

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 123

BY REPRESENTATIVES KATRINA JACKSON, BADON, BARROW, WESLEY BISHOP, BROSSETT, BURRELL, COX, DIXON, FRANKLIN, GAINES, HONORE, HUNTER, GIROD JACKSON, JAMES, JEFFERSON, TERRY LANDRY, NORTON, PIERRE, PRICE, SMITH, THIERRY, ALFRED WILLIAMS, AND PATRICK WILLIAMS AND SENATORS BROOME, BROWN, DORSEY-COLOMB, GALLOT, GUILLORY, MORRELL, MURRAY, PETERSON, AND TARVER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To express the condolences of the Legislature of Louisiana upon the death of Bishop Keith Cornell Smith, and to posthumously commend him for thirty years of dedicated service to God in the Gospel ministry.

WHEREAS, Ruben Smith, Sr., and Mrs. Frances Richardson Smith received with joy their last-born gift from Heaven on October 19, 1964 in Cleveland, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, as a child, when the young Keith Smith would play church with his siblings, he would assume the role of the preacher, stirring his brothers and sisters to sing and shout and as the make-believe preacher, he would preach the funerals of family and neighborhood pets; and

WHEREAS, while on the playground of H.M. Nailor Elementary School in Cleveland, Mississippi, Keith Smith heard the call from God to the ministry of preaching, and answered that call at the tender age of ten; and

WHEREAS, Keith Smith preached his first sermon in 1974 on Christmas Day at United Missionary Baptist Church in Cleveland, Mississippi, and was ordained on January 12, 1975, to preach the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, fulfilling his call to the fullest, the Reverend Smith recorded the first of four albums in 1975; the distribution of his singing and preaching on the medium of recordings attracted the attention of churches, ministries, and radio stations, and he was invited to preach at an August 1979 gospel music workshop conducted by gospel icon, the late Reverend James Cleveland, in Detroit before a crowd of seven thousand attendees; and

WHEREAS, in August 2002, the Reverend Smith was consecrated as a bishop by Grace International Fellowship in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and served on the council of bishops of the ministry; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the early beginnings of his ministry, Bishop Smith was a serious student of the Word of God, receiving a bachelor of theology degree from St. Stephens Bible College in Los Angeles, California; a master of divinity degree and an honorary doctor of letters from Morris-Booker Memorial College in Dermott, Arkansas; and a doctor of divinity degree from Tennessee School of Religion in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Smith relocated to Spartanburg, South Carolina, where he met and married Gytanna Ellis, and together they established the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit Bible Church, which features a children's daycare ministry, free after-school care for underprivileged neighborhood children, a food pantry, a clothing ministry, and a home-adoption program which provides monthly necessities for needy families; and

WHEREAS, at the age of forty-eight, God called Bishop Smith to his eternal home on May 1, 2013, and his departure will leave a void in the hearts and minds of his family, his congregation, and the community he so diligently served.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Legislature of Louisiana do hereby express their most heartfelt sorrow and do extend their condolences upon the death of Bishop Keith Cornell Smith, do hereby record for posterity many of the heights he achieved in the unique call of the ministry on his life, and do hereby acknowledge the special gifts he shared with the world in his thirty years service to God.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the family of Bishop Keith Cornell Smith.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE