**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM ON NETTING ITS SECOND STRAIGHT SEC TOURNAMENT TITLE AND ON MAKING IT INTO THE 2016 NCAA TOURNAMENT’S “SWEET SIXTEEN.”

Whereas, with great pleasure, the House of Representatives pauses in its deliberations to offer a tribute to the renowned University of South Carolina (USC) women’s basketball team, which once again has brought home the SEC Tournament title, making it back‑to‑back crowns for this exceptional team (2015, 2016); and

Whereas, on March 6, 2016, before a packed house at Veterans Memorial Arena in Jacksonville, Florida, the Gamecocks continued their defensive dominance and mixed in 55.6 percent shooting in the second half to claim their second straight SEC Tournament championship with a 66‑52 win over Mississippi State; and

Whereas, to add to the sweetness of an already sweet win, SEC Tournament Most Valuable Player Tiffany Mitchell and All‑Tournament choice A’ja Wilson tied for team‑high honors with nineteen points each. A’ja Wilson completed a double‑double behind thirteen rebounds; and

Whereas, following a scoreless four minutes for the Gamecocks at the opening of the second quarter, USC racked up eleven straight points in the final 4:43 of the period, giving the team a 33‑21 lead going into halftime as South Carolina’s frontcourt controlled the glass and the guards harassed Mississippi State into three turnovers in the stretch; and

Whereas, after she scored thirteen of her twenty‑six points in the third quarter, Mississippi State’s Victoria Vivians was held scoreless in the fourth as the Gamecocks shot 55.6 percent from the field to eliminate any comeback from the Bulldogs; and

Whereas, notably, South Carolina has not lost a game to an SEC team since March 1, 2015, claiming twenty‑two straight wins in that time, beginning with the 2015 SEC Tournament quarterfinals. Further, South Carolina is now the third program in league history to win both the regular‑season and tournament titles in back‑to‑back seasons, and the Gamecocks join the 2011 Tennessee team as the only ones in league history to go 16‑0 in the regular season and win the SEC Tournament. South Carolina completed its 2015‑2016 season with a 33‑2 record, the program’s fifth straight 25‑win season and second consecutive 30‑win campaign. The Gamecocks, ranked number 3/2 entering the postseason, won their third SEC regular‑season title in a row; and

Whereas, at season’s end, for the second straight year USC saw three Gamecocks named to the Associated Press All‑American squad: A’ja Wilson (first team), Tiffany Mitchell (second team), and Alaina Coates (honorable mention); and

Whereas, speaking for all the citizens of this great State, the members of the House of Representatives are proud to lift their collective voice of praise in honoring the dynamic USC women’s basketball team, which also played its way into the 2016 NCAA Tournament’s “Sweet Sixteen” on its second visit to the national playoffs. South Carolinians predict with confidence that these outstanding athletes, led by Head Coach Dawn Staley, will continue their fabulous rise to basketball fame. Go, Gamecocks! Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate the University of South Carolina women’s basketball team on netting its second straight SEC Tournament title and on making it into the 2016 NCAA Tournament’s “Sweet Sixteen.”

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the USC women’s basketball team and Head Coach Dawn Staley.

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