**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

REQUESTING THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO HONOR AND REMEMBER THE SUPREME SACRIFICE MADE BY DEPUTY SHERIFF ERNEST CHRISTIAN “CHRIS” POTTER, III OF THE KERSHAW COUNTY SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT BY ERECTING APPROPRIATE MARKERS OR SIGNS ALONG I‑20 IN KERSHAW COUNTY AT MILE MARKER 87.9 EAST AND THE CORRESPONDING MILE MARKER ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY THAT CONTAIN THE WORDS “IN MEMORY OF DEPUTY SHERIFF ERNEST CHRISTIAN ‘CHRIS’ POTTER, III”.

Whereas, Ernest Christian Potter, III was born on September 1, 1950, and raised in Blaney (now Elgin) South Carolina. “Chris” was outgoing and friendly and enjoyed having fun and spending time with his friends. He grew up working in his father’s family’s grocery store, Potter’s Grocery; and

Whereas, Chris graduated from Blaney High School, earned his Associate’s Degree from Spartanburg Methodist College, and attended the University of South Carolina and Georgia Southern University. He returned home and briefly worked for DuPont in Lugoff, South Carolina; and

Whereas, Chris’s willingness to help those in need, his desire to better his community, and his passion for law enforcement led him to pursue a career in law enforcement; and

Whereas, in October 1973, Chris was hired as a deputy sheriff by Kershaw County Sheriff Hector DeBruhl. Recognizing Chris’s high level of maturity and strong sense of responsibility, and despite his young age, the Sheriff issued him a patrol car earlier than other deputies; and

Whereas, on February 22, 1974, Deputy Potter and his partner, Deputy J. C. Tollison, stopped along I-20 in Kershaw County to question two men who were hitchhiking. As the deputies stepped out of their patrol car a third man surprised them from behind a guardrail. One of the men opened fire on the deputies, killing Deputy Potter. Deputy Tollison was seriously wounded. The deputies were not aware that the men were responsible for killing a Forest Acres police officer earlier that day; and

Whereas, at the time of his death, Deputy Potter was 23 years old and had been a deputy sheriff for only four months. He was married to Jeannie Potter who was pregnant with their son. Ernest Christian Potter, IV was born six months after his father’s death; and

Whereas, “Little Chris” grew up as the mascot for the Kershaw County Sheriff’s Department. Jeannie Potter raised Chris as a single mother and received support from family, friends, and the law enforcement community. Jeannie worked at the Kershaw County Sheriff’s Department for fourteen years and is currently the Executive Assistant to the Speaker of the House; and

Whereas, Little Chris shared his father’s passion for law enforcement, and today he is a corporal, serving as a deputy sheriff under Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott; and

Whereas, Deputy Potter’s parents, Ernest C. Potter, Jr. and Gladys, are deceased. His brother Johnny and sister Patty live in nearby Elgin, South Carolina. His son Chris and his wife Christie and their two children, Christopher and Victoria, live in Elgin, South Carolina; and

Whereas, Deputy Potter gave his life in the line of duty, protecting the people of Kershaw County and the citizens of the State of South Carolina; and

Whereas, Deputy Potter was a distinguished and highly dedicated law enforcement officer, respected and admired by his colleagues and by the citizens of Kershaw County; and

Whereas, there is no greater or more courageous sacrifice a man can make than to lay down his life for others, as did Deputy Potter; and

Whereas, it would be fitting and proper for the State of South Carolina to recognize Deputy Potter by erecting in his memory appropriate markers or signs along I‑20 in Kershaw County. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the General Assembly request that the Department of Transportation erect appropriate markers or signs along I‑20 in Kershaw County at mile marker 87.9 East and at the corresponding mile marker on the opposite side of the interstate that contain the words “In Memory of Deputy Sheriff Ernest Christian ‘Chris’ Potter, III”.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Department of Transportation and to the family of Deputy Sheriff Ernest Christian “Chris” Potter, III.

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