**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND THE 2014 ANNUAL UPSTATE BIKE AND CLUB BLESSING AND ANNUAL BLOOD DRIVE HONORING FALLEN BIKERS AND CLUB MEMBERS OF THE UPSTATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, the Annual Upstate Bike and Club Blessing seeks to foster unity in the Upstate community thru diversity of culture, inclusion, education, community involvement, and partnership regardless of age, race, color, creed, or religion; and

Whereas, in April 2010, the Upstate Bike and Club Blessing began as a means to maintain harmony and unity among the Upstate motorcycle clubs, social clubs, and auto clubs by remembering fallen bikers and club members; and

Whereas, the memorial service to remember fallen bikers and club members that year was held at Valley Brook Outreach Church, and some seventy‑five people participated; and

Whereas, the following April, the club community embarked on a project to provide toiletries for United States Armed Forces stationed overseas, and followed the memorial service with a unity ride and a free meal and entertainment in a family‑oriented environment for all participants and the general community; and

Whereas, in April of 2012, the Upstate Bike and Club Blessing identified charities of the Upstate to be supported through the clubs, and after the service to remember fallen bikers and club members, clubs from across the Upstate took a unity ride, provided several voter registrations booths, and provided and prepared food to serve more than one thousand families; and

Whereas, more than a hundred motorcycle clubs, social clubs, and auto clubs participated in the April 2013 Annual Upstate Bike and Club Blessing, including clubs from Virginia to Alabama. Besides the memorial service, unity ride, and the provision of free food for two thousand five hundred families in Greenville’s Gower Park, Miss South Carolina 2013 Ali Rogers addressed the gathering on the importance of helmet safety, and participants provided food goods to help to sustain the South Greenville Food Bank; and

Whereas, for 2014, the Carolina Blood Bank is designating an annual blood drive in honor of all fallen bikers, social club members, and auto club members of the Upstate, and the participants in the Annual Upstate Bike and Club Blessing will be encouraged to give blood; and

Whereas, the services this year will be held on April 5, 2014, at the Long Branch Baptist Church, and the keynote speaker will be Pastor Sean Dogan, followed by state and county officials. The Unity Ride will proceed to Lakeside Park where the clubs plan to provide free food, entertainment, games, and fun for more than three thousand five hundred families; and

Whereas, since the Annual Upstate Bike and Club Blessing began, the Upstate of South Carolina has reported fewer motorcycle related tragedies per capita than any other major metropolitan area from North Carolina through Atlanta, Georgia; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate appreciate the work of the Annual Upstate Bike and Club Blessing in fostering community involvement and unity among the bike clubs, social clubs, and auto clubs. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and commend the 2014 Annual Upstate Bike and Club Blessing and Annual Blood Drive honoring fallen bikers and club members of the Upstate of South Carolina.

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