**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF BENNETTSVILLE NATIVE MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT EMERITA OF THE CHILDREN’S DEFENSE FUND.

Whereas, Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president emerita of the Children’s Defense Fund, was born on June 6, 1939, in Bennettsville. When African Americans in Bennettsville were not allowed to enter city parks, Arthur Wright, her father, built a park for African‑American children behind his church; and

Whereas, Mrs. Edelman is a graduate of Spelman College and Yale Law School. While working as director of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund office in Jackson, Mississippi, she became the first African‑American female admitted to the Mississippi State Bar. She also became nationally recognized as an advocate for Head Start at this time; and

Whereas, in 1968, she moved to Washington, D.C., and subsequently became counsel to the Poor People’s Campaign, organized by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She founded the Washington Research Project (WRP), where she focused on lobbying Congress for child and family nutrition programs and expanding the Head Start program. In 1973, the WRP became the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF), the United States’ leading advocacy group for children. As president of CDF, Marian Wright Edelman worked to decrease teenage pregnancy, increase Medicaid coverage for poor children, and secure government funding for programs such as Head Start; and

Whereas, the first African‑American female to have served on the board of directors of Yale University, she also has served as director of the Center for Law and Education at Harvard University. Mrs. Edelman has written many articles and books, including the autobiographical *New York Times* best‑seller, *The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours*; and

Whereas, in 2000, Marian Wright Edelman received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the country’s highest civilian award, as well as the Robert F. Kennedy Lifetime Achievement Award, for her writings. In 2002, she published *I*’*m Your Child, God: Prayers for Children and Teenagers*. That same year, she received the National Mental Health Association Tipper Gore Remember the Children Volunteer Award. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, honor the life and achievements of Bennettsville native Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president emerita of the Children’s Defense Fund.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Marian Wright Edelman.

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