**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE BARBARA BRACEY OF RICHLAND COUNTY ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT, TO COMMEND HER FOR TWENTY‑SEVEN YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE YOUTH OF SOUTH CAROLINA AS A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, AND TO WISH HER FULFILLMENT AND EVERY HAPPINESS IN HER FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, it is with great pleasure that the South Carolina House of Representatives honors those individuals who give tirelessly of themselves to the welfare of this great State’s most important legacy, its children; and

Whereas, Barbara Bracey, retiring after twenty‑seven fruitful years as a special education teacher, certainly stands among their number as an outstanding educator, one much admired in her roles as teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend; and

Whereas, born in Teaneck, New Jersey, she is the daughter of Robert and Dolores Besley and is the eldest of their four children; and

Whereas, Barbara first became inspired to devote her career to helping children with special needs as a teenager. While serving as a lifeguard at a beachside pool during the summer, she spent the warm days teaching a handicapped child how to swim. That experience singlehandedly tuned her heart and narrowed her career path to helping children with disabilities; and

Whereas, she earned a bachelor’s degree in English education in 1977 and a master’s degree in special education in 1978, both from the University of South Carolina. Thereafter, she completed thirty additional coursework hours in learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, and the at‑risk child, among other topics; and

Whereas, after working as a special educator in the private sector for two years and spending an additional two years teaching in another school district, Barbara began her tenure with Richland School District Two and Joseph Keels Elementary School in 1988; and

Whereas, Barbara’s commitment to helping her students achieve success and develop pride in themselves and their work is wholly evident in all she does. Selflessly giving hundreds of thousands of hours of her own time over the years, she will stop at nothing to ensure the achievement of her students; and

Whereas, her classroom is a safe, inclusive place where her students feel encouraged and supported to reach their true potential; and

Whereas, committing over twenty years to the families of Joseph Keels Elementary, she has become an indispensible member of the Keels family. Barbara has compiled school cookbooks, drafted grants and lengthy accreditation reports, and served on intervention teams, among countless other responsibilities, all to the great benefit of the school and surrounding community; and

Whereas, recognized for her unwavering dedication to her chosen profession and to the children she serves, Barbara was selected from among her peers as Teacher of the Year for Joseph Keels Elementary for the 1996‑1997 school year and was a finalist for the district level award. In addition, she received the Culture of Excellence Award for the district in 1993; and

Whereas, a devoted wife and mother, she shares a loving marriage with Denny Bracey, and together they adore and dote on their two children, Beth and Jimmy. Her children honor her as their first and greatest teacher; and

Whereas, during her rare spare time, Barbara enjoys gardening and exercising. She also teaches a Friday afternoon water aerobics class set to her favorite oldies tunes; and

Whereas, embodying her favorite quote, “The greatest use of life is to spend it on something that will outlast it,” Barbara has shared her time and talents in immeasurable ways and has touched the lives of countless children. It is indeed the honor of the members of the House of Representatives to laud her for her many contributions and accomplishments in a career well spent. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, congratulate Barbara Bracey of Richland County on the occasion of her retirement, commend her for twenty‑seven years of dedicated service to the youth of South Carolina as a special education teacher, and wish her fulfillment and every happiness in her future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mrs. Barbara Bracey.

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