**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR MASTER SERGEANT WILLIAM T. “BILL” SIMMONS OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE FOR HIS TWENTY YEARS OF OUTSTANDING MILITARY SERVICE, AND TO DECLARE MAY 16, 2009, AS “MILITARY WAR VETERANS DAY” IN THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate, on behalf of all South Carolinians, acknowledge with deep appreciation the great sacrifice that the men and women of the United States Armed Forces make for the ideals of freedom and justice, which are so richly enjoyed in this nation; and

Whereas, Master Sergeant William T. “Bill” Simmons of the United States Air Force (Retired) stands high among those servicemen and women so honored by their country; and

Whereas, a native of Anderson County, Bill Simmons was just sixteen years old when he enlisted in the Army Air Corps in January 1946. He completed basic training at Sheppard Field in Texas and served primarily in the postal‑service career field at various locations in the United States and overseas, including sites in California, Florida, the Aleutian Islands, South Carolina (Shaw Air Force Base), Texas, New Mexico, Alaska, New Jersey, Korea, and Illinois; and

Whereas, among the many awards and letters of appreciation he received during his twenty years of exemplary military service are the World War II Victory Medal and Air Force Commendation Medal, granted for outstanding job performance. He retired from the United States Air Force with the rank of master sergeant in 1966; and

Whereas, returning to private life, Mr. Simmons held several positions in banking and financial services. He served as a loan officer in Kirkwood, Missouri, as well as in Greenville and Anderson in his native state; in Illinois, he became a servicing representative for Freddie Mac; and he was a branch manager in Indiana and a servicing manager for the Army Finance Center Federal Credit Union. In 1992, he retired again and returned to South Carolina; and

Whereas, throughout his life, believing a man should be involved in his community, Bill Simmons has been quite active in a number of veterans organizations and community activities. He was the first vice president of finance for the World War II Round Table of America, an organization he helped found in Indiana; a member of the St. Clair Volunteer Fire Department in Missouri; and vice president of the Carolina Horse Show Association in Greenville, among numerous other activities. He is currently a member of the Philippino‑American Association of Greater Columbia, for which he has served on the executive board and as a vice president; and

Whereas, a proud lifetime member of Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated (TAI), Bill Simmons served as chapter president in Indianapolis for a number of years. He was formerly also a member of the Atlanta and Hiram Mann chapters and is presently a member of the Spann Watson Chapter in Columbia, which he was instrumental in founding and for which he is immediate past president; and

Whereas, in addition, he is a member of Celebrate Freedom Foundation, Incorporated, and the Retired Enlisted Association. He keeps up a busy schedule of speaking engagements at schools; military bases; and business, social, civic, and religious organizations, using these opportunities as avenues for encouraging young people to stay in school, set goals, and strive to achieve them. For his fine leadership and extensive service to his community and to youth, Bill Simmons has received awards in abundance, adding to the many honors he received for his military service; and

Whereas, the South Carolina Senate counts it a great privilege to honor Master Sergeant William T. “Bill” Simmons, one of the Palmetto State’s finest, and the members with one voice commend the dedicated, sacrificial labors of this worthy son of South Carolina in the military of our great country. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and honor Master Sergeant William T. “Bill” Simmons of the United States Air Force for his twenty years of outstanding military service and to declare May 16, 2009, as “Military War Veterans Day” in the State of South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Master Sergeant William T. Simmons.

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