**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEMORATE THE LIFE OF DENNIS SMALLS AND TO DECLARE APRIL 14, 2018, AS “DENNIS SMALLS DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA IN HONOR OF THE LEGACY HE LEAVES BEHIND.

Whereas, the members of the House of Representatives of South Carolina wish to declare April 14, 2018, as “Dennis Smalls Day” in South Carolina to memorialize Dennis Smalls for the courage he showed as a teacher, trainer, advocator, educator, motivator, and fighter for cancer patients everywhere; and

Whereas, Dennis Smalls was born on May 14, 1964, in Moncks Corner, South Carolina. He departed life on Wednesday, February 14, 2018, in St. Stephen, South Carolina; and

Whereas, he was educated in the Berkeley County school system, graduating from St. Stephen High School in 1982. Upon graduation, he enlisted in the United States Army as a logistics specialist, and while serving his country he pursued a degree in electrical engineering at Limestone College. After twenty years, he retired with the rank of Sergeant First Class (E‑7), and his years of service were marked by a faithful commitment to duty and his nation; and

Whereas, Dennis Smalls was a faithful soldier for the Lord. He served as a dedicated member of Redeemer Reformed Episcopal Church from childhood to adulthood. As a committed servant of the kingdom, he was very active in Sunday school. He served as the assistant superintendent from 1999 through 2003. He also held the position of vice president of the Sunday School Convention of the Diocese of the Southeast for one year. Subsequently, he served as the superintendent of Sunday school diligently until his passing; and

Whereas, in 2002, he married the love of his life, Vanessa J. Edwards. Together, they were blessed with one son, Tavian Cole Smalls; and

Whereas, Dennis Smalls possessed a passion for physical fitness. Because of this interest, he acquired his training certification and worked at Gold’s Gym as a personal trainer. After receiving a diagnosis of cancer, he made it his mission to increase awareness and share his experience with anyone who cared to hear, using his testimony to educate both men and women on breast cancer and the importance of being health conscious. He travelled across the Carolinas and Georgia promoting awareness and prevention to both men and women; and

Whereas, as a natural‑born leader, he eagerly led “The Race for the Cure” with Susan G. Komen Foundation each year and also was actively involved in the annual Cooper River Bridge Run and the Charleston Dragon Boat, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the mental and physical wellness of cancer survivors and their community through the sport of dragon boating; and

Whereas, an avid sports fan, he especially loved watching the San Francisco 49ers and the Chicago Bulls; and

Whereas, Dennis Smalls’ sustained faith in God coupled with his unyielding love for his family empowered him to fight cancer like the valiant soldier he was. Left to cherish fond memories are his loving and devoted wife, Vanessa, and their son, Tavian; his daughter, Sage; his parents and four siblings; and a host of family and close friends; and

Whereas, the members of the House of Representatives are grateful for the legacy of love and commitment with which Dennis Smalls lived his life and offer their heartfelt sorrow to his family and friends. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, commemorate the life of Dennis Smalls and to declare April 14, 2018, as “Dennis Smalls Day” in South Carolina in honor of the legacy he leaves behind.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the family of Dennis Smalls.

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