**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE THE COMPLEX AND DEVASTATING NATURE OF EATING‑DISORDER ILLNESSES AND THE NEGATIVE IMPACT THEY HAVE ON INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED BY THEM, ON THEIR FAMILIES, AND ON THE GENERAL WELFARE OF OUR STATE; TO COMMEND ALL PROFESSIONALS WHO PROVIDE EATING‑DISORDER CARE, PARTICULARLY THE EXCELLENT WORK IN TREATING EATING DISORDERS BY THE HEARTH CENTER FOR EATING DISORDERS IN RICHLAND COUNTY; TO SUPPORT NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK; AND TO DECLARE THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014, “EATING DISORDER AWARENESS DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, an estimated 4,000 adolescents in South Carolina struggle with an eating disorder; and

Whereas, in the United States twenty million women and ten million men will suffer from a clinically significant eating disorder some time in their lives; and

Whereas, eating disorders are serious, potentially life‑threatening illnesses that affect not only the physical but also the emotional health of those who suffer from them; and

Whereas, ninety‑five percent of those who have an eating disorder are between the ages of 12 and 25; and

Whereas, eating disorders can lead to major medical complications, including cardiac arrhythmia, cognitive impairment, certain cancers, osteoporosis, infertility, kidney failure, and death; and

Whereas, for females between 15 and 24 years old who suffer from anorexia nervosa, the mortality rate is twelve times higher than the death rate of all other causes of death; and

Whereas, eating disorders affect persons of every race, color, gender, and socioeconomic category; and

Whereas, schools, medical professionals, and other community organizations can play a major role in raising the consciousness about the devastating effects of eating disorders; and

Whereas, eating disorders are treatable when diagnosed early and treated sufficiently; and

Whereas, February 24 through March 1 has been designated as National Eating Disorders Awareness Week; and

Whereas, the Hearth Center for Eating Disorders, with its family‑centered philosophy and its evidence‑based treatment approach opened in May of 2013 and builds on the one hundred four‑year history and expertise of the Carolina Children’s Home; and

Whereas, The Hearth is the only residential treatment facility for eating disorders in South Carolina that operates twenty‑four hours a day, seven days a week; and

Whereas, The Hearth also offers a partial‑hospitalization program that operates twelve hours a day, seven days a week; an intensive outpatient‑care program; and an outpatient counseling center; and

Whereas, The Hearth is one of only five programs nationally that accepts Medicaid patients; and

Whereas, The Hearth employs a comprehensive staff including psychiatrists, pediatricians, dieticians, nurses, therapists, and other professionals, as well as an on‑site certified teacher who assists students to continue their education while undergoing treatment. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, recognize the complex and devastating nature of eating‑disorder illnesses and the negative impact they have on individuals affected by them, on their families, and on the general welfare of our State; commend all professionals who provide eating‑disorder care, particularly the excellent work in treating eating disorders by the Hearth Center for Eating Disorders in Richland County; support National Eating Disorders Awareness Week; and declare Thursday, February 6, 2014, “Eating Disorder Awareness Day” in South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to the Hearth Center for Eating Disorders.

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