

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1044

By Akbari

A RESOLUTION to honor Reverend Bethel L. Harris, Jr. for his outstanding career in the ministry.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this General Assembly should recognize those venerable religious leaders who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, enrich the lives of the people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, one such stalwart individual is Reverend Bethel L. Harris, Jr. of Memphis, who is the pastor of Washington Chapel CME Church of the Northeast District, West Tennessee Region of the First Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; he has been a distinguished administrative and fiscal leader of this mighty faith organization for many years; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Harris is a native Memphian and a graduate of Hamilton High School and Memphis State University, now the University of Memphis, holding a degree in business; and

WHEREAS, he serves as treasurer of the West Tennessee Region, a trustee for the First Episcopal District, and paymaster for twenty-three years for the six presiding elders of the First Episcopal District; and

WHEREAS, the pastor served as presiding elder of the Northwest District of the West Tennessee Region from 2007 until 2011, and he served on the joint board of finance for the North Arkansas Annual Conference; prior to that, he served as pastor of Zion CME Church from 1993 to 1997, Featherstone Temple CME Church from 1990 to 1993, and the historic Lane Chapel CME Church in Forrest City, Arkansas, from 1986 to 1999; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his many years in ministry, Reverend Harris retired with distinction after a sterling twenty-five year career with logistics worldwide operations for Federal Express Corporation; and

WHEREAS, his pastoral duties notwithstanding, Reverend Harris is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., the NAACP, and a board member of the City of Refuge Outreach Ministries, Inc. which assists ex-offenders to successfully reintegrate into their families and communities with job support and career training; and

WHEREAS, Bethel Harris, Jr. epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean and a devout Christian; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Harris is most grateful for the love and companionship he shares with his wife, Deborah Greene Harris; and their children, Bethel III, Brian, and Brandi; and grandchildren, Briana, Brooklyn, Bailey, Houston, and Holland are sources of great pride for Reverend and First Lady Matthews; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Bethel Harris has a distinguished history of faith leadership and lends his expertise in business, finance, and management to the various organizations to which he has been led by the Holy Spirit; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Reverend Harris for his dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Reverend Bethel L. Harris, Jr. for his meritorious service to his family, church, community, and the State of Tennessee and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.