**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO DECLARE APRIL 2018 AS “SECOND CHANCE MONTH” IN SOUTH CAROLINA AND TO COMMEND THIS OBSERVANCE TO ALL CITIZENS OF THIS GREAT STATE.

Whereas, every person is endowed with human dignity and value; and

Whereas, redemption and second chances are American values; and

Whereas, an estimated sixty‑five million Americans have a criminal record; and

Whereas, individuals returning from prison and those who have paid their debt after committing a crime face significant barriers, also known as collateral consequences; and

Whereas, individuals with a criminal history often struggle to find housing, employment, or education; regain voting rights; volunteer in their community; and they often must pay for significant debt that arises as a result of their conviction and incarceration; and

Whereas, the Council of State Governments reports that the number of legal collateral consequences of a criminal conviction exceeds forty‑eight thousand; and

Whereas, these barriers can contribute to recidivism, which increases victimization and decreases public safety; and

Whereas, the stigma and legal barriers associated with a criminal record result in lost human capital and lost economic output for the United States; and

Whereas, the anniversary of the death of Charles Colson, who used his second chance following incarceration for a Watergate‑related crime to found Prison Fellowship, the nation’s largest outreach to prisoners and their families, falls on April twenty-first; and

Whereas, a robust coalition of businesses, congregations, and other organizations across the country has celebrated Second Chance Month since April 2017 through events, Second Chance 5Ks, briefings, social media campaigns, advocacy, press, and other activities; and

Whereas, the designation of April as Second Chance Month would contribute to increased public awareness about the need for closure for those who have paid their debt and would encourage the creation of opportunities for individuals, employers, congregations, and communities to extend second chances. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, declare April 2018 as “Second Chance Month” in South Carolina and commend this observance to all citizens of this great State.

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