Chapter No. 2041
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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 77

Originated in House Don Richardson Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 77

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING REVEREND HERMAN D. "PREACHER" DENNIS AND HIS LATE WIFE, MARGARET ROGERS DENNIS, IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF THE OBSERVANCE OF REVEREND HERMAN D. DENNIS AND MARGARET'S GROCERY AWARENESS AND PRESERVATION WEEK DURING THE WEEK OF MARCH 20-26, 2011.

WHEREAS, the Reverend Herman D. "Preacher" Dennis and his late wife, Margaret Rogers Dennis, owned and resided in the establishment on Old Highway 61 North in Vicksburg, Mississippi, known locally and worldwide as "Margaret's Grocery"; and

WHEREAS, "Miss Margaret" operated Margaret's Grocery for over 60 years and was a faithful member of Cool Springs Missionary Baptist Church where she taught Sunday School to children for many years; and

WHEREAS, "Preacher," an ordained minister who shared his faith in God, and his belief in equality and respect for all people, with friends and passersby, continues to be, as was Miss Margaret, devoted to their community, country and faith; and

WHEREAS, Miss Margaret's Grocery was a neighborhood gathering place where locals shopped and partook in the kinship, friendship and wisdom of Miss Margaret and Preacher Dennis; and

WHEREAS, "Preacher" promised Miss Margaret that if she would marry him he would build her a castle, and remaining true to his promise, "Preacher" lovingly honored Miss Margaret by transforming the small country grocery into a "Bible Castle to God," hammering, laying brick, painting and adorning it with bright colors, objects and religious verses; and

WHEREAS, Margaret's Grocery became an attraction, drawing tourists from around the world, and continues to be the subject of

folk art and cultural tourism research, discussion and appreciation; and

WHEREAS, after Miss Margaret's life transition to the celestial shores of heaven in 2009, "Preacher" was compelled to express his nostalgic goodbyes to the grocery to reside in a Vicksburg nursing home; and

WHEREAS, citizens of Vicksburg, friends of Miss Margaret and "Preacher" and folk art enthusiasts from around the world have expressed interest in maintaining, restoring and preserving Preacher's folk art as a symbol of Mississippi's creative spirit and cultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, March 22, 2011, is the Mississippi Arts Commission's Arts Advocacy Day at the Mississippi Legislature and "Preacher" will celebrate his 96th birthday on March 25, 2011, and the Governor of the State of Mississippi has deemed it fitting and proper to honor "Preacher" and his late wife by declaring the week of March 20-26, 2011, as the Reverend Herman D. Dennis and Margaret's Grocery Awareness and Preservation Week in Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to commend and congratulate those individuals such as Reverend Dennis and Margaret Dennis, who have made significant contributions to their community and to the State of Mississippi:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend Reverend Herman D. "Preacher" Dennis, for his contributions to the community and the world in creating a unique "Bible Castle" and for sharing his preaching and the gospel with visitors from around the world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we do hereby honor the memory of the late Margaret Rogers Dennis for being a pioneer African-American businesswoman, teacher and faithful member of the

Kings Community and Cool Springs Missionary Baptist Church for most of her life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Mississippians are encouraged to acknowledge the pioneering contributions of these two matchless individuals in observance of Reverend Herman D. "Preacher" Dennis and Margaret's Grocery Awareness and Preservation Week during the week of March 20-26, 2011.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to Reverend Dennis, his daughter, Cora Lee Dennis, Ida Mae Spooner on behalf of Miss Margaret's family, Cool Springs Missionary Baptist Church in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 28, 2011

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
March 2, 2011

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE