**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO SALUTE MELISSA STOCKWELL OF ILLINOIS, AMERICAN PARATRIATHLETE AND FORMER PARALYMPIC SWIMMER AND U.S. ARMY OFFICER, TO COMMEND HER FOR HER DEDICATED MILITARY SERVICE TO THIS COUNTRY, AND TO EXTEND TO HER A WARM WELCOME TO SOUTH CAROLINA AS SHE SPEAKS TO THE STUDENTS OF SLATER‑MARIETTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN GREENVILLE COUNTY.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that on Thursday, May 19, 2016, Melissa Stockwell of Illinois, American paratriathlete and former paralympic swimmer and U.S. Army officer, will speak to the students of Slater‑Marietta Elementary School in Greenville County as an extension of the school’s Veteran’s Day program; and

Whereas, born April 23, 1980, Melissa Stockwell selflessly served her country in the U.S. Army. As a first lieutenant, she was the first female soldier to lose a limb (her left leg) in the Iraq War, a loss resulting from a roadside bomb explosion that occurred when she was leading a convoy in Baghdad. For her service in Iraq, she was awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. Having retired from the military, she works as a prosthetist; and

Whereas, even though Melissa has always been athletic, she had no idea that her greatest athletic triumphs would come after she woke up in the Baghdad Emergency Room in early 2004. After recovery from her injury in Iraq, she became the first Iraq veteran chosen for the Paralympics. She competed in three swimming events, the 100‑meter butterfly, 100‑meter freestyle, and 400‑meter freestyle, at the 2008 Summer Paralympics and finished sixth, fifth, and fourth in her heats, respectively. She also served as the U.S. team’s flagbearer at the closing ceremonies; and

Whereas, turning to triathlon after the Beijing Paralympics, Melissa was selected to represent her country in the 2010 ITU Paratriathlon World Championships in Budapest. She won the Women’s TRI‑2 (above‑knee amputee) class and then successfully defended her TRI‑2 World Champion title in 2011 and 2012. She is a multiple U.S. National Paratriathlon Champion in her classification and was named USAT Paratriathlete of the Year in 2010 and 2011; and

Whereas, in addition, Melissa is a Level 1 USAT Triathlon coach and co‑founder of Dare2Tri, a Chicago‑based triathlon club specifically for athletes with disabilities. She served on the board of directors of the Wounded Warrior Project from 2005 to 2014 and is in demand as a motivational speaker. Further, she has been featured by the *Chicago Tribune*, *USA Triathlon*, CNN, *Sports Illustrated*, *People*, and other media outlets; and

Whereas, with much admiration for her justly celebrated achievements, the House takes great pleasure in welcoming Melissa Stockwell to South Carolina on the occasion of her address to the children of Slater‑Marietta Elementary School. The members trust that her visit to the Palmetto State will be an enjoyable one. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, salute Melissa Stockwell of Illinois, American paratriathlete and former paralympic swimmer and U.S. Army officer, commend her for her dedicated military service to this country, and extend to her a warm welcome to South Carolina as she speaks to the students of Slater‑Marietta Elementary School in Greenville County.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Melissa Stockwell.

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