**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO DECLARE SUNDAY, MAY 10 THROUGH SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2020, AS “CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK” IN THE PALMETTO STATE AND TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATING THE CHILDREN OF SOUTH CAROLINA IN INNOVATIVE CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS.

Whereas, in the 2019‑2020 Academic Year, eighty charter schools are serving students across South Carolina, thereby helping to create new jobs and opportunities for educators and other professionals in South Carolina. Charter schools, which are public schools, increase learning opportunities for all pupils and provide parents and students with expanded choices within the public school system; and

Whereas, forty‑five states and the District of Columbia have charter schools. In South Carolina, our eighty charter schools serve nearly forty thousand students; and

Whereas, the Palmetto State passed the South Carolina Charter School Act in 1996, and the first established charter schools opened their doors in 1998; and

Whereas, many charter schools are designed specifically to serve children from traditionally underserved communities. These schools have made dramatic gains in accelerating the closing of the achievement gap for underserved populations, resulting in an increase in the graduation rate and improvement in college readiness; and

Whereas, charter schools offer a variety of innovative learning environments, including college preparedness, alternative education campuses, career technical education, arts, and sciences; and

Whereas, charter schools play an integral role in South Carolina’s public education system, the communities in which they operate, the families they serve, and the pupils’ lives they impact; and

Whereas, by providing high‑quality education to students, charter schools contribute to the statewide effort to improve education in 2020, and they encourage community and parental involvement in the education of our youth. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, declare Sunday, May 10 through Saturday, May 16, 2020, as “Charter Schools Week” in the Palmetto State and acknowledge the importance of educating the children of South Carolina in innovative classrooms and schools.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Molly Spearman, state superintendent of education; John Payne, chairman of the South Carolina Public Charter School District Board of Trustees; and Carol Aust, executive director of the Public Charter School Alliance of South Carolina.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑