**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEND AND RECOGNIZE THE NARWHAL OF IDEAS ROBOTICS TEAM FOR WINNING THE SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST® LEGO® LEAGUE WEST STATE CHAMPIONSHIP FOR THE 2018‑2019 FIRST® ROBOTICS SEASON AND FOR ADVANCING TO THE FIRST® LEGO® LEAGUE LEGOLAND® INTERNATIONAL OPEN IN CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA.

Whereas, Due West Robotics’ FIRST® LEGO® League (FLL) team, The Narwhal Of Ideas, has won the South Carolina FLL West State Championship and has won a berth at the FLL LEGOLAND® International Open in Carlsbad, California in May; and

Whereas, FIRST® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is a national nonprofit organization that provides science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) opportunities for young people ages six to eighteen in the United States and internationally, impacting more than 615,000 young people around the world each year; and

Whereas, future engineers and inventors from ages nine to fourteen participate in teams called FLL, and youth from ages six to eight are FLL Jr, while students older than fourteen choose between FIRST® Tech Challenge for seventh through twelfth graders and FIRST® Robotics Competition for ninth through twelfth graders; and

Whereas, South Carolina FLL & Robotics Education, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in South Carolina, is the affiliate partner for FLL and FLL Jr in South Carolina; and

Whereas, the overall goal of South Carolina FLL & Robotics Education, Inc., is to stimulate students’ interest and capabilities in (STEM) fields, thereby increasing the pool of talented and skilled students who pursue careers in these areas; and

Whereas, Due West Robotics is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Due West, providing a sustainable STEM program that educates and inspires young people in all things STEM related in Abbeville County; and

Whereas, Clara Angel, Hannah Carter, David Clarke, Joseph Clarke, Cole Farley, Josey Janus‑Johnson, Georgia Wojtkowski, and Riley Wojtkowski comprise The Narwhal Of Ideas team coached by Sara Wojtkowski, Kelley Clarke, and Charles Angel; and

Whereas, the 2018‑2019 FLL theme is “Into Orbitsm,” and teams must participate in all four areas of the program, including Project, Core Values, Robot Design, and Robot Game, and must be judged the best overall in order to advance; and

Whereas, members of The Narwhal Of Ideas developed a solution called the Scent Strap to provide astronauts with custom watchbands infused with custom scents that remind them of home. This solution would help astronauts avoid depression and raise morale during extended periods in space. Team members interviewed astronauts, fragrance manufacturers, and mental health professionals to refine their solution using the engineering process; and

Whereas, The Narwhal Of Ideas designed, built, and programmed a robot to complete missions autonomously, such missions as space travel, meteor deflection, crater crossing, food production, solar travel, extraction, orbiting satellites, and observatory within a specified period of time; and

Whereas, twelve regional competitions and two state championships were conducted by South Carolina FIRST® LEGO® League & Robotics Education, Inc.; and

Whereas, there are over 40,400 FLL teams around the world and three hundred thirteen teams in the State of South Carolina; and

Whereas, ten years of evaluating data documents show FIRST® participants exhibit a significantly higher statistical interest in STEM, increased involvement in STEM‑related activities, greater STEM identity, higher levels of STEM knowledge, and greater interest in STEM careers than students who do not participate, and the impact is even greater for female students; and

Whereas, FIRST® participants are more motivated to do well in school, more likely to take a challenging math or science course, and show improved problem‑solving, time‑management, conflict‑resolution, and communication skills; and

Whereas, FIRST® alumni express a greater interest in going to college and are twice as likely to major in science or engineering as other students; and

Whereas, a FIRST® competition offers as close to real‑world engineering as a student can experience and combines the excitement of sport with the rigors of science and technology, the ultimate sport for the mind, with participants calling it “the hardest fun you’ll ever have”; and

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly values the significant impact that FIRST® has made, as well as the pride and recognition that The Narwhal Of Ideas team has brought to the Due West and the Abbeville County communities, and the members wish the team success at the FIRST® LEGO® League LEGOLAND® California International Open. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly commend and recognize The Narwhal Of Ideas robotics team for winning the South Carolina FIRST® LEGO® League West State Championship for the 2018‑2019 FIRST® Robotics season and for advancing to the FIRST® LEGO® League LEGOLAND® International Open in Carlsbad, California.

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