**South Carolina General Assembly**

126th Session, 2025-2026

**H. 4381**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

Concurrent Resolution

Sponsors: Reps. Atkinson and Kirby

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Introduced in the House on April 23, 2025

Currently residing in the House Committee on **Invitations and Memorial Resolutions**

Summary: Columbus Pressley and Claudie E. Pressley Memorial Road

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

4/23/2025 House Introduced ([House Journal‑page 49](h:\hj\20250423.docx))

4/23/2025 House Referred to Committee on **Invitations and Memorial Resolutions** ([House Journal‑page 49](h:\hj\20250423.docx))

View the latest  [legislative information](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=4381&session=126&summary=B)  at the website

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[04/23/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/4381_20250423.docx)

A concurrent RESOLUTION

TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME NESMITH CORNER ROAD IN THE COMMUNITY OF NESMITH IN WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY “COLUMBUS PRESSLEY AND CLAUDIE E. PRESSLEY MEMORIAL ROAD” AND ERECT APPROPRIATE SIGNS OR MARKERS AT THIS LOCATION CONTAINING THESE WORDS.

Whereas, a towering figure in the Nesmith Community, Columbus Pressley was hailed as an industrious, courageous, productive, and outstanding human being. The son of Peter James Pressley and his wife, Rachael Pressley, he was born on February 15, 1876, in Nesmith; and

Whereas, he was married three times having been widowed twice, and was the father of fifteen children. Described as a God‑fearing man and the “man behind the plan,” he started out with a small tract of land which he and his sons cleared using simple tools. After years of hard labor, he bought another tract and continued this pattern until his property exceeded two hundred acres; and

Whereas, he spearheaded improvements on the road entering Nesmith making it passable for longer periods of time for those who lived in Nesmith Corner. He led the families to pasture their cows in a grassland in the “big woods” for winter and round them up in the spring, a method said to help with feeding when food was scarce. When calves were butchered, families purchased meat from each other. With insight from Columbus, families who owned property worked together and grew ninety percent of the food needed for survival. Small crops of cotton and tobacco provided additional money; and

Whereas, Columbus and a neighbor purchased pieces of large farm equipment and made them available to all in the community. He also owned a gristmill where families could bring their corn for processing in exchange for a small portion of the finished product. When hogs were slaughtered in the winter, it was Columbus who visited the various smokehouses to inject the hams with preservative; and

Whereas, Columbus and other family members established lodges that, along with other community lodges, established the Benevolence Society Hospital. The lodges also made available the purchase of coffins at a reasonable cost, an operation that was the beginning of Nesmith‑Pinckney Funeral Home. It was Columbus and Blake Pressley who started the first branch of the NAACP in the community in the 1940s. Columbus passed away in October 1970 at age 94 following a life well lived; and

Whereas, born August 25, 1926, his son Claudie E. Pressley followed in his father’s footsteps in ministering to others. He grew up in the Nesmith community, attended Brown High School, and was an active member of Friendship Methodist Church where he served on numerous other ministries. He attended South Carolina State College in 1945 and served in the United States Army during World War II. He received the Army Occupation Medal and the World War II Victory Medal; and

Whereas, Claudie earned a diploma from the Automotive Body and Metal Work Training School in Philadelphia and taught vocational trades. Returning home he was the first black assistant fire chief in Williamsburg County’s Volunteer Fire Department #6. He took required courses to be an interior structure firefighter and was a certified pump engineer. Memberships include New Hope Masonic Lodge #358, King Solomon’s Consistory #330, and the Nesmith Hunting Club; and

Whereas, Claudie married Mary Mitchell in 1954, a union that lasted sixty‑one years and produced eight children. He owned and operated the Nesmith Corner grocery store and was part owner of Nesmith‑Pinckney Funeral Home. An avid farmer, he was a member of the Nesmith Branch Farmer Cooperative. In retirement, he worked as a night watchman for Williamsburg County; and

Whereas, Claudie truly believed in providing the best life for his family and promoting family life throughout the community by teaching, helping others, and keeping his family together when they worked, traveled, and played; and

Whereas, with their beginnings rooted just after the Civil War, the Pressley family not only survived but thrived through many generations and left behind a legacy that still stands. It is only fitting and proper that these native sons of the Palmetto State be remembered for their selfless contributions and devotion to God by having a road in the Nesmith Community named in their honor. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, request the Department of Transportation name Nesmith Corner Road in the community of Nesmith in Williamsburg County “Columbus Pressley and Claudie E. Pressley Memorial Road” and erect appropriate signs or markers at this location containing these words.

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

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