**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE MIKE AYERS UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AS HEAD FOOTBALL COACH FOR WOFFORD COLLEGE, TO COMMEND HIM FOR HIS THIRTY YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE, AND TO WISH HIM CONTINUED SUCCESS IN ALL HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, the members of the General Assembly are pleased to recognize Mike Ayers upon the occasion of his retirement as head football coach for Wofford College in December of 2017; and

Whereas, Mike Ayers was born on May 26, 1948 in Georgetown, Kentucky. As a youth, he played football at Glen Este High School and Georgetown College and was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame at both schools. In college, he was also involved in baseball, gymnastics, and wrestling. He received both a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master of Arts degree from Georgetown; and

Whereas, prior to coaching at Wofford, Ayers served in the Marines and was a part of the coaching staff at Georgetown College, Newberry College, the University of Richmond, and East Tennessee State University, where he served as head coach; and

Whereas, in 1988, Ayers came to Wofford to build a winning program, transforming the Terriers from a team with a 1‑10 record to a .500 team in just his first season. He guided the Terriers from the NAIA and NCAA Division II ranks to Division I and the Southern Conference. Along the way, Wofford made eight playoff appearances in the FCS, including in its most recent season, when the team reached the quarterfinals after winning its fifth Southern Conference championship under Ayers. The coach leaves with 207 wins at Wofford, the most in program history; and

Whereas, Ayers is one of the winningest active coaches in FCS and Southern Conference history, with 218 total career wins in 33 seasons. He leads coaches in South Carolina in longevity and victories and is the longest‑serving head coach of any sport in Wofford’s history; and

Whereas, Ayers was named Southern Conference Coach of the Year five times and won the Eddie Robinson Award as Division I‑AA’s National Coach of the Year in 2003; and

Whereas, Ayers ran his program with the Wofford values of dignity, integrity, and class and leaves an enduring legacy with his players. He was a driving force behind wins in the classroom, and his players have found success at the highest level in the classroom and beyond Wofford; and

Whereas, in his free time, Ayers enjoys fishing, karate, and sketch artistry; and

Whereas, Ayers and his wife, Julie, have three children, Katie, Courtney, and Travis, and five grandchildren, Max, Madison Grace, Amelia Rose, Avery, and Ezra Dowling; and

Whereas, the members of the General Assembly are grateful for the outstanding dedication and commitment that Mike Ayers has shown in serving the people and the State of South Carolina throughout his remarkable career. 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, congratulate Mike Ayers upon the occasion of his retirement as head football coach for Wofford College, commend him for his thirty years of distinguished service, and wish him continued success in all his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mike Ayers.

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