**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO AFFIRM THE HISTORICAL CONNECTION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE TO THE ANCIENT AND SACRED CITY OF JERUSALEM AND CONDEMN EFFORTS AT THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO) TO DENY JUDAISM’S MILLENNIA‑OLD HISTORICAL, RELIGIOUS, AND CULTURAL TIES TO JERUSALEM.

Whereas, for over 3,000 years, Jerusalem has played a central role in the history and identity of the Jewish people; and

Whereas, Jerusalem is the location of the holiest site for the Jewish people, the Temple Mount, as well as the Western Wall, where Jews from across the world come to pray; and

Whereas, Jerusalem has been a Christian pilgrimage site for over 2,000 years, and holds considerable religious significance for Christians; and

Whereas, Jerusalem is home to the third holiest site in Islam, and holds considerable religious significance for Muslims; and

Whereas, Jerusalem serves as a cultural and religious inspiration to billions of people around the world; and

Whereas the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has passed a series of anti‑Israeli resolutions in recent years regarding Jerusalem, both at the committee level and by the executive board, the governing body of UNESCO; and

Whereas, these biased resolutions are attempts to erase or minimize the Jewish as well as Christian historical and religious ties to Jerusalem, and unjustly single out our close ally Israel with false accusations and criticism; and

Whereas, numerous archaeological excavations, such as those taking place in the City of David, Israel’s most archaeologically excavated site, have uncovered a myriad of antiquities which scientifically reaffirm Jerusalem’s historical significance to Judaism and Christianity; and

Whereas, the City of David is the archaeological site of ancient Jerusalem, and is believed to be the very site recorded in the Bible upon which King David established the capital of ancient Israel; and

Whereas, since 1867, there have been archaeological excavations at the site of the City of David, including international delegations of archaeologists from the United States, England, France, and Germany; and

Whereas, these excavations have unearthed antiquities from over ten different civilizations, including Canaanite, Israelite, Roman, Byzantine, and Persian civilizations; and

Whereas, the current excavations of the City of David are carried out under the auspices of the Israel Antiquities Authority and are held to the highest scientific standards; and

Whereas, among the most significant archaeological discoveries unearthed from the City of David include the Siloam Inscription, which recounts the preparations made by King Hezekiah of Judah for the impending Assyrian siege against Jerusalem, consistent with the Biblical account; clay seal impressions bearing the names of two Judean Government officials who are mentioned in the very same verse in the Bible; the Pool of Siloam, which served during the Second Temple period as a ritual bath for the hundreds of thousands of Jewish pilgrims ascending annually to the Temple, which stood atop the Temple Mount; and the Second Temple Pilgrimage Road, which began at the Pool of Siloam and served as the main thoroughfare of the Second Temple period Jerusalem which carried hundreds of thousands of people on their annual pilgrimages to the Temple; and

Whereas, the Pilgrimage Road located within the City of David, which stretches 600 meters from the Pool of Siloam to the footsteps of the Western Wall, will be open to visitors upon completion of the excavation; and

Whereas, these discoveries affirm the undeniable truth that the City of David, the Western Wall, and the Temple Mount are inextricably linked together physically, historically, and symbolically as the bedrock of the connection between the Jewish people and Jerusalem and have been for millennia; and

Whereas, it is the belief of the House of Representatives that the Government of Israel has done an excellent job protecting the freedoms of all faiths in Jerusalem including Jews, Christians, and Muslims, ensuring their access to holy sites so that they may worship freely. The House of Representatives openly condemns any past, present, or future efforts at UNESCO to delegitimize Israel through attempts to rewrite and deny the history of Jerusalem; and

Whereas, the House of Representative encourages the United States to continue working with allies to prevent UNESCO from passing biased and unjust anti‑Israeli resolutions in the future. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, affirm the historical connection of the Jewish people to the ancient and sacred city of Jerusalem and condemn efforts at the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to deny Judaism’s millennia-old historical, religious, and cultural ties to Jerusalem.

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