**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR, COMMEND, AND EXTEND DEEP APPRECIATION TO BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIAM J. GOTHARD, DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL FOR THE 81ST REGIONAL SUPPORT COMMAND AT FORT JACKSON, SOUTH CAROLINA FOR HIS MANY YEARS OF EXEMPLARY PUBLIC SERVICE AND TO OFFER BEST WISHES FOR A SATISFYING AND REWARDING RETIREMENT.

Whereas, Brigadier General William J. Gothard, born in Columbus, Georgia, raised in Vandalia, Ohio, and graduated from the University of Dayton with a Bachelor of Arts in General Studies, has distinguished himself by exceptional service from April 1978 to May 2014 while serving in several general officer commands and leadership assignments in the United States Army Reserve; and

Whereas, his outstanding leadership, relentless pursuit of excellence, and strategic vision for the future significantly contributed to the outstanding quality of the entire military force. He organized and led the Base Realignment and Closure relocation of the United States Army Reserve Headquarters from Fort McPherson, Georgia to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and he developed critical command relationships with United States European Command, initiating the first Civil Affairs support to United States Africa Command. Additionally, he served as Chief, Military Transition Team and senior United States advisor to the Iraqi 5th Division in Diyala Province, Iraq; and

Whereas, Brigadier General Gothard is now concluding a 36-year military career as the Deputy Commanding General of the 81st Regional Support Command, Fort Jackson, South Carolina, one of only four regional support commands in the United States Army Reserve; and

Whereas, the 81st Regional Support Command can trace its history to 1917 when the 81st Infantry Division was organized at Camp (now Fort) Jackson, South Carolina. It adopted the name “Wildcat” Division from Wildcat Creek, which still flows through the area today. In 1918, the WWI commander directed the 81st Division to create what became the first unit patch of the Army, a distinctive shoulder patch sporting a black wildcat on an olive circle. General John J. Pershing later praised the esprit de corps exhibited by the 81st and authorized other Army divisions to create distinctive patches of their own; and

Whereas, since September 11, 2001, the “Wildcats” have mobilized and deployed more than 28,000 soldiers and 1,300 units or parts of units in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Brigadier General Gothard was instrumental in leading the 81st Regional Support Command during its support of the drawdown in these conflicts; and

Whereas, Brigadier General Gothard’s vast experience has provided invaluable contributions to the Fort Jackson, South Carolina community and the success of the United States Army Reserve. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, honor, commend, and extend its deepest appreciation to Brigadier General William J. Gothard for his many years of exemplary public service and offer its best wishes for a satisfying and rewarding retirement.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Brigadier General William J. Gothard.

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