**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA MEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM, COACHES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS ON AN OUTSTANDING SEASON AND TO HONOR THEM FOR THE TEAM’S FIRST APPEARANCE IN THE NCAA FINAL FOUR.

Whereas, the Gamecock men’s basketball team stormed onto the national stage, winning its first NCAA Tournament game in forty-four years by beating Marquette, before going on to reach the team’s first ever Final Four and to defeat top seeds Duke, Baylor, and Florida; and

Whereas, an unforgettable season and NCAA Tournament run came to an end in the national semi-final game against Gonzaga on April 1, 2017 at the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, Arizona. The men battled back from a double digit deficit in the second half but could not hold off the No. 1 seeded Bulldogs; and

Whereas, even with the loss, South Carolina clearly showed that it belonged in the Final Four. Even though the Gamecocks were the underdog in every NCAA Tournament game they played, they reinvented themselves in the tournament, winning each game prior to the Final Four by an average margin of 13.5 points; and

Whereas, Gamecock seniors Sindarius Thornwell, Duane Notice, and Justin McKie leave a legacy of passion for hard work to be carried on by the Gamecock team, notably star sophomore Chris Silva, who tallied five double-doubles this season; and

Whereas, Sindarius Thornwell stands as one of the best players not only in the SEC, but also in the nation. He ranks in the top five in program history for points, steals, free throws made, and three-point field goals made, and he’s the all-time leader for games started. Thornwell capped his stellar career by being named the NCAA Tournament’s East Region Most Outstanding Player; and

Whereas, Duane Notice has also left his mark on Carolina, as number one for games played and second for all-time three-point field goals made. He is one of just three players in school history with over two hundred career made three-point field goals; and

Whereas, Justin McKie has also earned his place as a solid contributor at Carolina, becoming a vital part of the rotation, notably this season. He worked tirelessly in the NCAA Tournament and in the Final Four game against Gonzaga; and

Whereas, Coach Frank Martin attributes the Gamecocks’ success to the players’ will. The team stayed the course and never ran from adversity; and

Whereas, the Gamecocks only won ten games the year before Martin took over, but under his guidance, the team has grown and flourished, posting a program record of twenty-six wins and its first appearance in the NCAA Final Four. These achievements are a testament to Coach Martin’s focus on character, discipline, and teamwork; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate appreciate the pride and recognition that the University of South Carolina men’s basketball team have brought to their school and community and look with interest to hear of all further accomplishments by the team and its talented athletes. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, congratulate the University of South Carolina men’s basketball team, coaches, and school officials on an outstanding season and honor them for the team’s first appearance in the NCAA Final Four.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Coach Frank Martin, Athletic Director Ray Tanner, and President Harris Pastides.

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