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**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND THE RIDGEWOOD FOUNDATION FOR ITS DEDICATED COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND TO HONOR AND CONGRATULATE THE FOUNDATION’S TOUR COORDINATOR, DR. EZELL PITTMAN, UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly are pleased to learn of the work of the Ridgewood Foundation in providing educational travel experiences that have broadened the cultural awareness of citizens of our State; and

Whereas, begun in 1990 by the late Reverend Levi C. Chavous, Sr., pastor of the Ridgewood missionary Baptist Church for forty years, the Foundation has sought to enhance the lives of residents in the Ridgewood community physically, educationally, and economically; and

Whereas, the Foundation began the trips to raise funds for the organization, which has provided an introductory computer program for seniors, a hypertension and diabetes program (HADA) in the Ridgewood community, and scholarships to students graduating from Eau Claire High School; and

Whereas, after the success of the first two‑day trip in 1993 to the Potomac Mills, the National Mall, and the Frederick Douglass Museum, the Foundation decided to plan African‑American Heritage tours and asked Dr. Ezell Pittman to plan the fundraising trips for 1994; and

Whereas, in the early years the trips were promoted by asking the executive directors of the Columbia, Aiken, and Florence Housing Authorities and the Columbia Urban League to sponsor youth to travel with the Foundation; and

Whereas, as support for the Foundation increased, travel grew from weekend trips to seven‑day trips, and since 2001, four trips have gone from coast to coast and lasted fourteen days each; and

Whereas, the Foundation has taken travelers to the forty‑eight continental states and has attracted travelers from South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and New York; and

Whereas, after fifteen years and countless trips, Dr. Ezell, a retired public servant, will relinquish his duties with the Foundation as its tour coordinator in 2009; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly are grateful for the vision of the Ridgewood Foundation to provide vital needs to the community it serves and express appreciation to Dr. Ezell Pittman for providing vital leadership to the Foundation’s travel program. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize and commend the Ridgewood Foundation for its dedicated community service, and honor and congratulate the Foundation’s tour coordinator, Dr. Ezell Pittman, upon the occasion of his retirement.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Beverly Hart Pittman, president of the Ridgewood Foundation, and to Dr. Ezell Pittman.

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