**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS THE PROFOUND SORROW OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE UPON THE PASSING OF PATRICK LASAINE THOMAS OF COLLETON COUNTY, TO CELEBRATE HIS LIFE, AND TO EXTEND THE DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Patrick Lasaine Thomas of Colleton County on August 8, 2021, at the age of forty‑seven; and

Whereas, born in Colleton County to Sharon L. Middleton and William Thomas, Jr., Patrick Lasaine Thomas, affectionately known to many as “Mr. T,” entered this world on November 12, 1973. He attended the schools of Colleton County and graduated with the Walterboro High School Class of 1991. He then matriculated at Fayetteville State University and later transferred to South Carolina State University. Having come from a family of distinguished educators, Patrick graduated in 1995 from South Carolina State University in Orangeburg as an English education major and did further study at The Citadel in Charleston. Prior to his passing, he was pursuing a degree in educational leadership at the University of South Carolina in Columbia; and

Whereas, in 1996, Patrick began his twenty‑five‑year teaching career in the Colleton County School District at Ruffin High School. At the time of his passing, he was still a member of the faculty at Colleton County High School in Walterboro, where he had been serving since Walterboro and Ruffin high schools merged in 2002. During his tenure at both schools, he served in numerous capacities, including as a coach and as advisor to the Walterboro Kappa League, Men of Distinction, junior and senior classes, and Prom Committee. He often sponsored a trip for Youth Day at South Carolina State University during football season. Most of all, he served as a mentor, even a father figure, to so many young people, from athletes to top scholars. In recognition of his service, he was named 2013‑2014 Teacher of the Year for the Colleton County School District. Further, he was interviewed on a 2019 *YouTube* video, *Minority Male Educators Transforming Education*; and

Whereas, while in college, Patrick was actively involved in community service through his fraternity. He maintained that involvement as a member of the Walterboro Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., and Sunlight Lodge #221, among other community organizations and events, and by attending community meetings and voicing his opinions when the opportunity presented itself; and

Whereas, at an early age, Patrick confessed Christ as his Lord and Savior. He was a faithful and devout member of St. Peter’s AME Church of Walterboro and was active in several capacities; and

Whereas, predeceased by his parents and his only sibling, Zenida Middleton, Patrick Lasaine Thomas leaves to cherish his memory a host of other family members and friends. A former Colleton County School District administrator praised Patrick with these words: “He leaves an indelible mark on Colleton County. Countless lives changed as a result of this man.” Indeed, he was an influential pillar in Colleton County and will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, express profound sorrow upon the passing of Patrick Lasaine Thomas of Colleton County, celebrate his life, and extend the deepest sympathy to his family and many friends.

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

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑