**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR COACH BEN FREEMAN OF PELION HIGH SCHOOL FOR HIS OUTSTANDING CAREER AS BOTH COACH AND EDUCATOR, TO CONGRATULATE HIM ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT, AND TO WISH HIM WELL IN ALL HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, it is with great pleasure that the South Carolina House of Representatives honors those individuals who give tirelessly of themselves to educate the young people of this great State; and

Whereas, prominent in the roll call of such benefactors to our youth, Coach Ben Freeman of Pelion High School for thirty‑three years has sought to instill in his student athletes the skills and character traits necessary for success in the classroom, on the gridiron, and in the workplace; and

Whereas, a native of Marion, North Carolina, Ben Freeman attended Wake Forest University (1978‑1982) and played offensive line for the school. In 1982, he began his coaching career at Brevard High School in his native state and in 1985 came to South Carolina to continue his coaching career. He took his first job as head football coach/athletic director at Denmark‑Olar High School and in 1990 made the transition to Pelion High to serve in the same capacities; and

Whereas, former Pelion High principal Jean Haggard and the school’s current principal, Clark Cooper, jointly have this to say about Coach Freeman: “When Ben Freeman was hired in 1990, it marked the beginning of a new era in the PHS athletic program. Ben understood the role and responsibilities of the athletic director and delivered them with integrity. He provided valuable input into the construction of a new football complex at PHS and the renovation of the former football field to a track and field complex. Also, during his tenure he managed the additional sports programs which served the students of Pelion Middle and Pelion High School. He served on various committees in the organization of the South Carolina High School League and provided valuable leadership.”; and

Whereas, now in his twenty‑fifth season with the Panthers, Coach Freeman has anchored the Pelion High School Athletics Department through six state championships in various sports and two football region championships; and

Whereas, in December 2014, Ben Freeman fulfilled a career goal of coaching the South Carolina Shrine Bowl team, leading the Sandlappers to a 21‑12 win over North Carolina’s team; and

Whereas, he has been a member of the South Carolina Athletic Coaches Association (SCACA) since 1985, was a founding member of the South Carolina Football Coaches Association (SCFCA), and served as a member of the South Carolina Athletic Administrators Association (SCAAA) board for twelve years. He also is a past president of all three associations; and

Whereas, over the course of his career, Coach Freeman has received various honors, including selection as SCAAA Athletic Director of the Year (2002), SCAAA 2A Athletic Director of the Year (2006), and SCACA Charles Arthur Stewart Athletic Administrator Award (2012). He also began a golf tournament for the SCFCA that has raised more than fifteen thousand dollars to help with SCACA scholarships; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives, grateful for the legacy of consistent commitment and excellence Coach Freeman has bestowed on the people of South Carolina, takes great pleasure in wishing him well as he enters retirement and trusts he will find much enjoyment in the more leisurely pace of the days ahead. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor Coach Ben Freeman of Pelion High School for his outstanding career as both coach and educator, congratulate him on the occasion of his retirement, and wish him well in all his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Coach Ben Freeman.

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