**South Carolina General Assembly**

126th Session, 2025-2026

**H. 4372**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

House Resolution

Sponsors: Reps. Cobb-Hunter, McDaniel, Alexander, Anderson, Atkinson, Bailey, Ballentine, Bamberg, Bannister, Bauer, Beach, Bernstein, Bowers, Bradley, Brewer, Brittain, Burns, Bustos, Calhoon, Caskey, Chapman, Chumley, Clyburn, Collins, B.J. Cox, B.L. Cox, Crawford, Cromer, Davis, Dillard, Duncan, Edgerton, Erickson, Forrest, Frank, Gagnon, Garvin, Gatch, Gibson, Gilliam, Gilliard, Gilreath, Govan, Grant, Guest, Guffey, Haddon, Hager, Hardee, Harris, Hart, Hartnett, Hartz, Hayes, Henderson-Myers, Herbkersman, Hewitt, Hiott, Hixon, Holman, Hosey, Howard, Huff, J.E. Johnson, J.L. Johnson, Jones, Jordan, Kilmartin, King, Kirby, Landing, Lawson, Ligon, Long, Lowe, Luck, Magnuson, Martin, May, McCabe, McCravy, McGinnis, Mitchell, Montgomery, J. Moore, T. Moore, Morgan, Moss, Murphy, Neese, B. Newton, W. Newton, Oremus, Pace, Pedalino, Pope, Rankin, Reese, Rivers, Robbins, Rose, Rutherford, Sanders, Schuessler, Sessions, G.M. Smith, M.M. Smith, Spann-Wilder, Stavrinakis, Taylor, Teeple, Terribile, Vaughan, Waters, Weeks, Wetmore, White, Whitmire, Wickensimer, Williams, Willis, Wooten and Yow

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Introduced in the House on April 23, 2025

Adopted by the House on April 23, 2025

Summary: Cecil Williams

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

4/23/2025 House Introduced and adopted ([House Journal‑page 43](h:\hj\20250423.docx))

View the latest  [legislative information](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=4372&session=126&summary=B)  at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[04/23/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/4372_20250423.docx)

A house RESOLUTION

TO COMMEND CECIL J. WILLIAMS OF ORANGEBURG COUNTY FOR FOUNDING THE SOUTH CAROLINA CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM, WHICH DISPLAYS HIS PHOTOGRAPHS CHRONICLING THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN SOUTH CAROLINA, AND TO CONGRATULATE HIM ON THE UPCOMING EXPANSION OF THE MUSEUM’S FOOTPRINT AS PART OF THE RAILROAD CORNER DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

Whereas, the House of Representatives is honored to recognize photographer Cecil J. Williams of Orangeburg County for his efforts to ensure that South Carolina’s role in the Civil Rights Movement receives accurate recognition. Born on November 26, 1937, when state laws forced racial segregation, Cecil Williams began to photograph social issues facing his community and State as a youth. His work first appeared in Jet Magazine and other Black publications, and later in national news outlets; and

Whereas, for two decades, he chronicled the Civil Rights Movement in South Carolina, beginning with images of courageous Clarendon County residents who challenged public school segregation in the Briggs v. Elliott lawsuit, to include photographs of Harry and Eliza Briggs, the Reverend J.A. DeLaine, who helped shepherd the litigation, and an iconic image of their attorney, Thurgood Marshall. The first of five cases filed challenging racial segregation in public schools, the lawsuit would be decided as part of the landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* case in which the United States Supreme Court declared public school racial segregation unconstitutional; and

Whereas, he continued to make a record of the state’s role in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s with images showcasing ordinary individuals speaking truth to power, such as a photograph of Black Orangeburg residents boycotting local businesses that had retaliated against fellow citizens for petitioning to desegregate the Orangeburg public schools based on the *Brown* decision. This boycott preceded the more well‑known Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott by several months; and

Whereas, his pictorial chronicle of the 1960s was wide‑ranging, beginning in February 1960 on the heels of the first Greensboro, North Carolina, lunch counter sit‑in, when he documented attempted small‑scale sit‑ins by Claflin and S.C. State students at the local Kress and accompanying marches, and on March 15, 1960, what would be the largest student‑led peaceful demonstration at that time nationwide, in which first responders used fire hoses and tear gas on the 1,000 student demonstrators, of whom hundreds were arrested and confined outdoors in rainy, cold weather at the county jail known as the Pink Palace. A photograph of the students singing behind the fence, taken by Cecil Williams, appeared on the front page of *The New York Times* the following day; and

Whereas, wanting to correct the narrative of our state’s overlooked role in the Civil Rights Movement, in 2019, Cecil Williams, and his wife, Barbara, and sister, Brenda, opened the South Carolina Civil Rights Museum, using personal funds, to showcase many of his photographs and other memorabilia. In the coming months, the museum will move into a substantially larger space at Railroad Corner in downtown Orangeburg, expanding the museum’s footprint to a more historically significant location for educating others about South Carolina’s role in the Civil Rights Movement, a story captured almost singlehandedly by Cecil Williams and his cameras. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, commend Cecil J. Williams of Orangeburg County for founding the South Carolina Civil Rights Museum, which displays his photographs chronicling the Civil Rights Movement in South Carolina, and to congratulate him on the upcoming expansion of the museum’s footprint as part of the Railroad Corner downtown redevelopment project.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Cecil J. Williams.

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