**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE MRS. IRIS M. ESTRIDGE OF BETHUNE ON THE GRAND OCCASION OF HER ONE HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY AND TO CELEBRATE THIS MOMENTOUS MILESTONE.

Whereas, on February 1, 1922, Iris M. Estridge was born to Edward Small McCaskill and Maud Jones McCaskill. The oldest of four children, she had three brothers, Ralph, Marvin, and Smith. Growing up as the daughter of a farmer, she worked hard chopping and picking cotton and pulling fodder. A diligent and gifted student, at age sixteen she graduated from Bethune High School, which only offered eleven grades at the time, as the class valedictorian; and

Whereas, she continued her education by attending the Textile Industrial Institute (TII), or what’s now known as Spartanburg Methodist College. During her time there she was well liked by her peers and was elected secretary of her class, most popular, most personality, and best all around. After graduating from TII, she received her bachelor’s degree from Winthrop College and began her first job teaching fifth grade in Dillon County; and

Whereas, she met her late husband, Edwin W. Estridge, before he was deployed to serve as a pilot in World War II. He joined the Air Force in 1942, and received his flight training in Tucson, Arizona. With their future unknown and due to the uncertainty of war, Iris and Edwin married on February 18, 1943, before he could be sent to war. As a pilot, Edwin flew a B‑24 “Liberator,” and was shot down on September 3, 1943, though Iris only received official confirmation that he had been taken as a prisoner of war in April 1944. Despite the dire situation, Iris never lost faith that her husband would return to her, and after two years spent in various prison camps, Edwin was finally liberated in April 1945; and

Whereas, during Edwin’s time in Europe, Iris had established herself as a teacher in Marion County, Chesterfield County, and Kershaw County. When Edwin was finally returned, the two settled once more in Iris’ hometown of Bethune. A gifted teacher, Iris taught at Bethune High School and was selected as Teacher of the Year on two separate occasions. After thirty‑five years as an educator, gifting her many talents in service to her students, she retired; and

Whereas, as a woman of great faith, Iris has attended Timrod Baptist church faithfully for nearly ninety years. Over the many years, she has served Timrod Baptist as a Sunday School teacher, has assisted with Vacation Bible School, served for twenty‑two years as the church treasurer, served on a multitude of committees, and acted in various leadership roles. She continues to be a member of the Senior Ladies Sunday School class and is a proud member of the Goldenrods, the seniors’ group; and

Whereas, a loving and devoted wife, Iris was married to Edwin for fifty‑five long and cherished years, until his death in 1998. Together they had one son, Ed, whom Iris treasures as the best son in the world. A proud grandmother, she enjoys doting upon her three grandchildren and seven great‑grandchildren; and

Whereas, birthdays provide a special time and opportunity to celebrate and honor those of great importance in our lives. It is a great pleasure for the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives to join with Mrs. Iris M. Estridge’s family and friends to recognize this momentous occasion and congratulate her on reaching this remarkable milestone. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate Mrs. Iris M. Estridge of Bethune on the grand occasion of her one hundredth birthday and celebrate this momentous milestone.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mrs. Iris M. Estridge.

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