**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE SHANNON KELAHAN‑PIERSON FOR BEING CHOSEN TO REPRESENT SOUTH CAROLINA AT THE INTERNATIONAL ROSE OF TRALEE FESTIVAL IN IRELAND.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that Shannon Kelahan‑Pierson was chosen at the first Rose Ball held at the Dunes Golf and Beach Club in Myrtle Beach on Saturday, March 21, 2015, to represent the South Carolina Rose of Tralee Centre at the Regional Festival in Port Laoise, County Laois, Ireland; and

Whereas, at the Rose of Tralee Regional Festival held from May 28 through 30, 2015, Shannon Kelahan‑Pierson was chosen as one of thirty-two Rose entrants to represent their centres at the 2015 International Rose of Tralee Festival in Tralee, County Kerry, Ireland, from August 14 through 18; and

Whereas, the international competition, which is held annually and celebrated in Irish communities around the world, was inspired by a nineteenth‑century ballad about a woman named Mary known as the Rose of Tralee because of her beauty. Originally an annual town event, the festival was discontinued in the wake of post‑war emigration but in 1957 was resurrected in Tralee, complete with a Carnival Queen; and

Whereas, a third-year student at Coastal Carolina University, twenty-one year old Shannon Kelahan‑Pierson is the first Rose to be chosen from South Carolina in the fifty-six years since the festival resumed; and

Whereas, drawn to study marine science by a lifelong love of the ocean, Shannon co‑founded a program that enables students to conduct their own research at one of the most diverse artificial reefs in the State; and

Whereas, in addition to her academic endeavors, Shannon values her family, friends, and volunteer work. She is very close to her parents and grandparents, but has an especially strong bond with her sister, Colleen, having grown up with Irish dancing and causing “Irish chaos” together; and

Whereas, the Kelahan‑Pierson family’s strong sense of pride in their Irish heritage harkens back to their ancestors from County Armagh and County Monaghan, Ireland; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives appreciates this “Rose of the Summer” for representing the Palmetto State in Ireland, and expect her to win the judges with “not her beauty alone,” but with “the truth in her eyes,” as well. 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 congratulate Shannon Kelahan‑Pierson for being chosen to represent South Carolina at the International Rose of Tralee Festival in Ireland.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Shannon Kelahan‑Pierson.

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