**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS PROFOUND SORROW UPON THE PASSING OF KAY GUNNELLS JOHNSON, TO CELEBRATE HER LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS, AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HER FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Kay Gunnells Johnson on Sunday, January 24, 2021, at the venerable age of eighty‑five; and

Whereas, born November 10, 1935, Kay was the only child to doting parents, Ralph E. Gunnells and Myrtle Meyer Gunnells of North Charleston. Outgoing and active, she loved to dance and to visit Folly Beach Pier, the Pavilion, and Front Beach on the Isle of Palms, all of which held a special place in her heart; and

Whereas, an exuberant youth, Kay met her husband and the love of her life, Blaine Johnson, Jr., at the age of sixteen when she was active in Y‑Teens. Together they shared fifty‑three years of a long and loving marriage and had three children, Ginger Johnson Sottile, Kathy Kay Johnson Binsted, and Alan Blaine Johnson, III; and

Whereas, as a couple, Kay and Blaine worked for his parents at Johnson Trailer Sales before owning two mobile home parks and a fuel oil delivery company. They were also licensed and active amateur radio operators and worked with FEMA. In service to FEMA, they traveled from Houston to Miami to New Orleans to Puerto Rico, making lifelong friends as they assisted thousands of people in dire situations who were dealing with the aftereffects of natural disasters; and

Whereas, throughout their lives, both Kay and her husband were active in the Omar Shrine Temple and the North Charleston Jaycees. Kay served on the Queen of the Nile’s Court and was elected to every officer position of the North Charleston Jaycee‑ettes. Additionally, for almost two decades, they hosted a semi‑annual fish fry for the Tri‑County’s Amateur Radio Clubs at their property in Givhans; and

Whereas, outgoing and southern at heart, Kay had the perfect personality and an eager passion for history that led her to be successful in a three‑year stint with the old Charleston Museum. A phenomenal ambassador for the Holy City, she was always prepared to share a Charleston secret with a local; and

Whereas, an avid reader, she loved Victorian novels, historical fiction, and biographies. A self‑appointed family historian, she made tremendous notes on her own family tree and researched the Meyer family back to their origins in Bremerhaven, Germany, where she traveled in 2005 to experience the area and take rolls of film of local buildings that bore the family name; and

Whereas, late in their lives, Kay and Blaine relocated with their two younger children to Tennessee. Blaine passed away a few years later on October 5, 2008. In her later life, Kay suffered from Alzheimer’s, which robbed her of her independence, but not her shining personality. Many recall her splendid stories and ability to befriend a room full of people; and

Whereas, loved by all who knew her, she leaves to cherish her memory her three children, her six grandchildren, her eight great‑grandchildren, and a host of other family and friends. She will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege and pleasure of knowing her. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, express profound sorrow upon the passing of Kay Gunnells Johnson, celebrate her life and achievements, and extend the deepest sympathy to her family and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Kay Gunnells Johnson.

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