

1 SJR10
2 116070-1
3 By Senators Coleman, Dunn, Smitherman, French, Waggoner,
4 Beason and Bedford
5 RFD:
6 First Read: 12-JAN-10

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8 MOURNING THE DEATH OF JESSIE HALE DOWNS.
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10 WHEREAS, it is with profound sorrow and regret that
11 news is received of the death of Ms. Jessie Hale Downs of
12 Birmingham, Alabama, on January 5, 2010, at the age of 92; and

13 WHEREAS, Ms. Downs, along with her late husband
14 Jimmie Hale, co-founded the Jimmie Hale Mission, a shelter for
15 the homeless, in 1944; only eight months later, at 27 years of
16 age and pregnant with her first child, she was faced with her
17 husband's untimely death and the responsibility to carry on
18 the Mission alone; and

19 WHEREAS, Ms. Downs, along with her co-director, Bro.
20 Leo Shepura, continued to reach out to those in need until her
21 retirement in 1990; her Mission legacy includes addiction
22 recovery programs, fundraising thrift stores, learning
23 centers, and employment readiness programs; and

24 WHEREAS, the current Mission director, Tony Cooper,
25 said that her Christian commitment to service is honored by a
26 shelter in her name for women and children, Jessie's Place,

1 opened in 1998, where she often visited and prayed; she is
2 also honored with a chapel bearing her name that was dedicated
3 in 2008; and

4 WHEREAS, Ms. Downs pursued her mission while rearing
5 two daughters and surviving breast cancer in the 1960's; and

6 WHEREAS, she leaves to mourn her death her
7 daughters, Katie Hale (Phillip) Giardina and Ann Downs Wilson;
8 her grandchildren, Bubba (Melany) Justice, Rhonda (Vernon)
9 Masters, Scott (Tonya) Justice, and Sherry (Eddie) Martin; her
10 great-grandchildren, Jessilyn, Katelyn, Connor, Corey, and
11 Kelsey Justice; Austin, Matt, and Amber Masters; and Zach and
12 Andrew Martin; her brothers, J.B. (Betty) Davis and Roland
13 (Carolyn) Davis; and sister, Audie Montgomery; and

14 WHEREAS, the legacy of Ms. Downs, and her love for
15 serving those in need, will live on in the City of Birmingham;
16 now therefore,

17 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
18 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the death of Ms. Jessie Hale
19 Downs is recorded with deep sadness and heartfelt sympathy is
20 extended to her friends and family, for whom a copy this
21 resolution shall be provided.