**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE COLUMBIA CITY BALLET ON THE OCCASION OF ITS FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY, AND TO THANK THE COMPANY FOR ITS INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE ENJOYED BY SOUTH CAROLINIANS.

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is pleased to learn that Columbia City Ballet is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary; and

Whereas, founded in 1961 as a community dance group staging only two performances a year, Columbia City Ballet (CCB) has transformed itself over the past fifty years into a professional company with thirty‑two contracted dancers and a record‑setting touring and performing schedule rivaling any professional dance company in the Southeast; and

Whereas, CCB founding artistic director Ann Brodie was herself a seasoned dancer, counting performance as a soloist with the Radio City Music Hall Ballet as one of her many credits. Ms. Brodie studied in New York under the direction of Igor Schwezoff, Alexandra Danilova, and Vitale Fokine; and

Whereas, Ann Brodie had a passion for ballet and a vision to present first‑rate ballets in Columbia while also providing the very finest training for young dance and ballet students. She assembled a support team of community leaders to help her put together the company’s first performances fifty years ago; and

Whereas, due to her efforts, CCB began serving consistently as a springboard to major professional dance companies and as a training ground for Ford Foundation Dance Scholarships; and

Whereas, subsequent seasons have seen the company performing to capacity audiences, working with world‑famous guest artists and choreographers, and graduating its principal dancers to the professional dance world. CCB alumni have performed, or are currently performing, with the American Ballet Theatre, Dance Theatre of Harlem, New York City Ballet, Boston Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Houston Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, Richmond Ballet, and on Broadway; and

Whereas, midway in CCB’s history, Ann Brodie handpicked William Starrett to be her successor. His vision was to provide the highest‑caliber professional dance company to the region. CCB was not only to serve as a major component for statewide economic development but also to provide a professional outlet for attracting and retaining extraordinary artistic talent for CCB; and

Whereas, an internationally acclaimed dancer and choreographer, William Starrett got his start at San Francisco’s Ballet Celeste and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. He was a principal for the Joffrey Ballet, a member of the American Ballet Theatre under the direction of both Lucia Chase and Mikhail Baryshnikov, and a guest artist with more than forty of the world’s most renowned ballet companies; and

Whereas, under his leadership as both executive and artistic director of CCB, the company produces what critics have described as “some of the highest‑quality cultural entertainment in the Southeast.” Mr. Starrett offers dancers and audiences the opportunity to perform and watch classical ballets, as well as his original full‑length productions, such as *Dracula: Ballet With a Bite*, *Beauty & the Beast*,and *Off the Wall & Onto the Stage: Dancing the Art of Jonathan Green*; and

Whereas, today, the company attracts quality dancers from around the country and has an extraordinary repertoire of fifteen original full‑length ballets, ten full‑length classics, twenty‑one one‑act ballets, and seventeen Educational Outreach ballets. It has performed in more than fifty cities, including Chicago and New York, and is the resident company in Savannah, Georgia; and

Whereas, CCB’s Educational Outreach Series, implemented in 1988, has educated and entertained more than a half million schoolchildren in the Southeast with the art of dance; and

Whereas, cognizant of its distinguished history and its excellence as a performing organization, the General Assembly takes great pleasure in honoring Columbia City Ballet on its fiftieth anniversary, and the members extend best wishes for much continued success in the years to come. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, congratulate Columbia City Ballet on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, and thank the company for its invaluable contributions to the quality of life enjoyed by South Carolinians.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Columbia City Ballet.

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