**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE MISS OLA HITT, AIKEN’S AMBASSADOR OF GOODWILL, ON THE OCCASION OF HER ONE HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY, AND TO WISH HER A JOYOUS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AND CONTINUED HEALTH AND HAPPINESS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are delighted to learn that Miss Ola Hitt will celebrate her one hundredth birthday on April 18, 2010; and

Whereas, Miss Hitt was born on April 18, 1910, in Richmond County, Georgia, and is an exceptional example of a true “Southern Belle,” sweet and gentle in disposition, endearing herself to those around her, but able to take charge of any situation; and

Whereas, the daughter of John and Abbie Hitt, she grew up with her siblings in Montmorenci and loved hearing stories of her ancestors, thus beginning a lifelong interest in American history and the desire to share her family’s history; and

Whereas, she has been instrumental in organizing her annual family reunion, which draws relatives from many states, and she proudly tells tales of her childhood home, Pascalena, now a noted historic location in Aiken County. Many treasures from her home are on display at the Aiken County Museum, and as heirlooms of a founding family, these Hitt family possessions are important artifacts of Aiken’s history; and

Whereas, Miss Ola is kept busy by her love of history, as a member of the Aiken Historical Society, the Aiken‑Barnwell Genealogical Society, Friends of the Aiken County Library, and the Augusta Genealogical Society. In addition, she is actively involved in the Colonial Dames XVII Century, Daughters of Indian Wars, Daughters of 1812, First Families of South Carolina, Mayflower Society, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. She also serves on the history committee of the First Baptist Church of Aiken, where she is a longtime member; and

Whereas, Ola Hitt and her mother operated a boarding house on Chesterfield Street in Aiken for many years, and in 1960 “Miss Ola” opened her home to disabled veterans, welcoming her “boys” to her large home with open arms and providing comfortable rooms, delicious meals, and a sense of belonging. She chauffeured her boys to their doctors’ appointments and also organized trips for them to Myrtle Beach, the Grand Canyon, Alaska, and other exotic ports; and

Whereas, a lifelong dedication to our country’s veterans was forged, and Miss Ola continued to support all types of veterans’ activities, collecting magazines and taking them to the VA Hospital, as well as collecting handmade items, lap robes, wheelchair bags, and helmet liners and delivering them to the VA, and she continues to stay in touch with her surviving veterans; and

Whereas, Miss Ola has been honored for her outstanding work with the veterans and her many other charitable organizations, and she proudly displays her Order of the Palmetto, the highest honor that can be bestowed on a citizen by the Governor of South Carolina; her Pickens‑Salley Southern Woman of Distinction Award; her Greater Aiken Chamber of Commerce Woman of the Year Award (1984); and her City of Aiken Citizen of Character Award. Miss Ola has had a street named in her honor in Aiken, and she was named a grand marshal of the annual Christmas parade; and

Whereas, no honor to Miss Ola would be complete without the famous “Minnie Pearl hat” story. While Miss Ola was working at B.M. Surasky’s dress shop in Aiken, Sarah Ophelia Colley Cannon, now known as “Minnie Pearl,” came into the store and purchased a hat from Miss Ola. Later, Minnie Pearl appeared on stage in that hat, having forgotten to remove the $1.98 sales tag, and the rest is history; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives is proud to honor this truly lovely lady at the celebration of her one hundredth birthday and joins with her legion of friends and well‑wishers to congratulate her on reaching this extraordinary milestone. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate Miss Ola Hitt, Aiken’s Ambassador of Goodwill, on the occasion of her one hundredth birthday, and wish her a joyous birthday celebration and continued health and happiness.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Miss Ola Hitt.

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