

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 25

BY REPRESENTATIVE JAMES

A RESOLUTION

To commend the Reverend Doctor Jesse Bernard Bilberry, Jr., on the blessed celebration, March 11, 2018, of his thirty-fourth anniversary as pastor of Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church in Baton Rouge.

WHEREAS, born May 12, 1929, in Marion, Louisiana, Jesse Bilberry, Jr., is the eldest son of the late Reverend Jesse Bernard Bilberry, Sr., and Joe B. Bilberry; and

WHEREAS, Jesse Bilberry confessed Christ and was baptized at the age of fourteen at Blooming Grove Baptist Church in Farmerville, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bilberry became the first of ten siblings to graduate from Southern University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, a rare achievement in number of siblings graduated from Southern University; after graduating in 1951, Jesse answered the call of his country by serving in the United States Army and was honorably discharged in 1953; and

WHEREAS, on December 23, 1953, Jesse Bilberry married Verta Lee Hamilton and the couple was blessed with a beautiful daughter, Cassandra Gail Bilberry; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bilberry received a master's degree in education from Louisiana State University in 1957 while serving as principal at Tensas Rosenwald High School in St. Joseph from 1956-1969; and

WHEREAS, upon his return to Southern University in 1969, Mr. Bilberry's experience and skills led to several collegiate appointments: he was director of the freshman complex, he organized and directed the first Office of High School Relations, he was director of admissions, and he served on the board of supervisors; and

WHEREAS, Jesse Bilberry united with Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church in 1975 and was ordained as a deacon; he also served as chairman of the finance committee; and

WHEREAS, the academic training of Jesse B. Bilberry, Jr., provided a solid foundation for his eventual transition to teach and preach the Word of God: he accepted the

call to the gospel ministry in 1981 and was appointed as an associate minister at Mount Pilgrim; and

WHEREAS, on January 15, 1984, Reverend Bilberry was called to pastor Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church and began in earnest the anointed task of shepherding the Mount Pilgrim flock; and

WHEREAS, fueled by a desire to learn more about the God he faithfully served, Pastor Bilberry earned a master of theology degree from Christian Bible College in 1988 and a doctor of theology degree in 1990; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Bilberry was recognized as Minister of the Year in 1989 by the Early Risers Kiwanis Club and is a two-time recipient of the M.S. Tally Walk on the Water Award from the Department of Christian Education, Sunday School Publishing Board, National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Bilberry led delegations on missionary journeys to Dominica, West Indies, for two decades; he received the Frontiersman Award in 1993 for his foreign mission ministry; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Bilberry served twelve years as a member of the Southern University and A&M College board of supervisors; from 2009-2012 he served as chairman of the board of directors of Crestworth Learning Academy; Pastor Bilberry was president and moderator of the Fourth District Missionary Baptist Association from 2010-2015; and

WHEREAS, leaders and members of the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Incorporated, recognized Pastor Bilberry as "Mr. Christian Education" in 2005 with a Director's Award; Pastor Bilberry served as a supervisor and instructor in the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education; and at the distinguished age of eighty-nine, Pastor Bilberry continues to serve as director of the Louisiana State Baptist Congress of Christian Education; he is a member of the East Baton Rouge Parish Ministers Conference, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, and Phi Delta Kappa Honorary Society; and

WHEREAS, one of the highest honors of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Incorporated, was conferred upon Pastor Bilberry by the Sunday School Publishing Board, which is the publication subsidiary of the convention: he received the Dedicated Services and Loyalty Award on November 29, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Bilberry considers spiritual growth to be the most precious of Christian goals, and he strives daily to learn, know, and teach more about his Lord; since 1984, his stewardship at Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church has focused on teaching the precepts of God's Word to the flock and enlarging the territory of the church; under his pastorate, the Education Center, the Outreach Center, and the Family Life Center have been added to the church; its properties now encompass a city block on Scenic Highway; and

WHEREAS, in this season of his ministry, Pastor Bilberry has redoubled his efforts to bring the lost to Christ; the theme for his thirty-fourth anniversary celebration is appropriately titled, "A Worthy Watchman: Praising God for the Gift"; Pastor Bilberry has faithfully executed his duty as shepherd keeping watch over the flock at Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church and has earned the accolades of the theme Scripture, 1 Timothy 5:17: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching"; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Bilberry exhibits the true Christian characteristics of godliness, obedience, humility, commitment, dedication, and perseverance; it is fitting to recognize the imprint of his thirty-four years of ministry in the lives of the congregation at Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church and in the Christian community of Baton Rouge, the state of Louisiana, and the nation.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby express hearty congratulations to the Reverend Doctor Jesse B. Bilberry, Jr., on the happy occasion of his thirty-fourth anniversary as pastor of Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church; does hereby commend him for the steadfast commitment to the call of God on his life; does hereby commend his continuation of the proud heritage of his earthly father and for consistently carrying out the commands of his Heavenly Father; does hereby extend best wishes to Pastor Bilberry and his family and the congregation as they celebrate thirty-four happy years of the spiritual marriage of this pastor to this church; and does hereby offer prayers and hopes for many more years of faithful service to God.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Reverend Doctor Jesse B. Bilberry, Jr.

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES