**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE DESHAWN BLANDING OF MANNING ON BEING ELECTED 2016‑17 NATIONAL FFA SOUTHERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT AND TO WISH HIM WELL IN ALL HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is pleased to learn that DeShawn Blanding of Manning has been elected National FFA Southern Region vice president for 2016‑17. DeShawn is only the fourth South Carolinian to be elected to the National FFA Officer Team and the first South Carolinian to be so elected since 1967; and

Whereas, each year at the National FFA Convention & Expo, delegates elect six students to represent the organization as national officers, these being a president, a secretary, and vice presidents representing the four regions of the country; and

Whereas, national officers commit to a year of service to the National FFA Organization. Each officer travels more than one hundred thousand national and international miles to interact with business and industry leaders, thousands of FFA members and teachers, corporate sponsors, government and education officials, state FFA leaders, the general public, and more. The team leads personal growth and leadership training conferences for FFA members throughout the country and helps set policies that will guide the future of FFA and promote agricultural literacy; and

Whereas, the son of Barbara L. and Carlton Blanding, DeShawn says of FFA, “[Through] four years of progressive leadership and growth and endless opportunities, I have been given a canvas to illustrate my story. As a state officer and with an introduction to agriculture and advocacy, I have been provided the platform to help others do the same”; and

Whereas, the twenty‑year‑old sophomore is majoring in biological engineering (natural resources engineering track) at North Carolina A&T State University. He is a U.S. Department of Agriculture 1890 Land Grant Scholar; a Student Government Association senator, representing the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences; and vice president of Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences. In addition, he is a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, a mentor for the North Carolina A&T Honors Program, and a starting builder for the Ashe Street Community Garden and Education Center; and

Whereas, DeShawn served as the 2014‑15 South Carolina State FFA vice president, and in high school he served as president of the Manning FFA Chapter (2012‑14). His supervised agricultural experience (SAE) was composed of several different areas in the agriculture curriculum, which enabled him to see agriculture from a farm‑to‑fork perspective in agribusiness and vegetable production. He experienced the three‑circle model through involvement in food preparation with locally grown products and expanded his research through the creation of rooftop and raised‑bed gardens, greenhouse work, and natuculture; and

Whereas, graduate school is in DeShawn’s plans, specifically the obtaining of a doctorate in a related discipline. He hopes to gain industry experience before becoming an agricultural education professor while conducting research on soil and water conservation and utilization; and

Whereas, the General Assembly is proud to recognize this son of South Carolina on his election as 2016‑17 National FFA Southern Region vice president, and the members look forward with interest to hearing of his future accomplishments. 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, congratulate DeShawn Blanding of Manning on being elected 2016‑17 National FFA Southern Region vice president and wish him well in all his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to DeShawn Blanding.

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