**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON, ITS CITIZENS, AND TOWN OFFICIALS FOR A VISION THAT HAS PRODUCED PAST AND CONTINUED EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE HISTORY, CULTURE, AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE COMMUNITY AND SURROUNDING AREA AND THAT SETS THE HIGHEST STANDARDS IN PROVIDING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH FOR THE FUTURE.

Whereas, established in 1825, the Town of Bluffton has had a long and valued history, and Old Town, a registered National Historic District within the town, takes great pride in its distinct vernacular architecture and in the oysters that are still harvested and eaten fresh off the banks of the May River among the live oak trees; and

Whereas, surrounded by master‑planned communities that continue to draw new residents, Bluffton provides a delicate balance of nature, history, authentic culture, and recreation for its citizens as it begins the modern transition from a summer retreat to a contemporary community; and

Whereas, the key challenge in creating the community’s vision for the future is to retain Bluffton’s historic character while allowing new sustainable development; and

Whereas, to establish a vision for the next fifteen years, the Bluffton Town Council adopted a Strategic Plan, which outlines and creates an outcome‑based model for the next five years, sets the policy agenda for the mayor and town council, defines principal responsibilities of the government, and sets standards and expectations for employees as basic core beliefs; and

Whereas, in a significant collaborative spirit with representatives from Beaufort County, Jasper County, and the City of Hardeeville, the Bluffton Town Council adopted the Beaufort County Southern Regional Plan to develop both a joint land‑use plan for uncommitted land and a joint land‑use map that defines areas of mutual planning interest over the next twenty years; and

Whereas, the Town of Bluffton also has adopted an ordinance to create a transfer of development rights and a development rights bank program to direct future growth from those areas of the town less suited for growth toward areas better suited to provide public services, prevent sprawl, preserve open space, and protect important waters and environmentally sensitive areas; and

Whereas, the Town of Bluffton has worked with Beaufort County to preserve rural and critical lands for conservation, parks, buffers, and scenic vistas while preserving valuable economic and natural resources through the purchase of land or by a purchase or donation of development rights; and

Whereas, the town recognizes the significance of the May River for historic, community, cultural, aesthetic, environmental, and economic purposes. As a result, the town council adopted the May River watershed action plan in agreement with neighboring jurisdictions to provide a strategy for preserving, assessing problems, and implementing solutions for the wonderful natural resource and to provide short‑term, medium‑term, and long‑term preventative measures that will protect this important river and the shellfish harvesting from it from future degradation; and

Whereas, for all of the above reasons, the Town of Bluffton has become one of the most farsighted and proactive communities in South Carolina and is fully deserving of recognition and commendation for these outstanding achievements. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor the Town of Bluffton, its citizens, and town officials for a vision that has produced past and continued efforts to protect the history, culture, and natural resources of the community and surrounding area and that sets the highest standards in providing sustainable growth for the future.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Mayor Lisa Sulka.

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