**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE MARINA LOMAZOV AND JOSEPH RACKERS, FOUNDERS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN PIANO FESTIVAL, UPON THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EVENT, AND TO EXPRESS PROFOUND APPRECIATION TO THEM FOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS THEY HAVE MADE TO CULTURAL WEALTH IN THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are pleased to learn that the Southeastern Piano Festival founded in 2003 will celebrate its fifteenth anniversary on June 18, 2017; and

Whereas, Marina Lomazov, together with her husband, Joseph Rackers, founded the Southeastern Piano Festival which has become a significant cultural highlight in the world of classical piano and a substantial contribution to Columbia’s cultural life; and

Whereas, festival organizer and artistic director, Marina Lomazov, has established herself as a world‑renowned concert pianist, was named a Steinway & Sons Artist and the Ira McKissick Koger Professor of Fine Arts at the University of South Carolina (USC) School of Music, and is vital to the state’s vibrant arts culture; and

Whereas, a world‑renowned concert pianist as well, Joseph Rackers, the festival’s program director, has also achieved the title of Steinway & Sons Artist and is an associate professor of piano at the USC School of Music. He and his piano duo partner and wife are a driving force in classical music today; and

Whereas, each summer the Southeastern Piano Festival transforms the USC School of Music and Columbia into a major cultural destination, drawing audiences and young piano talent from across the nation; and

Whereas, for one week in June, internationally acclaimed concert pianists offer evening concerts, and talented precollege pianists receive intensive training, culminating with an international piano competition, the winner of which performs with the South Carolina Philharmonic; and

Whereas, the festival provides the cultural admixture of a high‑level training venue for young pianists, the presentation of new and world‑renowned concert pianists and master teachers, an advocacy for new piano music, and a vehicle for exploring diverse roles the piano plays on stage and beyond; and

Whereas, for music lovers, the festival offers nightly concerts from world‑class pianists while twenty of some of the best precollege pianists participate in a rigorous program that includes daily lessons with USC piano faculty, master classes with renowned guest artists, and as much as five hours of practice daily; and

Whereas, the festival culminates with the Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition, adjudicated by a distinguished panel of judges, and the winners of the competition receive cash awards, as well as the opportunity to perform with the South Carolina Philharmonic; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives values the cultural impact that Marina Lomazov and Joseph Rackers have on our State through their dedicated leadership and inestimable talent. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate Marina Lomazov and Joseph Rackers, founders of the SouthEastern Piano Festival, upon the fifteenth anniversary of the event, and express profound appreciation to them for the contributions they have made to cultural wealth in the State of South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Marina Lomazov and Joseph Rackers.

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