**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE ABBEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM, COACHES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR AN OUTSTANDING SEASON AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM FOR WINNING THE 2016 CLASS AA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the members of the Abbeville High School boys basketball team took top honors at the state competition held in Columbia on Saturday, March 5, 2016; and

Whereas, to the wild cheers of their exuberant fans, the Abbeville Panthers defeated Timberland High School 58‑55 in a nail‑biting finish to garner the school’s first‑ever basketball state championship; and

Whereas, just a few months previously, the Abbeville football team captured the state trophy with several of the same teammates as the basketball team, many of the athletes having played both sports together since recreation league during their elementary school days. Abbeville is the first team to capture titles in both football and basketball since Gaffney accomplished it in 2012; and

Whereas, the Panther offense made a slow start against Timberland in the final game but caught up by the end of the first quarter, and the teams went back and forth on the scoreboard; and

Whereas, both the third and the fourth quarters began with a tie, and with only two minutes remaining in the championship game, Abbeville was holding on to the lead by only one point; and

Whereas, the Timberland Wolves took the lead away, and the teams traded the lead until the Panthers put up a three‑point shot, made two points from the free‑throw line, and made another layup to go ahead by five points. By the time the Timberland offense made its final push, the Wolves could not bridge the gap and fell to the Panthers 58‑55; and

Whereas, Abbeville’s Joseph Battle, who scored 32 points for the Panthers in the championship game, was named Class AA Player of the Year. Teammates Ventray Belton and Jamie Gray each scored 9 points in the final game, Taiquan Moore scored 5, and Javon Belcher 3. Javon Belcher had the added satisfaction of winning both football and basketball titles with his father on the sidelines, as assistant coach in football and head coach in basketball; and

Whereas, in a sport that demands strength, strategy, and quickness, Coach Doug Belcher and his capable coaching staff maximized their own athletic ability to forge a championship team and teach these athletes lessons that will prove invaluable both on and off the court; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives appreciates the pride and recognition that the Abbeville basketball players have brought to their school and their community, and the members look to hear of their continued accomplishments in the seasons to come. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor the Abbeville High School boys varsity basketball team, coaches, and school officials for an outstanding season and congratulate them for winning the 2016 Class AA State Championship title.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. Charles Costner, Principal of Abbeville High School, and to Coach Doug Belcher.

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