**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR TOMMY PRESTON, JR. ON THE OCCASION OF HIS ELECTION AS PRESIDENT‑ELECT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION “MY CAROLINA” AND TO WISH HIM MUCH SUCCESS IN HIS NEW POSITION.

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is pleased to learn that Tommy Preston, Jr. will become President‑Elect of the University of South Carolina Alumni Association “My Carolina” in July 2014 and begin his presidency in July 2016; and

Whereas, Mr. Preston, who will be the youngest and first African American to serve as President of the Alumni Association, also will serve as the Alumni member on the University’s Board of Trustees; and

Whereas, Mr. Preston brings with him a reputation for his commitment to academia and conviction to bringing more value to the education system throughout South Carolina, a passion that began at an early age; and

Whereas, Mr. Preston was raised in Clemson, SC, graduated from D.W. Daniel High School, and made his way to Columbia to attend the University of South Carolina where he served as a Bill and Melinda Gates Millennium Scholar, Student Body President, the student member of the University’s Board of Trustees, and Student Advisor for the U.S. Department of Education; and

Whereas, before graduating, Mr. Preston earned the prestigious Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award, the highest honor awarded to a University of South Carolina student; and

Whereas, he received an undergraduate degree with honors and a law degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law; and

Whereas, today, he currently serves the University as the Chair of the Board of Visitors; and

Whereas, outside of his work with the University, Mr. Preston has dedicated a tremendous amount of time and energy to improving education and inspiring a stronger academic future for children in South Carolina; and

Whereas, he founded Cocky’s Reading Express™, a program that has provided over 70,000 books to children in South Carolina and received funding from a range of notable companies and foundations, including the Barbara Bush Literacy Fund, BP America, and Verizon; and

Whereas, he also serves as the National President of the Gates Millennium Scholars Alumni Association, representing nearly 11,000 alumni who have received the scholarship since its inception in 1999; and

Whereas, Mr. Preston is a distinguished voice for education in our community and was recently selected by *The State* newspaper as one of its 20 Under 40 Leaders for his professional and civic efforts; and

Whereas, recognizing the direct connection between academic success and economic prosperity, Mr. Preston is equally committed to helping South Carolina thrive through his practice as an attorney at Nexsen Pruet in Columbia; and

Whereas, since beginning his legal studies and throughout his career, he has worked to preserve our nation’s judicial system and protect citizens’ access to justice, serving in a range of leadership roles through the American Bar Association and National Center for State Courts; and

Whereas, Mr. Preston and his wife, Felicia, who reside in Columbia, are active members of Midtown Fellowship. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, recognize and honor Tommy Preston, Jr. on the occasion of his election as President‑Elect of the University of South Carolina Alumni Association “My Carolina” and wish him much success in his new position.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mr. Tommy Preston, Jr.

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