**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

DECLARING WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2010, “SOUTH CAROLINA MEDAL OF HONOR DAY” AND CALLING UPON SOUTH CAROLINIANS TO ATTEND EVENTS SCHEDULED IN COLUMBIA THAT DAY AT WHICH THE WOMEN OF SOUTH CAROLINA WILL SIGN A DECLARATION OF GRATITUDE FOR THE SERVICE AND SACRIFICES OF THE HOLDERS OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR AND AT WHICH WILL BE HONORED AND RECOGNIZED LIVING SOUTH CAROLINA HOLDERS OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR.

Whereas, the United States of America is known as “the land of the free and the home of the brave” and “the shining city on the hill” the founding of which set in motion the great experiment in representative democracy that is a beacon of hope to the entire world; and

Whereas, “Old Glory”, our national flag with colors of blue for vigilance, perseverance and justice; white for purity and red for valor proclaims freedom. Our flag breathes vitality as it ripples in the breeze. It glows with sparkling stars as it is one of the most beautiful and distinctive flags of the world which possesses the unique ability to “grow with the country”, since a new star appears in the blue field for each new state. The stripes are for the thirteen original colonies with the white stripe beneath the field of blue being for South Carolina which ratified the United States Constitution on May 23, 1788; and

Whereas, the “Stars and Stripes”, the symbol of the nation, inherited by each and every generation of Americans, still flies proudly as a result of the blood and sacrifice of those who fought in the nation’s wars from the Revolution to the current struggles in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

Whereas, the Medal of Honor, established by Congress in 1862, honors a member of the armed forces of the United States who has “distinguished himself or herself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty” in combat against the enemies of the United States; and

Whereas, women have held a prominent role in South Carolina’s extraordinary history, a place recognized in the state seal inspired by the American Revolution which depicts a woman walking on the seashore, over swords and daggers; holding in her right hand a laurel branch and in her left hand the folds of her robe as she looks toward the sun, just rising above the sea. At the summit are the words “Dum Spiro Spero”, While I breathe I hope, and beneath the field below the figure is the word “Spes”, hope; and

Whereas, the Women of South Carolina, from the coast to the Blue Ridge will gather January 20, 2010, in Columbia, lead by the First Ladies of South Carolina, to sign The Declaration of Gratitude which will be presented to each of America’s Medal of Honor holders as they convene in Charleston in October 2010, in an operation known as “Beyond Valor”; and

Whereas, South Carolina, well‑known for its gracious hospitality, is honored to host this historic October event; and

Whereas, at the ceremonial signing of the Declaration of Gratitude, January 20, 2010, four of these heroes residing in South Carolina will be present for special recognition by the Women of South Carolina, including:

John F. Baker, Jr. ‑ Private First Class, United States Army Company A, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division, for actions in Tay Ninh Province South Vietnam, 1968, awarded the Medal of Honor May 1, 1968, by President Lyndon Johnson;

James E. Livingston ‑ Major General, United States Marine Corps, retired, for actions in Dai Do, Vietnam, 1968, while a Captain, United States Marine Corps, Company E, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, awarded the Medal of Honor on May 14, 1970 by President Richard Nixon;

Charles P. Murray, Jr. ‑ Colonel, United States Army, retired, for actions at Kaysersberg, France, 1944, while a First Lieutenant, United States Army Company C, 30th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division. Colonel Murray’s last combat duty was as an infantry brigade commander in Vietnam, where both of his sons served;

Michael E. Thornton ‑ Petty Officer, United States Navy, Navy Advisory Group, for actions at Cua Viet River Base, South Vietnam, 1972, awarded the Medal of Honor by President Richard Nixon; and

Whereas, it is appropriate that the members of the General Assembly, by this resolution, add their voices in support of those who have organized these special events honoring America’s greatest heroes. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That January 20, 2010, is declared South Carolina Medal of Honor Day and all South Carolinians who are able are urged to attend the Columbia events on that day and to make special efforts to honor the service of America’s greatest heroes.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to each of the living South Carolina holders of the Medal of Honor recognized at the Declaration of Gratitude signing ceremony on January 20, 2010, in Columbia and a further copy be forwarded to the Medal of Honor Museum aboard the USS Yorktown, at Patriots Point in Charleston Harbor.

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