**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE COURAGEOUS AND SELFLESS RESPONSE OF SO MANY RESIDENTS IN THE MIDLANDS WHO RISKED THEIR LIVES IN THE DEVASTATING FLOOD OF 2015 TO SAVE FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, AND STRANGERS FROM THE RAVAGES OF THE WATERS.

Whereas, during the course of 2015, South Carolina endured some of the worst disasters and tragedies it has suffered in the state’s long history; and

Whereas, on October 4, 2015, torrential rains hammered the State that led to loss of life and property. In the Midlands, Gills Creek measured more than 16 inches of rain in 17 hours that Sunday, and just over 20 total inches since Friday; and

Whereas, in the Midlands, creeks, lakes, ponds, and rivers topped their banks causing many dams to breach which resulted in unprecedented flooding; and

Whereas, the rapid and exacting response work of so many private citizens in the Lake Katherine neighborhood saved the lives of whole families trapped inside their homes and, in some cases, families who had left their dwelling to find shelter; and

Whereas, these “citizen first responders”, heedless of the danger to themselves, launched private boats of every ilk, including a rugged metal, flat‑bottomed War Eagle fishing boat, a G3 fishing boat, and even a pontoon boat; and

Whereas, people were rescued from rooftops, second floors, and trees by boats that bumped over bridges and debris and dodged power lines. At least one boat was sidelined because debris disabled its propeller; and

Whereas, unable to see cars below the surface of the water, the pilots knew when they had passed over one as the boat would bump the top of the car; and

Whereas, the flood waters were so high that boats motored over the top of the Lake Katherine Dam without knowing it; and

Whereas, some twenty‑five to thirty boats navigated what had once been the Lake Katherine neighborhood for hours before any emergency help would be able to arrive later in the evening; and

Whereas, two boats, each operated by two volunteers, rescued a total of sixty to seventy people that day; and

Whereas, occasionally police or firefighters would get word to the citizen first responders of the location of another stranded individual or family, and boaters would coordinate the rescue; and

Whereas, members of one family were rescued from the rising waters by a neighbor in what the family called “God’s boat,” part of the small armada across the Midlands that day; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives take great pride in thanking these citizen first responders who acted on behalf of their fellowman and fulfilled the Golden Rule to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. 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 the courageous and selfless response of so many residents in the Midlands who risked their lives in the devastating flood of 2015 to save friends, neighbors, and strangers from the ravages of the waters.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑