**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE ISABEL BLANCO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, ON RECEIVING THE CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS LEADERS OF EXCELLENCE AWARD.

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is pleased to learn that Isabel Blanco, deputy director of the South Carolina Department of Social Services, has been named a recipient of the Casey Family Programs Leaders of Excellence Award; and

Whereas, a recipient of the prestigious Casey Family Programs Leaders of Excellence Award is selected based on his or her agency’s success in: safely reducing the number of children in foster care under the age of eighteen; increasing the percentage of exits to permanency; increasing the percentage of exits to reunification; and positioning at or below the national standard rate of repeat maltreatment or demonstration of a decreasing rate in this area; and

Whereas, other selection considerations include whether: agency initiatives and activities are aligned with the mission, goals, and desired outcomes and are value driven and clearly outlined by the child‑welfare leader; the agency has developed a data‑driven child‑welfare system; the agency has developed or sustained a reform effort that has led to improved outcomes for children and families; and whether the agency has demonstrated success in engaging at a multisystemic level with other systems that serve children and families involved in the child‑welfare system; and

Whereas, Isabel Blanco became the deputy director of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) in March 2011, and has worked to gain extensive community and political buy‑in to make necessary practice and structural changes to DSS; and

Whereas, under her leadership, South Carolina has utilized Safety Roundtables and Permanency Roundtables, implemented Palmetto Power (P2) meetings that use data driven down to the case level to incite community stakeholder and staff support for change efforts, begun implementation of the Signs of Safety Practice model to ensure better family engagement for all cases, and utilized data to manage change efforts, as well as managing staff; and

Whereas, outcomes include steady overall reduction of 31.6 percent since Fiscal Year 2009. This rate is well below national average. In addition, the number of children entering care has decreased steadily since Fiscal Year 2010. In the first half of Fiscal Year 2012, nearly 371 more children exited care than entered. Further, the rate of reentry is lower (16.5 percent) than the national average (19.7 percent), and in Fiscal Year 2011 exits to permanence were above the national average at 90.9 percent; and

Whereas, grateful for her dedication to the welfare of this great state’s most precious resource, its children, the General Assembly takes great pleasure in commending Isabel Blanco on winning this latest acknowledgment of her outstanding work, the Casey Family Programs Leaders of Excellence Award. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, congratulate Isabel Blanco, deputy director of the South Carolina Department of Social Services, on receiving the Casey Family Programs Leaders of Excellence Award.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Isabel Blanco.

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