**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR MARA HORTON JONES OF KERSHAW COUNTY FOR HER TWELVE YEARS OF DEDICATED AND OUTSTANDING SERVICE ON THE KERSHAW COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND, UPON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT FROM THE BOARD, TO WISH HER MUCH HAPPINESS AND FULFILLMENT IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

Whereas, for twelve years, the Kershaw County School District Board of Trustees has enjoyed the benefit of the dedication, experience, and leadership of Mara Horton Jones, who in December 2016 stepped down from her post as a member of the board; and

Whereas, this lifelong resident of Kershaw County received her early education in the Kershaw County School District. In further preparation for her career, Mrs. Jones earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s degree in education with a specialty in rehabilitation counseling from the University of South Carolina; and

Whereas, in recognition of her achievements, in 1995 she was named one of three recipients in the United States to be awarded an internship at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, by the Rehabilitation Services Administration; and

Whereas, having returned home to Lugoff, Mrs. Jones began her career in counseling and education at Columbia’s Carolina Children’s Home, a residential treatment facility serving adolescents and youth who have been abused, abandoned, neglected, and/or emotionally traumatized. In addition, she has worked in the Governor’s office in the Division of Foster Care Review as its Medicaid review specialist, and she taught special education at Lugoff‑Elgin High School. She currently serves as deputy director of the ALPHA Behavioral Health Center, where she has worked since 2003. She is a licensed professional counselor and nationally certified addictions counselor; and

Whereas, during her service on the Kershaw County School District Board of Trustees, Mara Jones has been an important part of the successful completion of a number of board projects. These include Phase I of the Facilities Equalization Program; implementation of one‑to‑one technology in grades 3‑8 and increased STEM offerings; attainment of the highest bond rating in the history of the district; and strong increases in academic achievement, graduation rates, and students going on to postsecondary education; and

Whereas, further accomplishments during her board service include expanded partnership with Central Carolina Technical College, increased collaboration with community partners to provide additional services to students, and voter approval of a bond referendum for Phase II of the Facilities Equalization Program; and

Whereas, Mara Jones believes strongly in personal involvement with her community, and her convictions have led her to serve that community, as well as the broader community of South Carolina, in several capacities. Past or present service includes membership with St. John’s United Methodist Church and the Lugoff Optimist Club and service as Fifth Circuit representative on the South Carolina Division of Foster Care Review Board. Since her election to Seat 1 on the Kershaw County School District Board of Trustees in 2005, Mrs. Jones has served as finance chair, board chaplain, vice chair, and chair (2012‑2015); and

Whereas, the House of Representatives, profoundly grateful for Mara Jones’s many years of faithfulness in serving the people of South Carolina, takes great pleasure in commending her for her contributions to higher education in this great State. 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 Mara Horton Jones of Kershaw County for her twelve years of dedicated and outstanding service on the Kershaw County School District Board of Trustees and, upon the occasion of her retirement from the board, wish her much happiness and fulfillment in the years ahead.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mara Horton Jones.

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