

1 HR324
2 176834-1
3 By Representative Scott
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 20-APR-16

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7
8 CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF REVEREND JAMES
9 CURTIS OWENS.

10
11 WHEREAS, we deeply regret and are greatly saddened
12 to learn of the death of Reverend James Curtis Owens who was
13 called home to glory on March 26, 2016, at 64 years of age,
14 and we uplift his inspiring life and legacy with utmost
15 reverence and respect; and

16 WHEREAS, the passing of Reverend James Curtis Owens
17 leaves a void in the lives of his loving family, many friends,
18 and the entire community, where he was highly regarded; and

19 WHEREAS, Mr. Owens gave his life to Christ at an
20 early age and joined First Baptist Church Annisburg, now
21 Antioch Baptist Church; he graduated from Fairfield High
22 School and, in 1969, became the first African American to
23 receive a football scholarship at Auburn University, where he
24 lettered as a fullback for the Tigers from 1970 to 1972 and
25 played a key role on the 1972 Amazins team; he was drafted in
26 the 11th round of the NFL draft by the New Orleans Saints; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Owens entered into Holy Matrimony with
2 Gloria Sanks on April 20, 1974; in 1982, he served as
3 Assistant Football Coach, Physical Education instructor, and
4 employee of the United States Steel Corporation in Fairfield;
5 he returned to Auburn at the request of Coach Pat Dye to serve
6 as Assistant Football Coach; later, he continued to mentor and
7 inspire students as Head Football Coach at Miles College;
8 after leaving Miles College, he relocated to the
9 Opelika/Auburn area and was employed by Tuskegee University
10 and Auburn University; he retired from Auburn in 2004; and

11 WHEREAS, in 1995, Reverend Owens answered God's call
12 upon his life to enter the ministry and became the Associate
13 Minister of Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church in
14 Opelika, Alabama; in 2001, he became the Pastor of Pleasant
15 Ridge Missionary Baptist Church in Dadeville, Alabama; he
16 retired from full-time ministry in 2013 due to health issues,
17 but continued to share God's Word; and

18 WHEREAS, survivors include his queen and devoted
19 wife of 41 years, Gloria Sanks Owens; three loving children,
20 DeWana (Derrick) Blackmon, Kimberly (Bishop) Moss, Jamelia
21 Owens (Jacquin Dennis); three grandchildren, James Owens-Moss,
22 Jada Moss, Jakayla Moss; one step granddaughter, Jessica
23 Tolefree; special nephew, LaDarius Owens; two brothers, Neal
24 (Pamela) Owens, Jr., George (Bernadine) Owens, Sr.; four
25 sisters, Ella (Melvin) Lovejoy, Nora (Martin) Hill, Omega
26 Levins, and Ora Owens; five stepbrothers, Roderick (Sonya)

1 Ellington, William Ellington, Gregory (Ona) Ellington, Marlon
2 (Aisha) Ellington, and Sudan Ellington; one stepsister, Cheryl
3 (Blaine) Franks; mother-in-law, Mary Kelley; father-in-law,
4 Farris (Rebecca) O'Neal; four brothers-in-law, Elijah Sams,
5 Jr., Bobby (Jeannette) Sanks, Donald Sanks, Don (Gwendolyn)
6 Sanks; nine sisters-in-law, Rebecca Holloway, Betty (Franklin)
7 Knight, Annette Phillips, Rica Gaines, Cassandra (Neal) Davis,
8 Vanteria (Matthew) Geller, Charissa O'Neal, Sherrellis
9 (Darrell) Smith, Quintina O'Neal; father in the ministry,
10 Reverend Dr. George C. McCulloh; sons in the ministry,
11 Reverend Ira Moss and Reverend Tommy Carwell; special friends,
12 Terry Henley, Thom Gossom, Reverend Ollie Gunn, Reverend
13 Joseph Rowser, Jr., the 1972 Amazins and other former players;
14 a host of nieces, nephews, aunties, uncles, cousins, friends;
15 and the Auburn University family; he was preceded in death by
16 his parents and oldest sister, Mattie Owens Sams; and

17 WHEREAS, Reverend James Curtis Owens was a valued
18 member of the community; although his presence is greatly
19 missed, his memory is cherished in the hearts and minds of all
20 those who were fortunate enough to know him; now therefore,

21 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
22 THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That while grieving the loss of
23 Reverend James Curtis Owens, we are extremely grateful for his
24 abundant life, and we offer this resolution in highest tribute
25 to his inspiring legacy, as well as in heartfelt sympathy to
26 his family and friends.

