**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE THE DEDICATED SERVICE AND IMMEASURABLE SACRIFICE OF SOUTH CAROLINA’S COMBAT VETERANS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL AND TO EXPRESS PROFOUND APPRECIATION FOR THEIR STEADFAST AND COURAGEOUS EFFORTS IN THE DEFENSE OF OUR NATION’S FREEDOM AS AMERICANS OBSERVE THIS COUNTRY’S FIFTY-NINTH ANNUAL ARMED FORCES DAY ON MAY 16, 2009.

Whereas, before 1950, separate days had been set aside to honor the branches of the armed forces individually; the establishment of a single observance followed the combining in 1947 of the Departments of War and Navy into one entity, the National Military Establishment, which two years later became known as the Department of Defense; and

Whereas, members of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard are justly proud of the heroic records forged by those branches and by their continuing contributions to the security of American citizens at home and abroad; and

Whereas, the U.S. Army was established on June 14, 1775, when the Second Continental Congress authorized the formation of ten companies of riflemen; from the American Revolution to the present operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the army has furnished the majority of American ground troops when the country has taken up arms; today this service is composed of a number of basic branches, including Infantry, Field Artillery, Aviation, the Corps of Engineers, and Special Forces, and such special branches as the Army Medical Department, the Army Chaplain Corps, and the Judge Advocate General’s Corps; and

Whereas, on October 13, 1775, the Second Continental Congress called for the fitting out of two warships, thereby founding the Continental Navy; although disbanded following the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, this service was reestablished with the creation of the Department of the Navy on April 30, 1798, and today, naval personnel ensure the defense of the nation by sea and give seaborne support to the other military forces; and

Whereas, a month after the Continental Congress authorized the procurement and dispatching of the navy’s first ships, it passed a resolution, on November 10, 1775, calling for the raising of two marine battalions; the Marine Corps disbanded, like the navy, following the War of Independence, but it was reestablished on July 11, 1798; a separate service within the Department of the Navy, the Marine Corps prepares for counterinsurgency, guerilla, and amphibious warfare and commando operations; and

Whereas, the U.S. Air Force, which became a separate branch within the Department of Defense on September 18, 1947, had its genesis in the 1907 creation of an aeronautical division within the U.S. Army Signal Corps; military aviation subsequently achieved widespread recognition during World War I, when planes proved their effectiveness in reconnaissance and bombing missions, and air power became a crucial factor in World War II, during which time the U.S. Army Air Forces emerged as the most powerful air force in the world; today’s air force defends the country in the realms of air, space, and cyberspace; and

Whereas, now part of the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Coast Guard has assumed many duties throughout its history, from protecting against pirates to intercepting contraband, conducting search and rescue operations, responding to oil spills, and licensing and certifying all U.S. maritime personnel; its wide ranging wartime service has included escort and patrol duty and assisting amphibious landings; and

Whereas, together with members of the reserve forces, the Army National Guard, and the Air National Guard, South Carolina’s active duty servicemen and servicewomen are prepared to do their utmost to preserve our nation’s freedom. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives recognize the dedicated service and immeasurable sacrifice of South Carolina’s combat veterans and military personnel and express profound appreciation for their steadfast and courageous efforts in the defense of our nation’s freedom as Americans observe this country’s fifty-ninth annual Armed Forces Day on May 16, 2009.

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