**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO PROCLAIM OCTOBER 15, 2011, AS FEDERATION CENTER OF THE BLIND DAY IN SOUTH CAROLINA UPON ITS FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY AND TO ENCOURAGE ALL SOUTH CAROLINIANS TO JOIN IN SUPPORT AND CELEBRATION OF THIS MILESTONE EVENT WHICH HAS BETTERED THE QUALITY OF LIFE DURING THE PAST FIVE DECADES FOR BLIND SOUTH CAROLINIANS.

Whereas, in the late 1950’s, Donald Capps and other forward thinking blind individuals had the insight and foresight to establish a center where the business of the blind could take place and where activities of the Columbia Chapter as well as the statewide blind would be able to meet for statewide seminars, leadership seminars, legislative grassroots efforts, and technology and Braille classes and demonstrations; and

Whereas, with the assistance of the blind in conjunction with business, civic, and governmental leaders, property was deeded to the blind from the City of Columbia in July of 1960 to erect such a center with the Honorable Hyman Rubin, the then Mayor Pro Tem of Columbia being instrumental in this process; and

Whereas, on October 15, 1961, the Aurora Center of the Blind (now known as the Federation Center of the Blind) was dedicated to service the needs of blind South Carolinians; and

Whereas, a blind Board of Trustees was established to be elected by the blind to make and implement policy and operations of the center, including current longtime Board Chairman, Frank Coppel and Founder and Trustee Board member, Dr. Donald Capps; and

Whereas, an Advisory Board was also established consisting of civic, education, business, and governmental leaders who would lend their advice and support in the ever growing services the Federation Center provides, including such leaders over the years as Senator Hyman Rubin, Joe Edens, Sr., David Baker, John Baker, Bernard Kline, Alan Mustard, Milburn Shaw, Dr. A. Baron Holmes, IV, Rex Wilson, and John W. Harris, just to name a very few; and

Whereas, the successful demand for services by the Federation Center of the Blind for blind South Carolinians meant there would be building expansions in 1970 and again in 1978 with the addition of a parking lot and additional property to expand parking; and

Whereas, staffing of the Federation Center was accomplished through a variety of employees, most of which have been blind, including Suzanne Bridges Mitchell as the first Director, followed by David Houck, with administrative assistants, blind receptionists, and computer lab instructors like Vicki Black and Jim Jackson, not to mention hundreds of blind and sighted volunteers; and

Whereas, United Way of the Midlands supported the work of the Federation Center of the Blind over a thirty-one year period from 1977 to 2008; and

Whereas, thousands of blind individuals have received services from the Federation Center to go on to bigger and better things on a local, state, national, and even international level, including such people as Dr. Donald Capps, Parnell Diggs, Chris Danielsen, Marty McKenzie, Suzanne Mitchell, Tim Cox, and Dan Frye, to name a very few. Now, therefore,

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

That October 15, 2011, be proclaimed as Federation Center of the Blind Day in South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that the General Assembly of South Carolina, along with other officials in government, business, civic groups, and citizens of the Palmetto State, join in support and celebration of this milestone event which has bettered the quality of life during the past five decades for blind South Carolinians.

Be it further resolved that notice be spread far and wide of the fiftieth anniversary of the Federation Center of the Blind so that all blind South Carolinians can participate in the programs and services the center offers and to ensure that the expansion of those services to the blind will continue for another fifty years.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Federation Center of the Blind.

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