

HR32 INTRODUCED



1 HR32
2 6HYP311-1
3 By Representative Clarke
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 06-Feb-25



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4 HR___ CELEBRATING BIG ZION AME ZION CHURCH HERITAGE DAY ON
5 FEBRUARY 9, 2025, AND RECOGNIZING THE COURAGEOUS EFFORTS OF
6 REVEREND SHANDY JONES AND HIS FIGHT AGAINST INJUSTICE.

7
8 WHEREAS, the Reverend Shandy Jones was born in
9 Huntsville, Alabama, in 1816 to an enslaved mother and a
10 member of the slave master's family; and

11 WHEREAS, before his 21st birthday, Shandy Jones was
12 emancipated and moved from Huntsville to Tuscaloosa,
13 Alabama; in 1837, he married Elvina Love, who was also the
14 offspring of an enslaved woman and her slave owner and was
15 later freed; and

16 WHEREAS, Shandy Jones apprenticed as a barber and
17 later opened his own barbershop, achieving financial
18 security and successfully raising a family of 14 children;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, for the next decade, he built a thriving
21 barbering business serving Tuscaloosa's white community,
22 allowing him to learn business practices and strategies
23 through his interactions; as a result, by 1860, Shandy Jones
24 had accumulated real estate holdings worth \$7,000, a
25 significant achievement for a Black man in Alabama at that
26 time; he was one of the most successful Black men in
27 Tuscaloosa and among the wealthiest in Alabama; and

28 WHEREAS, beyond his business ventures, Shandy Jones



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29 was ordained as a minister in the African Methodist
30 Episcopal Zion Church and played a pivotal role in
31 establishing Tuscaloosa's first Black school and church,
32 Hunter's Chapel AME Zion Church; and

33 WHEREAS, before the Civil War, he became involved
34 with the American Colonization Society, which sought to
35 assist free Black Americans in emigrating to Liberia; Mr.
36 Jones wrote letters to the African Repository, the society's
37 official publication, advocating for the freedom of all
38 people of color in the United States and expressing his
39 support for Black colonization in Liberia; and

40 WHEREAS, after the Civil War, during the
41 Reconstruction era, Shandy Jones became active in the
42 Republican Party; following the ratification of the
43 Fourteenth Amendment, he ran for office and won a seat in
44 the Alabama House of Representatives, becoming one of the
45 first Black legislators in Alabama; he served until 1870,
46 when he lost his bid for re-election; and

47 WHEREAS, as white resistance to Reconstruction
48 intensified in Tuscaloosa, many groups targeted Shandy
49 Jones; his businesses, including his barbershop, faced
50 organized boycotts; due to these hostilities, Mr. Jones and
51 his family relocated to Mobile in 1871, leaving behind
52 everything he had worked to build; and

53 WHEREAS, upon arriving in Mobile, Shandy Jones was
54 appointed to a position at the U.S. Customs House by
55 President Ulysses S. Grant in recognition of his political
56 contributions to the Republican Party in 1872; and



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57 WHEREAS, Shandy Jones became the pastor of Little
58 Zion AME Zion Church in Mobile, in 1880, later renamed Big
59 Zion AME, serving faithfully until his death in 1886; and

60 WHEREAS, Shandy Jones was laid to rest in Magnolia
61 Cemetery, where his grave remained unmarked until 2015, when
62 the Friends of Magnolia Cemetery successfully located his
63 burial site and placed a prominent grave marker in his
64 honor; and

65 WHEREAS, Big Zion AME Zion Church Heritage Day will
66 be held on February 9, 2025; on this special day, the church
67 will pay homage to the Honorable Reverend Shandy Jones; now
68 therefore,

69 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
70 LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That the Alabama House of
71 Representatives joins Big Zion AME Zion Church in
72 recognizing Reverend Shandy Jones as a significant figure in
73 Alabama's history who overcame immense challenges of his
74 time to emerge as a successful businessman, religious
75 leader, and politician; his contributions to the Black
76 community and his advocacy for freedom and equality remain a
77 lasting legacy.