**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE CALVIN GILMORE, OWNER, PRODUCER, AND DIRECTOR OF THE CAROLINA OPRY, ON BEING NAMED MYRTLE BEACH AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2010 ASHBY WARD PIONEER OF THE YEAR.

Whereas, the South Carolina Senate is pleased to note that Calvin Gilmore has been named Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Ashby Ward Pioneer of the Year; and

Whereas, the Ashby Ward Pioneer of the Year award, named in honor of the late Ashby Ward (president and CEO of the Chamber for nearly thirty years), was established to recognize individuals who have had a significant, positive impact on the Myrtle Beach area; and

Whereas, Calvin Gilmore, this year’s honoree, has led his award‑winning Carolina Opry, now in its unprecedented twenty‑fifth season, to outstanding success with both visitors to the Grand Strand and the citizens of South Carolina; and

Whereas, he grew up in Missouri, where he cut his musical teeth singing in church. After a career in real estate, in 1986 he moved with his wife, Janis, and their two children to the Myrtle Beach area to bring a new sound to the Grand Strand, beginning in a modest thousand‑seat theater in Surfside Beach. That sound grew until shows were selling out night after night; and

Whereas, in an effort to accommodate growing popularity, Gilmore began a second show in North Myrtle Beach, The Dixie Jubilee. It, too, sold out night after night until 1993, when Mr. Gilmore built a new theater; and

Whereas, The Carolina Opry, a state‑of‑the‑art mega showplace in Myrtle Beach, is the only show to win the coveted Governor’s Cup, the state’s highest tourism award. It is also the only show to be voted the state’s Most Outstanding Attraction by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism; and

Whereas, Calvin Gilmore has recorded country and gospel albums, performed in two movies, and now oversees the largest live variety‑music enterprise on the East Coast, Gilmore Entertainment. Through the company’s twenty‑five years, Gilmore has produced and directed shows in several different theaters. The company has expanded into the fields of recording, television production, print media, and artist management; and

Whereas, Brad Dean, president and CEO of the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, says of Mr. Gilmore, “He is a true risk‑taker [and] innovator and the epitome of what the Ashby Ward Pioneer award represents. The Myrtle Beach area [owes] much to his creative business philosophy, as the Carolina Opry helps attract thousands of people back to the area year after year. The company he has grown has helped Myrtle Beach grow”; and

Whereas, the Senate takes great pleasure in congratulating Calvin Gilmore on being recognized as the 2010 Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce Ashby Ward Pioneer of the Year. It is an honor befitting the service he has rendered to the people of his fair city and of this great State. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and congratulate Calvin Gilmore, owner, producer, and director of The Carolina Opry, on being named Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce 2010 Ashby Ward Pioneer of the Year.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Calvin Gilmore.

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