

SENATE COMMEMORATION NO. 46

Introduced by: Senators Partridge, Bolin, Cammack, Cronin, Curd, Ewing, Frerichs, Greenfield (Brock), Haverly, Heinert, Jensen (Phil), Killer, Klumb, Kolbeck, Langer, Maher, Monroe, Nelson, Netherton, Novstrup, Otten (Ernie), Peters, Rusch, Russell, Soholt, Solano, Stalzer, Sutton, Tapio, Tidemann, White, Wiik, and Youngberg and Representatives McPherson, Ahlers, Anderson, Bartels, Barthel, Bartling, Beal, Bordeaux, Brunner, Campbell, Carson, Chase, Clark, Conzet, Dennert, Diedrich, DiSanto, Frye-Mueller, Glanzer, Gosch, Greenfield (Lana), Haugaard, Hawley, Heinemann, Holmes, Howard, Hunhoff, Jamison, Jensen (Kevin), Johns, Johnson, Kaiser, Karr, Kettwig, Lake, Latterell, Lesmeister, Livermont, Lust, Marty, May, McCleerey, Mickelson, Mills, Otten (Herman), Peterson (Kent), Peterson (Sue), Pischke, Qualm, Rasmussen, Reed, Rhoden, Ring, Rounds, Rozum, Schaefer, Schoenfish, Smith, Steinhauer, Tulson, Turbiville, Wiese, Willadsen, York, and Zikmund

A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Commending Reverend William (Billy) F. Graham, Jr. for his life of evangelistic ministry and efforts to reach the world with the gospel of Christ.

WHEREAS, Reverend Billy Graham took the Biblical instruction literally in Mark 16:15 to, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature"; and

WHEREAS, he identified his purpose in life was to help people find a personal relationship with God, which he believed comes through knowing Christ; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Graham preached the Gospel to more people in live audiences than anyone else in history - nearly two hundred fifteen million people in over one hundred eighty-five countries and territories, plus additional millions through video film webcast; and

WHEREAS, he was a spiritual advisor for twelve United States presidents from Harry Truman to Barack Obama; and



WHEREAS, Reverend Graham is credited with leading hundreds of thousands of people into a relationship with Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Graham funded the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and under that ministry started the weekly *Hour of Decision* radio program which ran for over sixty years, multiple television programs, the *My Answer* newspaper column, and *Decision* magazine which is one of the most widely circulated religious periodicals with a circulation of more than four hundred twenty-five thousand; and

WHEREAS, he authored thirty-three different books, many of which became top sellers including his autobiography *Just As I Am* (1997), which achieved the triple crown by simultaneously reaching the top three best seller lists; and

WHEREAS, he was given many awards and recognitions including the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation Freedom Award (2000), the Congressional Gold Medal (1996), the Templeton Foundation Prize for Progress in Religion (1982), the Big Brother Award (1966), the Speaker of the Year Award (1964), honorary knighthood from Honorary Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE) (2001), and recognition from the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith in 1969 and the National Conference of Christians and Jews in 1971 for his efforts to foster a better understanding among all faiths; and

WHEREAS, Gallup named Reverend Graham as one of the Ten Most Admired Men in the World sixty-one different times and he is widely considered to have been the most influential evangelist of modern times:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Ninety-Third Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that Reverend William (Billy) F. Graham Jr. be honored and commended for his service to his King in bringing the Gospel of Christ into all the world.