**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE MARY JANE SMALL OF RICHLAND COUNTY ON THE OCCASION OF HER NINETY‑FIFTH BIRTHDAY AND TO WISH HER A JOYOUS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AND MUCH HAPPINESS IN THE DAYS AHEAD.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are delighted to learn that Mary Jane Small of Richland County will celebrate her ninety‑fifth birthday on April 21, 2017; and

Whereas, born the third youngest of eleven children to Lonnie Lawrence People and Nellie Iola People, the young Mary Jane came into this world on April 21, 1922, when the twentieth century was still in its youth, and she has been witness to nearly all the incredible changes and developments that have come to this nation from that time into the second decade of the twenty‑first century; and

Whereas, growing up in her hometown of Blair, she completed her schooling at the end of tenth grade, because the eleventh‑grade school was eighteen miles from her home and her mother wouldn’t let her travel that far. At the age of nineteen, Mary Jane wed George Williamson, Jr., and the couple became the parents of George III and Leroy, both now deceased. In the 1950s, she became the wife of Johnny “Duck” Small, who helped care for her sons until he passed away in the 1970s. Today, Mary Jane rejoices in her three grandchildren and four great‑grandchildren; and

Whereas, Mary Jane Small worked cleaning houses for years until she suffered a stroke in 1980. She has resided in her house in Columbia for fifty‑five years and still lives on her own; and

Whereas, according to her family, her hobbies are eating, talking, and shopping (not necessarily in that order), and she really loves listening to country and blues music, her favorite artist being Tim McGraw. In fact, whenever Tim comes on the air, she tells everybody present, “Sit down, shut up, and stop breathing”; and

Whereas, moreover, Tim McGraw got wind of her ninety‑fifth birthday and invited her to be his guest at his Charleston concert, scheduled for April 20, 2017, the day before her birthday. This delightful serendipity began when Mary Jane Small’s granddaughter Tia posted on her Facebook account that her grandmother was about to turn ninety‑five. In that same post, Tia shared that the family was planning a birthday trip to the McGraw concert so her grandmother could see her favorite musical artist in person. The perfect birthday treat! The post was passed along by several people until it came to the attention of Tim McGraw’s management. As a result, Tim supplied Mary Jane Small with four tickets to the concert for her own use and that of the family members taking her there; and

Whereas, yet more birthday fun was on the way. Tim posted on his Facebook account that he was looking forward to helping celebrate Mary Jane’s ninety‑fifth birthday while he was in Charleston. The word continued to get around, and a radio station that had heard the story put her on the air to chat with Tim during a live interview the station was conducting. Then, the station gifted Mary Jane with free hotel accommodations for the concert and one hundred dollars in spending money. That’s quite a birthday celebration, and the House trusts Mary Jane will have (in the vernacular) a real blast at the concert; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives is proud to honor this truly lovely lady at the celebration of her ninety‑fifth birthday, and the members join with her family and friends in congratulating her on reaching this extraordinary milestone. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate Mary Jane Small of Richland County on the occasion of her ninety‑fifth birthday and wish her a joyous birthday celebration and much happiness in the days ahead.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mary Jane Small.

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