**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND REVEREND DR. KIRK HUDSON NEELY FOR HIS SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PALMETTO STATE IN THE FIELDS OF EDUCATION, SERVICE, LITERATURE, AND FAITH.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are grateful for the beneficial impact and sacrificial services of highly‑regarded church leaders such as Reverend Dr. Kirk Hudson Neely; and

Whereas, Kirk Neely earned a bachelor’s degree in biology and chemistry from Furman University in 1966, and he received a master of divinity in 1970 and a doctor of ministry in pastoral counseling in 1973, both from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He pursued postdoctoral studies from Harvard Divinity School at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, under a Merrill Fellowship in 1980; and

Whereas, during his early ministry, he served in Kentucky as a pastoral counselor and chaplain at a state mental hospital, a child evaluation clinic, an institution for juvenile offenders, and a general hospital; and

Whereas, from 1973 to 1980, Dr. Neely served as the pastor of family ministries at Knollwood Baptist Church in Winston‑Salem, North Carolina, and from 1980 to 1996, he served as an associate pastor of family ministries and the director of the Pastoral Counseling Center at First Baptist Church in Spartanburg; and

Whereas, a native of Spartanburg, he returned to his hometown where he has faithfully served since 1996 as the senior pastor of Morningside Baptist Church, which broadcasts its services and sermons on radio programs across the Southeast; and

Whereas, Dr. Neely has authored numerous inspirational and entertaining books and short stories and is a frequent columnist and featured writer for various newspapers and magazines; and

Whereas, deeply committed to his community, he has served on various educational, nonprofit, and religious commissions, boards, and committees in the City and County of Spartanburg; and

Whereas, among his many honors for outstanding service, he was awarded the 2002 Four Avenues of Service Award by the Rotary Club, the 2003 Toast of the Town by the Salvation Army, the 2009 Distinguished Eagle Scout Award, and the 2010 Distinguished Citizen of the Year by Wofford College. He has also been named an Honorary Kentucky Colonel for his distinguished service to the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and

Whereas, a master gardener, Pastor Neely demonstrates his creativity in his own garden and enjoys his backyard, which has been certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a wildlife refuge; and

Whereas, he and his beloved wife, Clare, live in the home built by his grandparents after the Great Depression in 1937. Together they reared five fine children and have been blessed with twelve wonderful grandchildren; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are pleased to honor Kirk Neely for his meaningful and sacrificial service for the spiritual, educational, and aesthetic well-being of our fellow citizens. 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 commend Reverend Dr. Kirk Hudson Neely for his significant contributions to the Palmetto State in the fields of education, service, literature, and faith.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Reverend Dr. Kirk Hudson Neely.

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