**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR GARY R. BAKER, THE LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER, UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT, AND TO WISH HIM CONTINUED SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS IN ALL HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate are pleased to learn that Gary R. Baker will begin a much deserved retirement after many years of service to the citizens of South Carolina; and

Whereas, in 1966, Gary Baker graduated from The Citadel with a bachelor’s degree in business administration, and upon graduation, he entered the United States Army where he served as a staff officer stationed in Korea and later Fort Jackson until 1969; and

Whereas, from 1970 to 1972, he served as the director of admissions of Palmer College, earning a master in business administration from the University of South Carolina in 1972, and from 1972 to 1976, he served as the personnel officer in the Division of Administration of the Office of the Governor of the State of South Carolina; and

Whereas, for twenty‑three years from 1976 to 1999, he served as the executive director of the State Ethics Commission, during which time he wrote and issued over twelve hundred advisory opinions and initiated complaint actions on behalf of the commission, and he assisted in authoring and administering one of the most stringent ethics laws in the United States; and

Whereas, from 1985 to 2005, he served as president of Palmetto Bookworks, a company which he founded to focus on historical and biographical releases, and during that time he published thirty books and authored *Cadets in Gray*, the definitive history of the South Carolina Military Academy cadets in the Civil War; and

Whereas, before Mr. Baker was appointed to lead the Lexington County Veterans Affairs Office in 2003, he served as the president of Baker Consulting from 1999 to 2001, providing expert advice concerning ethics issues; and

Whereas, for eight years, he has provided invaluable assistance to veterans and their family members by establishing three Outreach sites for meeting with veterans and their families; editing and distributing a newsletter to veterans’ organizations and to veterans, now distributed online; and raising funds to purchase a van, which eight volunteers use to transport veterans to Dorn VA Medical Center, driving some twelve hundred miles a month; and

Whereas, his many and varied community involvements include membership in the Acacia Masonic Lodge, service as a past president of the East Columbia Optimist Club, and a past junior warden at St. Alban’s Episcopal Church; and

Whereas, his interest in historical and veterans’ affairs is noted in his membership in the South Carolina Historical Society, the South Caroliniana Society, The Citadel Historical Council, on the board of South Carolina Battleground Preservation Trust, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6740, and his service as past commander and district commander of American Legion Post #7; and

Whereas, his service has been commended with numerous awards, including the Order of the Silver Crescent by Governor James H. Hodges, the Jefferson Davis Historical Gold Medal by the South Carolina United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Disabled American Veterans’ Outstanding County Veterans Affairs Officer Award 2004‑2005, and the Daughters of the American Revolution Community Service Award by the Granby Chapter; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate are grateful that Gary R. Baker has served the veterans of Lexington County with insight and devotion and wish him much enjoyment and satisfaction in his well‑earned retirement. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the Senate of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, recognize and honor Gary R. Baker, the Lexington County Veterans Affairs Officer, upon the occasion of his retirement, and wish him continued success and happiness in all his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Gary R. Baker.

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