**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE THE JOHN RUTLEDGE HOUSE IN CHARLESTON ON THE OCCASION OF ITS TWO HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY, TO HONOR ITS ILLUSTRIOUS PAST, AND TO CONGRATULATE RICHARD WIDMAN, PROPRIETOR, ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF THIS BELOVED LANDMARK INTO A CHARMING AND SUCCESSFUL INN.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the John Rutledge House in Charleston will celebrate its two hundred fiftieth anniversary in 2013; and

Whereas, John Rutledge, one of fifty‑five signers of the U.S. Constitution, in 1763 built his stunning antebellum home at 116 Broad Street in historic downtown Charleston. Originally Mr. Rutledge's wedding gift to his bride, Elizabeth Grimke, the house was exquisitely restored in 1989 by its current proprietor, Richard Widman, and is one of only fifteen surviving homes belonging to the signers; and

Whereas, as a AAA Four Diamond property, the John Rutledge House Inn offers elegant accommodations featuring antiques and historically accurate reproductions and recently placed number five among the "Top 40 Hotels in the South" in the 2012 *Conde Nast Traveler* Reader's Choice Awards; and

Whereas, now designated as a National Historic Landmark, the house figured as the backdrop for various important events in the annals of American history. In the second‑floor drawing room and adjoining library, John Rutledge, as chairman of the drafting committee, wrote several drafts of the U.S. Constitution. In 1791, George Washington had breakfast with Mrs. Rutledge during his presidential visit to Charleston; and

Whereas, in 1853, the house was renovated, and many distinctive architectural features were added, including the Italian marble fireplaces, ornate parquet floors, and elaborate ironwork depicting the Federal Eagle and South Carolina Palmetto tree as a tribute to Mr. Rutledge's service in federal and state governments. During the Civil War, the house survived a great fire that destroyed a neighboring building in which the Articles of Secession were signed; and

Whereas, for more than one hundred years, the house served variously as a residence, office, and home to the Gaud School. The house then sat vacant for several years until 1989, when it was returned to its former glory. Its inlaid floors, plasterwork, and staircase were restored, and modern conveniences were tastefully added, the result being the transformation of this historic structure into an elegant inn; and

Whereas, in celebration of the home's 250th anniversary, the John Rutledge House Inn plans a number of commemorative events, among them Reunion for Graduates of the Gaud School for Boys and Semiquincentennial Celebration Weekend; and

Whereas, recognizing the significance of the John Rutledge House to the history of our great State and nation, the House of Representatives takes great pleasure in honoring the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of this Charleston icon and in saluting Richard Widman on his fine work in restoring and transforming the house into the beautiful John Rutledge House Inn. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize the John Rutledge House in Charleston on the occasion of its two hundred fiftieth anniversary, honor its illustrious past, and congratulate Richard Widman, proprietor, on the transformation of this beloved landmark into a charming and successful inn.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Richard Widman.

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