**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE DEDICATION, HEROISM, AND IMPORTANCE OF FIREFIGHTERS IN THE PALMETTO STATE AND TO DECLARE MAY 4, 2016, AS “FIREFIGHTERS’ DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, it is altogether fitting that the members of the South Carolina Senate should pause in their deliberations to express sincere appreciation for the courageous and critical work of firefighters throughout the communities of our State; and

Whereas, Firefighters’ Day celebrates the dedication, heroism, and importance of firefighters all over the world, many of whom are volunteers who risk their lives in the course of duty; and

Whereas, to show appreciation for firefighters on Firefighters’ Day, many supporters don blue and red ribbons tied together to symbolize the combination of fire and water; and

Whereas, in South Carolina, more than 11,500 volunteers serve as firefighters and 6,000 as career firefighters, a force of 17,500 dedicated firefighters who provide fire and emergency services; and

Whereas, firefighters contribute to the safety and well‑being of residents and visitors to our State by responding to and mitigating fires in single family and multi‑family residential properties; public and private businesses; commercial and industrial facilities; automotive, vehicular, and recreational equipment; and the forested woodlands and wildlands of South Carolina; and

Whereas, firefighters are also tasked with responding to and mitigating incidents involving hazards due to the release of harmful gases and chemicals; rescues of persons trapped at great heights, in confined spaces, or in water; rescues of persons ensnared by mangled vehicles; caring for the sick and injured as the result of medical emergencies or accidents; and conducting searches for disoriented or injured hikers; and

Whereas, the services of South Carolina firefighters saved an estimated 2.9 billion dollars of property and contents during 2015, and services of volunteer firefighters provided an estimated 59 million dollars in savings to taxpayers in 2015; and

Whereas, even though there are only three or four firefighters for every one thousand residents in the State, service is available to all around the clock everyday of the year; and

Whereas, firefighters promote fire safety through public education, inspection, building fire‑code‑compliance enforcement, smoke‑detector campaigns, child car‑seat‑safety programs, and community first aid and CPR instruction; and

Whereas, many local and national community initiatives, such as the Muscular Dystrophy Association and the Medical University of South Carolina’s Camp ‘Can’ Do, are supported by firefighters who embody the spirit of our communities and dedicate their lives to provide fire prevention and life safety; and

Whereas, during 2015, three South Carolina firefighters made the supreme sacrifice by giving their lives in the line of duty; and

Whereas, recognizing the great sacrifice that firefighters make to bring safety to their communities, the South Carolina Senate takes great pleasure in commending the selfless heroism of these first responders throughout our State. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and honor the dedication, heroism, and importance of firefighters in the Palmetto State and declare May 4, 2016, as “Firefighters’ Day” in South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the South Carolina State Firefighters’ Association.

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