**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR KATHERINE “KATIE” JOHNSON, A SOUTH CAROLINA NATIVE AND FORMER SLAVE WHO LEFT A LEGACY FOR HER DESCENDANTS THAT STILL RESOUNDS AND INSPIRES TODAY.

Whereas, born between 1820 and 1830 in Orangeburg, Katherine “Katie” Johnson was the African‑American daughter of slaves. At the time of Katie’s birth, her father, William, was just sixteen years old, and her mother, Luanna, was twenty‑four. Both parents were born in Jamaica; and

Whereas, Katie was what some slave historians refer to as a “mule”; in short, her primary responsibility was to become pregnant and deliver laborers for various plantation owners. Her Native American heritage made her a “special breed” for those slave owners hoping to create a hybrid labor force in much the same way cattle farmers experiment with methods in developing an improved heifer or bull. Research indicates Katherine Johnson gave birth to between fifteen and twenty children during her lifetime. She bore children for her owners and was “loaned out” to other plantation owners to produce new laborers for them, as well; and

Whereas, sometime in 1835, Katie’s owner, one Daniel Rush, relocated his family and slaves from Orangeburg to Lowndes County, Alabama, where historic documents show Katie was later baptized at Bethany Baptist Church in Lowndes County. In 1852, Otis Rush, eldest son of Daniel, moved his family, Katie, and several other slaves to Polk County, Texas. Here, Katie produced more slaves until Emancipation. In 1870, she married a former slave named Mr. Lee Robinson; and

Whereas, because black mothers were not allowed to deliver their children in hospitals in rural Texas, Katie worked as a midwife after slavery. She safely delivered dozens of black children throughout Walker County, San Jacinto County, and Polk County, Texas. Sometime between 1910 and 1920, Katie died. She is buried in the Old Cemetery for Negroes and slaves in Point Blank, Texas; and

Whereas, Katie Johnson endured the indignities of slavery in hope that her descendants would someday know freedom. Her great‑great‑great grandchildren wrestled with history for more than twenty‑five years to uncover her history. Today, they refer to her as the “Angel of Endurance”; and

Whereas, indeed, the legacy of Katie Johnson lives on in her descendants. They have played in Super Bowl Championship games; they performed eight‑hour continuous surgery to help save the life of Reginald Denny during the 1992 Los Angeles riots; they actively serve in President Obama’s administration; they have contributed distinctive military service; and they serve their communities daily through teaching, the legal profession, engineering, the medical industry, business, entrepreneurship, and civic duty. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize and honor Katherine “Katie” Johnson, a South Carolina native and former slave who left a legacy for her descendants that still resounds and inspires today.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Keith Kelley on behalf of the descendants of Katie Johnson.

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