**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO DECLARE MAY 15, 2015, TO JUNE 15, 2015, AS A TIME SET ASIDE FOR VULNERABLE ADULT AND ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS IN SOUTH CAROLINA AND TO JOIN OTHER STATES AND NATIONS IN RECOGNIZING WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY ON JUNE 15, 2015.

Whereas, vulnerable and elderly adults deserve to live in safety and with dignity; and

Whereas, vulnerable and elder adult abuse is a genuine and growing problem in South Carolina’s midlands and nationally that damages public health and threatens millions of our parents, grandparents, and friends; and

Whereas, the South Carolina Department of Social Services in fiscal year 2014 reported one thousand five hundred twenty‑eight substantiated abuse claims involving a vulnerable adult victim; and

Whereas, those from all socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds may be targets of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, which can occur within families or at the hands of caregivers and workers in long‑term care facilities and communities; and

Whereas, one in ten Americans over age sixty nationally have experienced some type of abuse, neglect, or exploitation including physical, psychological, and financial abuse; and

Whereas, national and international research shows that abuse of vulnerable and older adults is grossly underreported; and

Whereas, protecting our vulnerable and elder adults is a community responsibility, and it is imperative that we work together to help reduce and prevent abuse; and

Whereas, all residents should watch for signs of abuse such as physical trauma, withdrawal, depression, anxiety, and fear of family members, friends, or caregivers and report suspected abuse or exploitation to Adult Protective Services at 803‑704‑7444; and

Whereas, combating abuse and empowering older people will help improve the quality of life for all seniors across this State, allowing them to continue to live as independently as possible, adding to their overall well‑being; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives encourages all citizens to learn the signs of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, to take a stand against it, and to participate in community efforts to support and improve the safety and well‑being of vulnerable and elder adults and secure their right to live free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, declare May 15, 2015, to June 15, 2015, as a time set aside for Vulnerable Adult and Elder Abuse Awareness in South Carolina and join other states and nations in recognizing World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15, 2015.

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