**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE DEDICATION, HEROISM, AND IMPORTANCE OF FIREFIGHTERS IN THE PALMETTO STATE AND TO DECLARE MAY 4, 2017, AS “INTERNATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS’ DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, it is altogether fitting that the members of the South Carolina General Assembly should pause in their deliberations to express sincere appreciation for the courageous and critical work of firefighters throughout the communities of our State; and

Whereas, Firefighters’ Day celebrates the dedication, heroism, and importance of firefighters all over the world, many of whom are volunteers who risk their lives in the course of duty; and

Whereas, to show appreciation for firefighters on International Firefighters’ Day, many supporters don blue and red ribbons tied together to symbolize the combination of fire and water; and

Whereas, in South Carolina, more than eleven thousand five hundred volunteers serve as firefighters and six thousand as career firefighters, a force of seventeen thousand five hundred dedicated firefighters who provide fire and emergency services; and

Whereas, firefighters contribute to the safety and well‑being of residents and visitors to our State by responding to and mitigating fires in single family and multi‑family residential properties; public and private businesses; commercial and industrial facilities; automotive, vehicular, and recreational equipment; and the forested woodlands and wildlands of South Carolina; and

Whereas, firefighters are also tasked with responding to and mitigating incidents involving hazards due to the release of harmful gases and chemicals; rescues of persons trapped at great heights, in confined spaces, or in water; rescues of persons ensnared by mangled vehicles; caring for the sick and injured as the result of medical emergencies or accidents; and conducting searches for disoriented or injured hikers; and

Whereas, the services of South Carolina firefighters saved an estimated 2.9 billion dollars of property and contents during 2015, and services of volunteer firefighters provided an estimated fifty‑nine million dollars in savings to taxpayers in 2015; and

Whereas, even though there are only three or four firefighters for every one thousand residents in the State, service is available to all around the clock every day of the year; and

Whereas, firefighters promote fire safety through public education, inspection, building fire‑code‑compliance enforcement, smoke‑detector campaigns, child car‑seat‑safety programs, and community first aid and CPR instruction; and

Whereas, many local and national community initiatives, such as the Muscular Dystrophy Association and the Medical University of South Carolina’s Camp Can Do, are supported by firefighters who embody the spirit of our communities and dedicate their lives to provide fire prevention and life safety; and

Whereas, during 2016, one South Carolina firefighter made the supreme sacrifice by giving his life in the line of duty; and

Whereas, recognizing the great sacrifice that firefighters make to bring safety to their communities, the South Carolina General Assembly takes great pleasure in commending the selfless heroism of these first responders throughout our State. 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 and honor the dedication, heroism, and importance of firefighters in the Palmetto State and declare May 4, 2017, as “International Firefighters’ Day” in South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the South Carolina State Firefighters’ Association.

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