**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR MRS. MELBA F. BLAKELY FOR HER FORTY‑FOUR YEARS OF DEDICATED COMMUNITY SERVICE IN THE ELECTION PROCESS TO THE CITIZENS OF SPARTANBURG COUNTY.

Whereas, it is with great pleasure that the South Carolina House of Representatives honors individuals who freely give of their time and resources for the good of others; and

Whereas, Mrs. Melba F. Blakely has contributed valuable community service in the election process over a period approaching half a century to the citizens of Spartanburg County and is thereby worthy of praise; and

Whereas, beginning in 1970, Mrs. Blakely volunteered in voter‑registration drives, assisting voters at the polls and serving as a poll manager on election days. For the next twenty‑five years, she continued these efforts, making sure citizens were able to exercise their constitutional right to elect their leaders at the federal, state, county, and municipal levels; and

Whereas, in 1995, Mrs. Blakely was appointed to the Spartanburg County Election Commission. She began a more active role in the election process by participating in poll‑manager training to ensure that election workers were knowledgeable about election law and proficient and professional in processing voters, operating voting machines, counting ballots, and certifying election results. While doing all of this, she increased her own knowledge and expertise about elections in South Carolina; and

Whereas, Melba Blakely was named chair of the Spartanburg County Election Commission in 2006 and served in that capacity until March 2014. As chair, she guided the efforts of the other commissioners and shared her experiences with each of them, assisting them in acting as a team. She also was responsible for hiring county election directors. Further, she oversaw the director’s performance to ensure that all elections were conducted in a transparent manner. In diligently and effectively discharging her duties, she instilled confidence in Spartanburg County voters that their votes counted; and

Whereas, she also assembled a team to process all absentee votes on election nights, a task that sometimes started early in the day and ended late at night with checking and double‑checking ballots. Accuracy was her mantra; and

Whereas, as a spokesperson about the election process to numerous groups, she educated many about the importance of voting. She also was able to assist in recruiting additional people to serve as poll managers and to participate in other election activities; and

Whereas, always conducting herself with the utmost dignity and professionalism, she has inspired many with her dedicated, unselfish service; and

Whereas, the members of the House of Representatives recognize that the success of the State of South Carolina, the strength of its communities, and the vitality of American society as a whole depend, in great measure, upon the dedication of individuals like Melba Blakely who use their talents and resources to serve others. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor Mrs. Melba F. Blakely for her forty‑four years of dedicated community service in the election process to the citizens of Spartanburg County.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Mrs. Melba F. Blakely.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑