**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE A’JA WILSON OF RICHLAND COUNTY FOR HER ACCOMPLISHMENTS AS A UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN’S BASKETBALL PLAYER, AND TO CONGRATULATE HER ON THE TEAM’S 2017 NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP AND HER SELECTION AS THE MOST OUTSTANDING PLAYER OF THE TOURNAMENT AS WELL AS THE RECIPIENT OF MANY OTHER AWARDS.

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly is pleased to take time to recognize significant contributions and successes of citizens of this great State. A’ja Wilson of Hopkins is an individual worthy of recognition; and

Whereas, the standout junior All‑American forward of the University of South Carolina Gamecocks women’s basketball team led her squad to defeat the Mississippi State University Bulldogs by a score of 67‑55 and win the program’s first‑ever national title on April 2, 2017, in Dallas, Texas; and

Whereas, A’ja Wilson, dominated the title game with 23 points, 10 rebounds, 4 blocks, and 2 steals. In the semifinal match‑up against Stanford University, she had delivered yet another double‑double with 13 points and 19 rebounds. For her stellar performance, she was selected the Final Four championship’s Most Outstanding Player and was named to the All Final Four Team; and

Whereas, she has received honors from numerous sports organizations throughout her not‑yet‑completed collegiate career, including from the Associated Press (AP), Women’s Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA), United States Basketball Writers Association (USBWA), and International Basketball Federation (FIBA); and

Whereas, she is a finalist for the prestigious John R. Wooden award, which is given annually to the most outstanding women’s and men’s college basketball player, and was a finalist for the award following the 2015‑2016 season. She also has been named to many All‑America First Teams as a sophomore and junior (AP, WBCA, USBWA, ESPN, and Wooden Award); and

Whereas, other accolades she received following her junior year include Wade Trophy finalist, Naismith Trophy finalist, and AP Women’s Basketball Player of the Year finalist; and

Whereas, she has been a dominating force in the Southeastern Conference since she joined the Gamecocks. As an upperclassman, the accolades have included SEC Player of the Year (Coaches, AP) her sophomore and junior seasons, SEC Defensive Player of the Year her sophomore year, All SEC First Team (Coaches, AP) her sophomore and junior seasons, and SEC All‑Defensive Team and SEC All‑Tournament Team as a sophomore and junior; and

Whereas, as a freshman, she won SEC Freshman of the Year (Coaches, AP), was named to the SEC All Freshman Team and the All SEC First Team (Coaches, AP), and was selected as the SEC Freshman of the Week five times. She also compiled national and international honors as a freshman, including All‑America Third Team (AP), All‑America Honorable Mention (WBCA), and the 2015 USA Basketball Female Athlete of the Year and FIBA U19 World Championship gold medalist and MVP, to name a few; and

Whereas, when interviewed after the championship game, A’ja Wilson attributed her emotional response to winning the national title to her grandmother Hattie Mary “Tut” Wade Rakes who passed away just before the season and to whom she had dedicated the season; and

Whereas, whether wearing her trademark pearls off the court or dominating the paint by scoring while double‑teamed and rebounding no matter the height of her opponents, A’ja Wilson is ever a humble servant leader. In her post‑game comments, she owed her success in the national title run to the selfless dedication of her family and the support of her teammates and coaches. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize A’ja Wilson of Richland County for her accomplishments as a University of South Carolina women’s basketball player, and congratulate her on the team’s 2017 NCAA championship and her selection as the Most Outstanding Player of the tournament as well as the recipient of many other awards.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to A’ja Wilson.

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