. However, because of the lack of quality schools for blacks, he subsequently home‑studied, teaching himself mathematics, physical science, and classical languages; and

Whereas, in 1829 at the age of eighteen, he opened his first school dedicated to teaching blacks how to read and write in South Carolina; and

Whereas, on April 1, 1835, South Carolina passed legislation restricting the rights of people of color and slaves. Law Number 2639 made teaching literacy to free people of color and slaves illegal and subject to fines and imprisonment. With the passage of this law, Daniel Alexander Payne had to close his school and chose to leave South Carolina; and

Whereas, he did not allow this setback to stop his desire to create educational opportunities for African Americans. Bishop Payne was the first black American selected to lead an institution of higher education, and he served as president of the first university for African Americans in the country, Wilberforce University, in 1856. In 1871, the Wilberforce College Board of Trustees approved the establishment of a free‑standing seminary to be named for Bishop Daniel A. Payne, who influenced the African Methodist Episcopal Church to mandate a program of higher education to train clergy and uplift the people; and

Whereas, Bishop Payne also served as the first president of Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce, Ohio, which is named for him; and

Whereas, this year, Payne Theological Seminary is celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne’s birth, February 24, 2011, with a yearlong commemoration, part of which is a five‑city tour. The tour will visit key cities that significantly impacted Bishop Payne’s life, including Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; Charleston, South Carolina; Baltimore, Maryland; and Wilberforce, Ohio; and

Whereas, on Friday, April 1, 2011, Bishop Preston W. Williams and the Seventh District will conduct a worship service remembering Bishop Daniel Alexander Payne’s birthplace and commitment to black education, the service to be held at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, where Reverend Clementa Pinckney serves as senior pastor; and

Whereas, cognizant of his outstanding contributions to the education of African Americans, the House of Representatives takes great pleasure in joining with Payne Theological Seminary to recognize and honor Bishop Daniel A. Payne and in proclaiming that the spirit of his commitment to the education of black Americans is alive and thriving in 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, commemorate the two hundredth birthday of Charleston native Daniel Alexander Payne, distinguished African Methodist Episcopal Church teacher, preacher, and bishop, and declare April 1, 2011, “Bishop Daniel A. Payne Homecoming of an Extraordinary Educator Day.”

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Payne Theological Seminary.

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