**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR RENOWNED NEW YORK CITY RESTAURATEUR MELBA WILSON FOR HER SUCCESSFUL CAREER, TO WELCOME HER TO THE PALMETTO STATE, AND TO EXTEND THANKS FOR HER PARTICIPATION IN THE FIRST ANNUAL SOUTH CAROLINA CORNBREAD FESTIVAL.

Whereas, the South Carolina Senate is pleased to learn that the First Annual South Carolina Cornbread Festival will be held on March 2, 2013, at Main Street near Columbia’s Earlewood Park and that noted New York restaurateur Melba Wilson will participate in the festival as judge of the professional and amateur cornbread cook‑offs; and

Whereas, “born, bred, and buttered in Harlem,” Melba Wilson is one of the most successful African‑American women in the restaurant and catering business. Her style, poise, and love of entertaining have made Melba’s Restaurant a New York landmark frequented by celebrities, locals, and world travelers; and

Whereas, Melba’s drive to succeed started at an early age. Her first opportunity to learn about the restaurant business came at Harlem’s Sylvia’s Restaurant, where she held a variety of service and managerial positions. Melba conceptualized and launched the popular Sunday Gospel Brunch, which was so successful that the restaurant industry’s elite quickly came calling; and

Whereas, Michael Lomanco, former executive chef of the 21 Club and executive chef of Windows on the World Restaurants, contacted Melba in 1999 to produce and manage a weekly Sunday brunch. Within six months, the Champagne Gospel Brunch generated a 65 percent increase in revenue. This experience led to partnerships with various famed restaurateurs; and

Whereas, in 2004, Melba decided to strike out on her own. She is now the sole owner of three Harlem‑based businesses, Melba’s Restaurant, Melba’s Catering, and a 350‑seat dining hall and cafeteria on 125th Street called Melba’s 125; and

Whereas, Melba’s Restaurant owns rave reviews from *New York* magazine, the *New Yorker*, and the *Daily News* and has featured recipes in *Go Green East Harlem Cookbook* and *Bobby Flay*’*s Throwdown!* Melba’s Catering has an extensive clientele list, including Target, Nike, American Express, and Time Warner; and

Whereas, in addition, Melba appears on national news and cooking shows, such as *The View*, *The Today Show*, *Good Day New York*, NBC’s *New York Live*, CBS’s *The Morning Show*, and Food Network’s *Savoring Harlem*, which Melba narrated; and

Whereas, the proud mother of a twelve‑year‑old son, Melba has been recognized twice by *Ebony* magazine with its Taste of Ebony Award. Other honors include the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce Award; and

Whereas, because she believes in active involvement in her community, Melba supports many worthy causes and takes time to help outreach organizations throughout New York City; and

Whereas, the Senate takes great pleasure in welcoming celebrity restaurateur Melba Wilson to the Palmetto State and wishes to extend its thanks for the generous donation of her inimitable talents to this inaugural event. The members encourage all South Carolinians to attend and enjoy Melba Wilson’s competitions, as well as all the exciting offerings of the First Annual South Carolina Cornbread Festival. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and honor renowned New York City restaurateur Melba Wilson for her successful career, welcome her to the Palmetto State, and extend thanks for her participation in the First Annual South Carolina Cornbread Festival.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Melba Wilson.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑