

1 HJR325
2 176836-2
3 By Representative Scott
4 RFD: Rules
5 First Read: 20-APR-16

1
2 ENROLLED, House Joint Resolution,
3 CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF REVEREND JAMES
4 CURTIS OWENS.

5
6 WHEREAS, we deeply regret and are greatly saddened
7 to learn of the death of Reverend James Curtis Owens who was
8 called home to glory on March 26, 2016, at 64 years of age,
9 and we uplift his inspiring life and legacy with utmost
10 reverence and respect; and

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

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

22 WHEREAS, Mr. Owens entered into Holy Matrimony with
23 Gloria Sanks on April 20, 1974; in 1982, he served as
24 Assistant Football Coach, Physical Education instructor, and
25 employee of the United States Steel Corporation in Fairfield;

1 he returned to Auburn at the request of Coach Pat Dye to serve
2 as Assistant Football Coach; later, he continued to mentor and
3 inspire students as Head Football Coach at Miles College;
4 after leaving Miles College, he relocated to the
5 Opelika/Auburn area and was employed by Tuskegee University
6 and Auburn University; he retired from Auburn in 2004; and

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

14 WHEREAS, survivors include his queen and devoted
15 wife of 41 years, Gloria Sanks Owens; three loving children,
16 DeWana (Derrick) Blackmon, Kimberly (Bishop) Moss, Jamelia
17 Owens (Jacquin Dennis); three grandchildren, James Owens-Moss,
18 Jada Moss, Jakayla Moss; one step granddaughter, Jessica
19 Tolefree; special nephew, LaDarius Owens; two brothers, Neal
20 (Pamela) Owens, Jr., George (Bernadine) Owens, Sr.; four
21 sisters, Ella (Melvin) Lovejoy, Nora (Martin) Hill, Omega
22 Levins, and Ora Owens; five stepbrothers, Roderick (Sonya)
23 Ellington, William Ellington, Gregory (Ona) Ellington, Marlon
24 (Aisha) Ellington, and Sudan Ellington; one stepsister, Cheryl
25 (Blaine) Franks; mother-in-law, Mary Kelley; father-in-law,

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

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

18 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
19 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That while grieving the loss of
20 Reverend James Curtis Owens, we are extremely grateful for his
21 abundant life, and we offer this resolution in highest tribute
22 to his inspiring legacy, as well as in heartfelt sympathy to
23 his family and friends.

