**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR JAMES R. METTS, SHERIFF OF LEXINGTON COUNTY, FOR HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF LEXINGTON COUNTY AS THE CHIEF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER FOR FOUR DECADES.

Whereas, at the age of twenty-five, James R. Metts became the sheriff of Lexington County on December 15, 1972, becoming the youngest sheriff ever elected in the nation; and

Whereas, in 1975, the young sheriff was instrumental in the effort to build the Lexington County Law Enforcement Complex where the Lexington County Detention Center and headquarters for the Lexington County Sheriff’s Department are located; and

Whereas, he was the first sheriff in the State to hire school resource officers, victims’ assistance officers, and certified female law enforcement officers. He also created a team to focus on reducing drunk driving in the county; and

Whereas, under his able leadership, the Sheriff’s Department attained national accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies for the first time in 1999; and

Whereas, in 1998, Governor David Beasley awarded Sheriff Metts the Order of the Palmetto, the state’s highest civilian honor, and in 2004, Governor Mark Sanford awarded him the Order of the Silver Crescent, the highest civilian honor awarded in the State for community service; and

Whereas, Sheriff Metts created the Lexington County Criminal Domestic Violence Court, the first court in South Carolina exclusively devoted to criminal domestic violence cases, and hired two specially trained detectives to investigate and an attorney to prosecute these cases; and

Whereas, throughout his illustrious career, he received numerous other awards and commendations including the South Carolina Law Enforcement Officers’ Association’s Lifetime Achievement Award and the South Carolina National Safety Council’s Advocate of the Year Award. He is also the longest-serving Republican currently holding elected office in South Carolina; and

Whereas, Sheriff Metts, an Eagle Scout, received the Silver Beaver Award, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the Boy Scouts of America, and started the first Boy Scouts of America Explorer Post at the Sheriff’s Department, providing hundreds of teenagers with the opportunity to learn about a career in law enforcement; and

Whereas, he led the effort to build the Nancy K. Perry Children’s Shelter to house abused and neglected children in Lexington County and supported construction of the Dickerson Center for Children to provide psychological treatment for physically and sexually abused children and to assist law enforcement in gathering forensic evidence in abuse cases; and

Whereas, though Sheriff Metts is the recipient of many awards and accolades, it is his commitment to the citizens of his county and the State that are his true legacy. 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 James R. Metts, Sheriff of Lexington County, for his distinguished service to the citizens of Lexington County as the chief law enforcement officer for four decades.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Sheriff James R. Metts.

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