**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CELEBRATE THE FIFTY‑SEVENTH ANNUAL BEAUFORT WATER FESTIVAL, TO BE HELD FRIDAY, JULY 13, 2012, THROUGH SUNDAY, JULY 22, 2012, TO ENCOURAGE ALL SOUTH CAROLINIANS TO ATTEND AND ENJOY THIS FAMILY‑FRIENDLY EVENT, AND TO WISH ITS ORGANIZERS EVERY SUCCESS.

Whereas, Beaufort is South Carolina’s second oldest city, located on our beautiful coast between Charleston and Savannah, Georgia; and

Whereas, through the past fifty‑seven years, the Beaufort Water Festival has become an important part of the city’s unique culture and heritage. The family‑oriented, totally volunteer‑run event showcases the city’s character and close connection with the water; and

Whereas, the festival’s origins date back to the 1930s, when sailboat racing on the Beaufort River became popular. Members of the community later decided to create an event that would celebrate Beaufort’s renowned Southern hospitality and culturally diverse island lifestyle; and

Whereas, as a result, the first official Beaufort Water Festival was established in 1956, and the event has grown to attract more than one hundred thousand visitors annually to downtown Beaufort and the surrounding areas; and

Whereas, this year’s edition of the festival, July 13‑22, 2012, includes golf and fishing tournaments; an arts and crafts market; live entertainment in Waterfront Park, featuring music from the varied genres of Motown, country, shag, and other styles; and family entertainment, including Children’s Day, Talent Night, the Lowcountry Supper, and the ever‑popular Parris Island Marine Band and Grand Parade of Boats; and

Whereas, leading the festival fleet is Commodore John Gentry, with the support of First Lady Jan Gentry and John’s 2012 coordinators, Dan Thompson, Clark Robinson, Brandy Gray, Tank Morris, Chris Canaday, Alan Langford, Bill Damude, Stacey Canaday, Bonnie Thompson, and Nicky Fowlkes. Their outstanding leadership of the hundreds of volunteers working under their command keeps everything about the festival flowing in shipshape fashion; and

Whereas, after bills are paid, most of the money the Beaufort Water Festival brings in goes back into the community. The festival donates to the Lions Club, Rotary Club, Beaufort Business and Professional Women’s Club, Zonta Club of Beaufort, and other groups that volunteer to help during the festival. It also sponsors a $2,500 scholarship every year for a student at the University of South Carolina Beaufort; and

Whereas, the community’s continuous dedication to providing visitors and residents quality entertainment has made the event one of the most popular volunteer festivals on the Southeastern coast. The House of Representatives commends the people of Beaufort for bringing the Beaufort Water Festival to the Palmetto State and encourages all South Carolinians to patronize and enjoy its offerings. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, celebrate the fifty‑seventh annual Beaufort Water Festival, to be held Friday, July 13, 2012, through Sunday, July 22, 2012, encourage all South Carolinians to attend and enjoy this family‑friendly event, and wish its organizers every success.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Commodore John Gentry for the Beaufort Water Festival.

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