**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEND AND APPLAUD SINDARIUS THORNWELL OF LANCASTER COUNTY FOR EARNING THE CONSIDERABLE HONOR OF SEC PLAYER OF THE YEAR.

Whereas, on Tuesday March 7, 2017, University of South Carolina senior Sindarius Thornwell was named SEC Player of the Year, the first in USC history, after completing a stellar season; and

Whereas, standing at six feet and five inches, Sindarius grew up in Lancaster. At around the age of eight, he began playing a modified form of basketball made necessary by a lack of basketball hoops at his apartment complex. In these early days, he set the groundwork for skills that mark his performance to this day. He learned to maneuver around stronger peers and score over bigger guys. Watching him on the court now shows how those many hours spent playing forged the man. He drives with reckless abandon and wild determination to get to the hoop, taking on any and all comers, striving for success by any means necessary; and

Whereas, he has a mindset of toughness and grit that comes from a close‑knit family that molded him on and off the court. He’s the product of the discipline of a single mother, Sharicka Thornwell and his uncle Dajuan Thornwell, who was his first coach and biggest cheerleader, teaching him how to dribble with his left hand, running him through drills and workouts every day, and helping him develop a jump shot; and

Whereas, his on‑court achievements are the result of a medley of hard work, willingness to listen, acceptance of coaching, and a relentless desire to reach higher. He has not had an easy road along the way. USC’s basketball team was not known for its wins when he joined the team as a freshman in 2013. During his freshman season, the Gamecocks won fourteen games, and in his sophomore season, they won seventeen games. He could boast a scoring average in the double‑digits, but knee issues were causing his performance to suffer. After his sophomore season, he had surgery to fix knee tendinitis and endured all of the pain and recovery associated with it. Through hard work and perseverance, Sindarius came back and impressed all those around him with his maturity in handling adversity and his strength in the face of obstacles; and

Whereas, at the start of his senior season, Sindarius was unable to play in six games, but he didn’t sulk. He instead saw his chance to help keep the team pumped and became the loudest fan at the games. When the suspension ended, Sindarius came back like he was shot out of cannon into SEC play. His mind was locked on dominating on the court and winning games to make up for his absences. He never let up; and

Whereas, on the fateful Tuesday, Sindarius hopped in his car to return to Columbia after a trip to Lancaster to visit his family. When he got to Colonial Life Arena, Head Coach Frank Martin informed Sindarius, surrounded by his teammates in the weight room, that he had won the honor of SEC Player of the Year. As Frank Martin said, “He is a winner. He didn’t join a winner and continue to win. He joined a place that had no success for a long time and took on the burden of winning. He embraced it and never ran away from it and changed the whole culture and the whole expectation where it matters‑‑in the locker room”; and

Whereas, Sindarius hopes his legacy is built on the pride he has for the State of South Carolina, which he tries to bring to the court constantly with the intensity with which he plays. Tangibly, the evidence of Sindarius’s career will be displayed in Colonial Life Arena for decades to come as the first SEC Player of the Year from USC, a member of a team that has won fifty‑seven games in the past two seasons, and the fifth‑leading scorer in school history; and

Whereas, it is altogether fitting and proper that the members of the House of Representatives pause in their deliberations to recognize and laud the prestige and awareness this exceptional son of the Palmetto State has brought. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the House of Representatives, by this resolution, commend and applaud Sindarius Thornwell of Lancaster County for earning the considerable honor of SEC Player of the Year.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Sindarius Thornwell.

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