**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEMORATE AND CELEBRATE THE DEDICATION OF THE HISTORIC DOWNTOWN AFRICAN AMERICAN BUSINESS DISTRICT IN THE CITY OF FLORENCE, AND TO HONOR THE NORTH FLORENCE COMMUNITY HISTORY AND HERITAGE INITIATIVE AND THE CITY OF FLORENCE FOR THEIR RELATED CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD MARKING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISTRICT TO THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, for decades, North Dargan Street in Florence prospered as an economic hub of African American‑owned commercial enterprises that provided a variety of essential services to customers spurned by white‑owned businesses in the era of racial segregation. As the commercial draw of North Dargan Street grew, the area also became the principal residential district for African Americans in Florence, making it the heart of the city’s African American community; and

Whereas, although the fortunes of North Dargan Street declined over time, today it enjoys a heartening revitalization due to increased commercial investment and the presence of the North Dargan Innovation Center, a partnership between Francis Marion University and the City of Florence to foster small business growth in the area; and

Whereas, as Florence looks to a promising future for North Dargan Street, it will pause to proudly celebrate the past when it dedicates the 200 and 300 blocks of North Dargan Street as the Historic Downtown African American Business District and unveils a South Carolina Historical Marker for the district in ceremonies planned for April 14, 2018; and

Whereas, approval of an historical marker for the Historic Downtown African American Business District by the Department of Archives and Natural History resulted from the commendable efforts of the North Florence Community History and Heritage Initiative, which began the endeavor, and the City of Florence, which sponsored the marker; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives joins the citizens of Florence in celebrating this special occasion, and commends the efforts of the North Florence Community History and Heritage Initiative and the City of Florence for making it possible. Now, therefore:

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, commemorate and celebrate the dedication of the Historic Downtown African American Business District in the City of Florence, and honor the North Florence Community History and Heritage Initiative and the City of Florence for their contributions toward marking the historical significance of the district to the State of South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that copies of the resolution be presented to the Historic Downtown African American Business District and the City of Florence.

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