**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR RENOWNED AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE PRINCIPAL DANCER MISTY COPELAND FOR HER SUCCESSFUL CAREER, TO WELCOME HER TO THE PALMETTO STATE, AND TO EXTEND THANKS FOR HER CONTRIBUTIONS IN SUPPORT OF COLUMBIA CLASSICAL BALLET AND COLUMBIA CITY BALLET.

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is delighted to welcome famed American Ballet Theatre (ABT) principal dancer Misty Copeland to South Carolina in support of Columbia Classical Ballet and Columbia City Ballet; and

Whereas, during her visit, Ms. Copeland will participate in a fundraiser benefiting the two ballet companies. She will speak on the importance of ballet and the impact ballet has had on the community, celebrate what the companies have accomplished over several decades, and help them look to the future; and

Whereas, while both companies have endured significant funding losses over the years, Columbia Classical Ballet has had a particularly difficult season. The historic October 2015 floods in South Carolina destroyed the company’s dance studio, and the company took an additional hit when Radenko Pavlovich, its director, suffered a heart attack shortly after the flooding; and

Whereas, born in Kansas City, Missouri, Misty Copeland eventually settled with her family in San Pedro, California. She studied under California ballet instructor Cindy Bradley at the Girls and Boys Club during middle school, a nontraditional entry to ballet. In the halls of school and world of performance, she found solace and escape from her tumultuous home life; and

Whereas, the young dancer was recognized as a prodigy after demonstrating the ability to see and immediately perform choreographed movement and dance en pointe after a very short period of ballet training, a rare accomplishment. Misty attended a summer intensive program on scholarship at San Francisco Ballet and in 1999 attended another summer intensive, this time at the renowned American Ballet Theatre. She joined the studio company of the American Ballet Theatre in September 2000, becoming a part of its corps de ballet the following year; and

Whereas, in 2007, Misty Copeland reached the rank of soloist for ABT, where she was showcased in productions like Marius Petipa’s *La Bayadère*, Alexei Ratmansky’s *Firebird*, and *The Nutcracker*. In 2015, she became the first African‑American woman to dance with ABT in the dual role of Odette and Odile in Tchaikovsky’s *Swan Lake*. In that same year, she was named one of *Time Magazine*’s 100 Most Influential People and became the first African‑American performer to be appointed as a principal dancer for ABT; and

Whereas, many will remember Ms. Copeland as one of the stars of Under Armour’s “I Will What I Want” video campaign, her clip having received more than eight million views. In 2014, she published the *New York Times* best‑selling memoir *Life in Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina* and the award‑winning children’s picture book *Firebird*; and

Whereas, with much admiration for her inimitable gifts, the General Assembly takes great pleasure in welcoming ABT star Misty Copeland to the Palmetto State, and the members wish to extend grateful thanks for the generous donation of her time and support to Columbia Classical Ballet and Columbia City Ballet. 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 renowned American Ballet Theatre principal dancer Misty Copeland for her successful career, welcome her to the Palmetto State, and extend thanks for her contributions in support of Columbia Classical Ballet and Columbia City Ballet.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Misty Copeland.

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