**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE SIGNIFICANT SERVICE OF TRI‑COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE AND TO CELEBRATE ITS SEVENTY‑FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF PROVIDING ELECTRICITY IN THE PALMETTO STATE.

Whereas, for seventy‑five years Tri‑County Electric Cooperative has served its membership guided by seven core principles: voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member’s economic participation, autonomy and independence, education and training, cooperation among cooperatives, and concern for community; and

Whereas, one of twenty non‑profit, consumer‑owned electric distribution systems serving the rural and suburban areas of South Carolina, Tri‑County Electric Cooperative was organized by people in Calhoun County after many years of attempting to get other power suppliers to provide electric service to their sparsely populated rural areas; and

Whereas, in the early 1930s, electricity in South Carolina was confined to towns and cities where power suppliers could sell current to large groups of customers over small areas of land. It costs much more to serve rural areas because it takes more miles of line to sell power to fewer people. To recover those costs and make a profit, power companies would have to charge rates higher than people could afford; and

Whereas, in 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced relief projects to help the nation recover from the Great Depression and passed an executive order creating the Rural Electrification Administration, which today is part of the United States Department of Agriculture known as Rural Utilities Service; and

Whereas, the state’s leaders knew that if South Carolina were to regain the competitive economic position it had lost in the Civil War, its rural areas would have to be brought into the twentieth century, and that meant availability to electricity. If profit‑making companies could not or would not provide it, then perhaps non‑profit systems could; and

Whereas, many consumers in the Palmetto State became interested in organizing electric supply systems through non‑profit electric cooperatives. County agents from the Clemson Extension Service, instrumental in forming most of the co‑ops in the State, explained that it was possible for the consumers to own their own company through the cooperative system; and

Whereas, on June 14, 1940, Tri‑County Electric Cooperative in St. Matthews received its charter and with five employees began serving 394 members over 122 miles of line. Seventy‑five years later, it has fifty‑eight employees and serves 17,860 accounts and 2,697 miles of line in six counties: Calhoun, Orangeburg, Richland, Lexington, Kershaw, and Sumter counties; and

Whereas, although the Cooperative’s core mission is to provide reliable, affordable electric service to its membership, it also has become an economic engine for development and job creation. By working with state and county governments, Tri‑County has helped attract global industrial leaders, such as Southeast Frozen Foods, Zeus Industries, Starbucks Roasting Facility, and Sigmatex; and

Whereas, the South Carolina Senate appreciates the three‑quarters of a century that Tri‑County Electric Cooperative has provided electricity, productivity, and opportunity to the citizens of South Carolina, and the members look forward to its continued prosperity and growth in the days ahead. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and honor the significant service of Tri‑County Electric Cooperative and celebrate its seventy‑fifth anniversary of providing electricity in the Palmetto State.

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