**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE BEN LIPPEN VARSITY FOOTBALL TEAM, COACHES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR A REMARKABLE SEASON AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM FOR WINNING THE 2016 SOUTH CAROLINA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL ASSOCIATION CLASS 3A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the Ben Lippen football team of Richland County took top honors at the state competition held at Charlie W. Johnson Stadium in Columbia on Saturday, November 19, 2016; and

Whereas, to the cheers of their exuberant fans, the Ben Lippen Falcons defeated Porter Gaud School 27‑21 in overtime to claim the football program’s first state championship in its twenty‑three‑year history and to finish the season with an outstanding 10-2 season; and

Whereas, the Falcons posted the first score when junior Bryce Thompson, who has committed to Virginia Tech, reversed left to Ryan Fleming who made a 52 yard-run for the first touchdown. After Jonas Lundberg’s successful PAT, Ben Lippen led 7‑0 with three minutes left in the first quarter; and

Whereas, late in the second quarter, the Porter Gaud Cyclones found the end zone and headed to the lockers with a 7‑7 tie; and

Whereas, with less than six seconds of play remaining in the third quarter, Ben Lippen took the lead when Bryce Thompson scampered into the end zone with an eight‑yard carry, but the Falcons failed on the point after try for a 13‑7 lead; and

Whereas, almost halfway through the fourth quarter, Porter Gaud rushed for 78 yards in 17 plays and landed a successful kick for the extra point to take the Cyclones’ only lead in the championship game 14‑13; and

Whereas, Ben Lippen made an immediate reply, driving 80 yards in four plays, as Bryce Thompson ran 59 yards for a touchdown, and giving the Falcons a 19‑14 lead. Quarterback Patrick McClure targeted the ball to Chris Haynesworth, who managed a successful one‑handed catch deep in the end zone for a two‑point conversion, despite the Cyclones swirling around Haynesworth, and Ben Lippen led 21‑14 with five and a half minutes of play remaining; and

Whereas, the Cyclones returned the kickoff, driving 69 yards in eleven plays and tying the game 21‑21 with two and a half minutes remaining. Both teams failed to score again during regulation; and

Whereas, after Ben Lippen’s defense denied an overtime score to the Cyclones on four successive rushing attempts, the Falcons’ “Brick Formation” provided the nest for their star tailback Bryce Thompson to score on Ben Lippen’s first offensive play of overtime and take the team’s first football championship trophy; and

Whereas, senior lineman Garrison Moore, who finished with twenty‑three tackles including a sack, made the block that provided Bryce Thompson’s path for the overtime touchdown and secured the victory for the Falcons; and

Whereas, in a sport that demands strength, expertise, and determination, Head Coach Derek White and his skilled coaching staff maximized their own experience and passion to forge a championship‑caliber team and teach these athletes lessons that will prove invaluable through life both on and off the gridiron; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives appreciates the pride and recognition that the Ben Lippen football players have brought to their school and their community and look to hear of their continued accomplishments in the days ahead. 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 honor the Ben Lippen varsity football team, coaches, and school officials for a remarkable season and congratulate them for winning the 2016 South Carolina Independent School Association Class 3A State Championship title.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Principal Max Russell and Coach Derek White.

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