**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE WESTON CHAPEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL (AME) CHURCH OF GREENWOOD ON THE OCCASION OF ITS HISTORIC ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY AND TO COMMEND THE CHURCH FOR A CENTURY AND A HALF OF SERVICE TO GOD AND THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, having been founded in 1865, Weston Chapel AME Church, one of the oldest churches in Greenwood, is commemorating its historic one hundred fiftieth anniversary with special celebratory services on Sunday, May 31, 2015; and

Whereas, as the AME Church was growing throughout the shores of South Carolina in the late 1800s, the congregation of Weston Chapel AME Church in the Piedmont began its journey of Christian ministry in the Greenwood community. In 1863, six years after the City of Greenwood was chartered, the church group began meeting under a brush arbor on land it presently owns on East Cambridge Avenue. The first dollar donated to build a sanctuary was given by A.J. Poole, who was a child at the time; and

Whereas, the Reverend Paul Weston served as first pastor of the congregation, and the church was named in his honor. Sometime thereafter, the first sanctuary was constructed. The congregation grew, and in 1895 a second church replaced the first building; and

Whereas, after the 1909 organization of the Piedmont Conference, Weston Chapel hosted the conference’s first session in December 1910. Many of its pastors and members through the years have had a significant impact on local, state, and national religious endeavors, as well as in education, politics, and business; and

Whereas, several years ago, the church set out on a mission to build a new sanctuary that would meet the needs of worshippers well into the twenty‑first century. In pursuit of this goal, the sanctuary was torn down in 2006, and the membership began worshipping with Mt. Pisgah AME Church while planning and working to build a new structure. At the 2006 Piedmont Annual Conference, the histories and legacies of Weston Chapel and Mt. Pisgah were brought together, and the conference approved the merger of the two churches. The new church on that day began its current journey as Weston Chapel AME Church under the leadership of the Reverend Willie Neal Norman, who had served at Weston Chapel for approximately sixteen years; and

Whereas, at the 2009 Piedmont Annual Conference, the Reverend Furman M. Miller, Jr., was assigned to pastor Weston Chapel. At that time, he was given the specific assignment to build a new church suitable for housing current and future worshippers and for meeting the ministerial needs of the communities served by Weston Chapel and Mt. Pisgah AME churches; and

Whereas, on October 30, 2011, with great praise and thanksgiving to God, the new Weston Chapel opened its doors for the dedication of its new building. Weston Chapel’s goal continues to be building its outreach ministries to the lost and needy and partnering with other churches and organizations who share the love and message of Jesus Christ in Greenwood and throughout the world. The congregation’s mission is “Kingdom building” and working to serve the Lord as the best disciples of Jesus Christ they can be; and

Whereas, Weston Chapel AME Church has been a beacon of light and a community worship center in the Greenwood area for one hundred fifty years, and, God willing, will continue its godly heritage for many more years of worship and service. 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 congratulate Weston Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church of Greenwood on the occasion of its historic one hundred fiftieth anniversary and commend the church for a century and a half of service to God and the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Weston Chapel AME Church.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑