**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR MR. PEARL FRYAR OF BISHOPVILLE, TOPIARY ARTIST, ON BEING SELECTED WINNER OF THE 2013 ELIZABETH O’NEILL VERNER SPECIAL AWARD AND TO JOIN WITH HIS FAMILY AND COUNTLESS FANS IN EXPRESSING GRATITUDE FOR THE PLEASURE HE BRINGS TO SO MANY THROUGH HIS TOPIARY SCULPTURES.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that Mr. Pearl Fryar of Bishopville has been selected as the 2013 Elizabeth O’Neill Verner Special Award winner; and

Whereas, to recognize outstanding achievement and contributions to the arts in the Palmetto State, the South Carolina Arts Commission annually presents the Elizabeth O’Neill Verner Awards, the highest accolades the State gives in the arts; and

Whereas, Pearl Fryar, a self‑taught artist, philanthropist, and teacher, exemplifies in his work how art and design can engage and inspire people. Born in 1939, he attended North Carolina College and lived for several years in New York State before settling in Bishopville with his family in the late 1970s; and

Whereas, after building a house outside the Bishopville city limits, Mr. Fryar decided he wanted to win Yard of the Month. Although the award was given only to Bishopville residents, this determined gardener decided to create a truly extraordinary garden that would call for an exception to the rule. He discovered topiary, the ancient art of cutting trees and shrubs into imaginative shapes; and

Whereas, through countless hours of work, creativity, patience, and determination, Pearl Fryar shaped his shrubs into a fantastic topiary showcase, not only winning the coveted Yard of the Month award but also attracting attention from near and far. He continued to enlarge and modify his topiary collection, with some of his current work spanning more than twenty years in the making. More recently, he started creating metal sculptures to augment the collection of unique objects surrounding his home; and

Whereas, his work as a topiary artist is well respected among both artists and horticulturists, and his popularity has brought visitors to Bishopville from all around the world. The more than ten thousand people who annually visit Pearl Fryar’s garden come to see his amazing creations and meet the inspiring artist himself; and

Whereas, his work has been displayed in museums and arboretums and featured in exhibitions at the South Carolina State Museum and Spoleto. He frequently gives presentations about his work throughout the United States. As an artist‑in‑residence at Coker College, he shared his skills and artistic vision with art students. In 2006, a documentary film about Pearl’s life and art, *A Man Named Pearl,* was released in theaters, won positive reviews and awards, and has been shown on cable television channels; and

Whereas, in addition to the local and state media coverage he has received, Mr. Fryar has been featured on *CBS Sunday Morning*, *The Martha Stewart Show*, and *The Victory Garden* and in numerous publications such as *Southern Living*, *Veranda*, the *New York Times*, *Harper*’*s Magazine*, and the *Wall Street Journal*; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives takes great pleasure in saluting Pearl Fryar for the topiary artistry that won him a 2013 Verner Award, as well as for his inspiring message that one’s success is determined by one’s drive, dreams, and hope. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, honor Mr. Pearl Fryar of Bishopville, topiary artist, on being selected winner of the 2013 Elizabeth O’Neill Verner Special Award and join with his family and countless fans in expressing gratitude for the pleasure he brings to so many through his topiary sculptures.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Pearl Fryar.

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