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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 402

Offered January 27, 2009

Commending the Montgomery-Penson-Watkins family.

Patron—Petersen

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Montgomery-Penson-Watkins family has a long and illustrious heritage, dating back to the eve of slavery in Alabama, when family life was forbidden for enslaved people; and

WHEREAS, the family history begins with the Montgomery family, which had 15-18 brothers and sisters, all of whom were born slaves; and

WHEREAS, Jim Montgomery married LuAnn and carried the Montgomery name, Laura Montgomery married Albert Penson and started the Penson clan, and another sister, Amelia, married Alfred Watkins and started the Watkins clan; and

WHEREAS, a family of farmers, the Montgomery-Penson-Watkins family members worked diligently to build homes and educate their children to the best of their abilities, instilling in them a love for family and faith in God; and

WHEREAS, many descendants in the next two generations left the south for more opportunities in the north, with George Penson, Ervin Watkins, Jr., and Archie Montgomery moving to the Youngstown and Akron, Ohio, areas; and

WHEREAS, firmly rooted in faith and family, the Montgomery-Penson-Watkins family members that moved north were founders of the Pilgrim Baptist Church in Struthers, Ohio, and worked hard to send money to their relatives in the south, encouraging them to move north to eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, early members of the Montgomery-Penson-Watkins family in Ohio demonstrated an entrepreneurial spirit by founding a plastering company and plumbing company; that same entrepreneurial spirit was shown by family members who remained in Alabama, as they owned and operated a grocery store; and

WHEREAS, in 1927, "Aunt Bessie" planned the first of many reunions; family members in the north met together after days of preparation to enjoy one another's company and catch up on family events; and

WHEREAS, in the beginning, the northern members of the family would gather together in the north, while the southern members of the family would meet together at the family churches, Canaan Presbyterian Church and Mt. Olive Baptist Church for "Homecoming"; and

WHEREAS, the family has continued to grow and prosper over the decades, now meeting in cities across the nation as the family has spread out; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly commend the Montgomery-Penson-Watkins family for maintaining its family ties for decades; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Montgomery-Penson-Watkins family as an expression of the General Assembly's respect and admiration for its longevity and commitment to faith and family.

INTRODUCED

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