**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR BENJAMIN F. THOMAS III, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION, UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AFTER MORE THAN FOUR DECADES OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE, AND TO WISH HIM CONTINUED SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS IN ALL HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives have learned that on July 1, 2015, Benjamin F. Thomas III will begin a well‑deserved retirement after forty‑four years as a premier law enforcement officer, the last four of which have been as the distinguished and highly‑regarded assistant chief of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED); and

Whereas, Benjamin Thomas earned a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice at Georgia Southern University in 1972 and completed the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy in 1973; and

Whereas, in 1971, he began his career in law enforcement as an undercover/contract agent, and from 1973 to 1975, he served as a special agent in narcotics. He was a special agent in an intelligence unit from 1975 to 1979, and he served as a lieutenant and then captain in Protective Services/Emergency Management from 1979 to 2004; and

Whereas, during these years, he completed Radiological Emergency Response Training at the Nevada Test Site, United States Secret Service Dignitary Protection Training, and the 174th Session of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia; and

Whereas, from 2004 to 2008, he was the assistant director in the Office of Counter‑Terrorism for SLED with the rank of major, and in 2009, he became the chief of the Office of Professional Responsibility for the South Carolina Department of Public Safety. Since 2011, he has served as the assistant chief of SLED, and he has been a guest instructor at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy; and

Whereas, he completed a basic law enforcement instructor course at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy, major event management training with United States Secret Service/Department of Homeland Security (DHS), United States Coast Guard Incident 100/400, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) response seminar for NRC and DHS; and

Whereas, he received professional certification from the United States Coast Guard Incident Command, DHS Emergency Management Institute National Incident Management, FEMA Emergency Management Institute IS 800 Introduction to National Response Plan, United States Department of Justice Special Deputy United States Marshal, and South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy as a certified basic instructor; and

Whereas, Mr. Thomas is a member of the FBI National Academy Associates, South Carolina Law Enforcement Officers Association,

South Carolina Wildlife Law Enforcement Association, and the FBI JTTF executive committee, Sea Hawk executive committee, and FBI‑WMD Task Force; and

Whereas, he has been honored with a SLED Certificate of Merit and Letter of Commendation and USSS Certificate of Appreciation Visit Pope John Paul II; and in 1988, he received the Order of The Palmetto. Mr. Thomas was also made a United States Deputy Marshal as a member of the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are grateful for the years of unparalleled dedication that Benjamin Thomas has devoted to law enforcement in the Palmetto State and wish him many years of enjoyment in his well‑earned retirement. 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 and honor Benjamin F. Thomas III, Assistant Chief of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, upon the occasion of his retirement after more than four decades of outstanding service, and wish him continued success and happiness in all his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Benjamin F. Thomas III.

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