**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR HOPE HOWELL BOYKIN COOPER OF CAMDEN, THE LINCHPIN BETWEEN THE CAMDEN EQUINE AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES, FOR HER MANY YEARS OF VARIED AND VALUABLE SERVICE TO HER CITY, COUNTY, AND STATE.

Whereas, it is with great pleasure that the South Carolina General Assembly honors individuals who give of their lives and resources to improve their communities. Such is Hope Howell Boykin Cooper of Camden, who has brought to fruition so many invaluable projects that have enhanced life in her city; and

Whereas, her love for horses and history has driven many of her endeavors. She was a leader in bringing the Historic Camden Revolutionary War Site, as well as the National Steeplechase Museum, to her adopted hometown. She served as director of the Main Street Program, which spearheaded the reinvigoration of Camden’s historic downtown. To many, however, this New York City native is more closely associated with her post as Camden’s assistant race director for the Carolina Cup and Colonial Cup steeplechase races and, later, as the first curator of the National Steeplechase Museum; and

Whereas, Hope took in her first Carolina Cup while visiting her older sister during the 1957 spring break from school. That experience began a love affair with Camden and the Carolina Cup for Hope, whose presence at fifty‑seven Camden spring classics in a row may prove a record; and

Whereas, back home in New York, Hope soon decided to move to the town with which she has had an ongoing love affair from the first time she set foot on its sandy soil. Settled in her new home and bitten by the riding and showing bug, Hope joined the Camden Hunt, a group in which she remains an active member; and

Whereas, although fox hunting took up some of her free time, Hope sought something she could sink her teeth into. She found her first challenge in what would become the Historic Camden Revolutionary War Site. The site gained entry into the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 1969, thanks in large part to her efforts. She would go on to become the site’s development director, a position she would occupy for some ten years; and

Whereas, after enjoyable forays into real estate and the restaurant business, she worked on commission booking sponsors for the Carolina Cup Races, an idea that originated in Hope’s creative mind and scored a runaway success. The idea for Camden’s becoming the home of the National Steeplechase Museum was also hers, and she would become the museum’s curator from the day the facility opened to the public during the 1998 Colonial Cup. Open year round, the museum has attracted visitors from around the globe; and

Whereas, in addition, Hope was a founding member of the South Carolina Equine Promotion Foundation, a nonprofit organization that promotes the horse industry in the Palmetto State. The foundation’s first project was building the highly successful South Carolina Equine Park, which opened in 2009 and continues to expand; and

Whereas, understanding that Hope Cooper has stepped down as director of the National Steeplechase Museum and will be retiring in July from her present post as assistant race director, the General Assembly wishes to express its deep appreciation for her many contributions to Camden, as well as its certainty that in retirement she will continue to find ways to bless her community. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize and honor Hope Howell Boykin Cooper of Camden, the linchpin between the Camden equine and business communities, for her many years of varied and valuable service to her city, county, and State.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Hope Cooper.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑