**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE FURMAN UNIVERSITY MEN’S RUGBY TEAM, COACHES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR A REMARKABLE SEASON AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM FOR WINNING THE 2016 SOUTHERN RUGBY CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the members of the Furman University men’s rugby team of Greenville County took top honors at the Southern Rugby Conference Championship; and

Whereas, to the raucous cheers of their exuberant fans, the Paladins defeated the University of North Carolina‑Charlotte 44‑20 on November 6, 2016, at Roberts Field on Furman’s campus. This victory secured the conference title and allowed the team home field advantage in the upcoming South Regional; and

Whereas, one of four regionals, the South Regional ended in another victory for the Paladins as they bested Sacred Heart University 68‑31 and North Carolina State 41‑4 to advance to the USA Rugby D2 Final Four; and

Whereas, with more than three hundred teams in Division 2, Furman was one of only sixteen to advance to the 2016 USA Rugby D2 playoffs; and

Whereas, during the competition, in the national semi‑final game, the Paladins defeated three‑time defending champion University of Minnesota Duluth 32‑29, effectively breaking their four‑year winning streak; and

Whereas, this stellar season culminated in an appearance in the national championship game against the stiff competition of the University of Wisconsin‑Whitewater. The contest proved too tough this season and Furman fell 29‑13; and

Whereas, with a season distinguished by a conference title, a regional win, and an appearance in the national finals, the Paladins can hold their heads high knowing they completed an enormous feat and have something more to strive for in the upcoming season; and

Whereas, in a sport that demands tenacity and strength, Head Coach John Roberts and his skilled coaching staff capitalized on their own experience and passion to forge a championship‑caliber team and teach these athletes lessons that will prove invaluable through life both on and off the pitch; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are grateful for the pride and recognition that the men of the Furman rugby team have brought to their school and community and look to hear of their future success in the days to come. 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 Furman University men’s rugby team, coaches, and school officials for a remarkable season and congratulate them for winning the 2016 Southern Rugby Conference Championship title.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to President Elizabeth Davis and Head Coach John Roberts.

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