**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR ALVIN R. HENDERSON, WORLD WAR II VETERAN AND FORMER PRISONER OF WAR, AND TO EXPRESS TO HIM AND HIS FAMILY THE DEEPEST APPRECIATION OF A GRATEFUL STATE AND NATION FOR HIS LIFE, SACRIFICE, AND SERVICE.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives acknowledges with deep appreciation the great sacrifice that the men and women of the United States Armed Forces make for the ideals of freedom and justice, which are so richly enjoyed in this nation. Alvin R. Henderson of Pickens, World War II veteran and former prisoner of war, stands high among those servicemen and women so honored by their country; and

Whereas, this POW story began in the heart of a young man who saw the need of his country and answered it. When Pearl Harbor was bombed, Al postponed his plans for college, lied about his age, and volunteered for the United States Army. Shortly after, he joined the 101st Airborne 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment Company C Screaming Eagles at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. After receiving his training, Al jumped into D‑Day on June 6, 1944, and fought in many battles until all D‑Day missions were accomplished; and

Whereas, after a time in England, Al began work in Holland during Operation Market Garden on September 17, 1944. As a first scout, Al was sent into an area with two others, where he came under fire and selflessly rendered aid to Lyle, an injured soldier, rather than seeking safety for himself. Both men were captured. The third man ran and reported that his comrades had been shot. After his capture, Al was sent to Stalag 12A POW camp; and

Whereas, at the POW camp, Al was given a job in the office that registered prisoners and, due to circumstances involving the escape and recapture of two POWs, suffered a severe beating. The Germans stowed him on an infamous train car full of Polish POWs, and he traveled for three days and nights in standing‑room‑only conditions with no food or water; and

Whereas, he arrived at a POW camp for Russian prisoners, Stalag 2A, at the Baltic Sea, where he witnessed and survived countless horrors. There, Al was with Father Samson, the chaplain of the 101st Airborne, who had been captured in Bastogne. After the retreat of the Germans, Father Samson was instrumental in freeing the remaining American prisoners at Stalag 2A, which by this time was under the control of the Russian Army. Al was finally free; and

Whereas, once home, Al earned a degree in accounting and economics at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania, married his beloved Bonnie, and fathered Arthur, Beth, and Carol. A successful businessman at Singer and later at Brunswick Mills, Al retired in 1990. He has been a respected member of the Pickens community and Pickens Presbyterian Church for more than sixty years; and

Whereas, at the age of seventy‑eight, Al was reunited with his 101st Airborne “Band of Brothers” friend, John Cipolla, at a reunion of the regiment. At that time, Al learned that he and Lyle had been reported as killed in Holland and that indeed Lyle had died the day after their capture. Since the reunion, Al and John have traveled together with the College of the Ozarks Living History Program to revisit Normandy and Holland, including the spot where Al was captured. From these events, his family learned his POW story, which he had never discussed before; and

Whereas, to honor his valor as a World War II prisoner of war, Al Henderson has received the South Carolina Governor’s POW Recognition Award. 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 Alvin R. Henderson, World War II veteran and former prisoner of war, and express to him and his family the deepest appreciation of a grateful State and nation for his life, sacrifice, and service.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Alvin R. Henderson.

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