**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE HAMMOND SCHOOL WESTERN EQUESTRIAN TEAM, THE COACH, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR A STELLAR SEASON AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM FOR WINNING THE 2018 SOUTH CAROLINA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL ASSOCIATION STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE.

Whereas, the House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the members of the Hammond Western equestrian team took top honors at the South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA) state competition held on Saturday, April 14, 2018; and

Whereas, to the delight of their devoted fans, the Hammond Skyhawk Western equestrian team defeated a fine, competitive field of comers, besting their nearest rival Ben Lippen School; and

Whereas, in competition, a rider is made to ride on a horse other than their own without any practice with the horse, depending solely on the description of the horse given by the horse provider; and

Whereas, in horsemanship competition, a rider shows a horse in an arena with other horses at a walk, jog, and lope. The judge scores how confidently the rider controls the horse on a loose rein with low head carriage; and

Whereas, reining competition allots a score of 70 to horse and rider who receive additional points or lose points on a performance of a precise pattern of circles at a lope and gallop with flying changes of lead; rapid spins, turns in one spot on the haunches; rollbacks, rapid turns followed by a gallop in the opposite direction; and the sliding stop executed from a full gallop, a sure crowd pleaser. A score above 70 is remarkable on the high school level; and

Whereas, the Hammond Skyhawk Western team consists of juniors Claire Pound and Piper Meeker, and sophomore Hannah Jane Lucas for horsemanship and reiner; and junior Lauren Rowe and freshmen Olivia Davidson and Maddy Best for horsemanship. The middle school riders are eighth grader Amber Meeker for horsemanship and reiner and eighth graders Marci Leath and Sylvia Adongo and seventh grader Amelia Lee for horsemanship; and

Whereas, the four levels of Western competition include Open, the highest level; Intermediate; Novice; and Beginner. Claire Pound, who has already committed to ride for the University of South Carolina, an NCAA Division I team, placed first in both Open Horsemanship and Open Reining with a score of 71 for Hammond; Amelia Lee placed first in Intermediate, Marci Leath was second in Novice, and Sylvia Adongo came in second in Beginner; and

Whereas, accepted as a school sport in 2008, the Hammond equestrian team fields a hunt seat and a Western division. In the nine years during which the Western team has been organized, the team or an individual has qualified for nationals each year and sometimes both, with many titles earned at the national level. This year, the middle school team placed third and will compete in the semi‑finals in May, along with six individual middle and high school riders; and

Whereas, SCISA first recognized the equestrian team in 2010, and the Hammond Western team has captured eight state championships already, establishing the team as a Western dynasty in the State; and

Whereas, in a sport that exacts precision, strength, and confidence, Coach Joy McMillion maximized her own experience and passion to produce a championship‑caliber team and teach these athletes lessons that will prove invaluable through life both in and out of the saddle; and

Whereas, the members of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina value the esteem and recognition that the Hammond Western riders 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 Hammond School Western equestrian team, the coach, and school officials for a stellar season and congratulate them for winning the 2018 South Carolina Independent School Association State Championship title.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Joseph Lumpkin, Head of Upper School, and Coach McMillion.

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