**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEND THE HONORABLE PHIL P. LEVENTIS FOR THIRTY-ONE YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE, AND TO EXPRESS DEEP APPRECIATION FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR STATE AND TO HIS CONSTITUENTS.

Whereas, the Honorable Phil Peter Leventis has served the citizens of Lee and Sumter Counties in District 35 in the South Carolina Senate since 1981; and

Whereas, born in 1945 to Tina and Peter Leventis, he graduated from the University of Virginia in 1969, during which time he met his wife Ellen Venable “E.V.” Locker, whom he has been married to for more than forty-three years and together they have raised four children, Gregory, Henry, Peter, and Christina, and they have three lovely grandchildren, Lucy, Henry Cabel, and Eleni; and

Whereas, after he served our Nation in the United States Air Force from 1969 to 1974, he was in the South Carolina Air National Guard from 1974 to 1999 and retired as Brigadier General from McEntire Air National Guard Base. As a fighter pilot, he flew twenty-one combat missions over Iraq and Kuwait and volunteered for active duty during the Persian Gulf War. For his honorable service he was decorated with an Air Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, and a Distinguished Flying Cross, and he was named South Carolina Aviator of the Year in 2006; and

Whereas, when Senator Leventis left the Air Force, he went back to Sumter to help his father with the family business, Dixie Beverage Company, serving as General Manager. He headed the company and, in 2002, merged Dixie Beverage Company and Central Distributing to become Dixie-Central; and

Whereas, in addition to his legislative duties, Senator Leventis served on numerous boards and commissions, just a few of which include the Sumter Rotary Club, Aviation Hall of Fame, County Airport Commission, Sumter Chamber of Commerce, South Carolina Beer Association, American Legion Post 15, Santee‑Lynches Grassroots Advisory Council, University of South Carolina School of Health Partnership Board, Sumter Community Resource Bank, Sumter County Development Board, Sumter Community Bank Shares Board, general partner in LPT, Chairman and founding Board member of Sumter National Bank, and founding partner with Dixie Aeronautical Services; and

Whereas, in 2002 Senator Leventis distinguished himself as a nominee of the Democratic Party for Lt. Governor of South Carolina; and

Whereas, in 2003 Senator Leventis developed the Blue Granite Recognition Program for State Employees to recognize the outstanding service state employees perform on a daily basis all across South Carolina. Recipients receive a twenty-five pound piece of South Carolina blue granite, the state’s stone; and

Whereas, in 2008 he was honored at the South Carolina Chapter of the International Association of Workforce Professionals by being given the state Public Policy Award and he also received the international version of the award; and

Whereas, Senator Leventis chaired the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee from 1993 to 2001, during which time he offered a tireless dedication to protecting our environment through his advocacy for land conservation; clean air and water; energy efficiency; recycling; green construction; alternative energy; the reduction of waste; the re-use of materials for fuels, energy, and electricity; protective policies for low-level radioactive waste management; and improved management of solid waste, “mega dumps”, and the Pinewood hazardous waste landfill on the bank of Lake Marion; and

Whereas, Senator Leventis also has a long record of accomplishments, among which are his consistent support for public education, Home Rule, and sound economic policies; and

Whereas, not one to be shy of enjoying the privilege of holding the floor when he believed necessary, during his long career of public service Senator Leventis has always been appreciative of the issues he believes impact all of South Carolina’s citizens, and his service to this State and his community have been admirable. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the Senate, by this resolution, commend the Honorable Phil P. Leventis for thirty-one years of distinguished service upon the occasion of his retirement from the South Carolina Senate, and express deep appreciation for his contributions to our State and to his constituents of District 35.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Honorable Phil P. Leventis.

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