**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE F‑35 LIGHTNING II AND F‑16 FIGHTING FALCON ARE CRITICAL TO AMERICA’S SECURITY, AS WELL AS IMPORTANT TO SOUTH CAROLINA, AND TO CALL FOR FULL F‑35 FUNDING BY THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS.

Whereas, maintaining air superiority is essential to preserving global security and stability; and

Whereas, the F‑35 Lightning II is the only operating fifth‑generation aircraft in the world, combining advanced stealth with fighter speed and agility, fully fused sensors, network‑enabled operations, and advanced sustainment; and

Whereas, the F‑35 is superior to other fighters for air‑to‑ground strike missions; and

Whereas, the F‑35 is already flying combat missions in the world’s worst trouble spots; and

Whereas, Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort plays a significant role in the F‑35 program, providing invaluable training for pilots and those who maintain the F‑35B; and

Whereas, U.S. Marine Corps and pilots from Italy and the United Kingdom are trained at the pilot training facility at MCAS Beaufort; and

Whereas, the Beaufort Pilot Training Center is equipped with cutting‑edge technology such as electronic classrooms and six high‑fidelity full mission simulators, which prepare pilots for the first flight through mission rehearsals; and

Whereas, the F‑35 program has an economic impact in South Carolina of approximately $34 million, supporting the jobs of more than five hundred South Carolinians, and Lockheed Martin Greenville has invested $240 million in capital expenditures and contributes an annual economic impact of $100 million to the Upstate; and

Whereas, the iconic F‑16 Fighting Falcon will now be manufactured in South Carolina; and

Whereas, Lockheed Martin will produce the F‑16 Block 70, with new advanced avionics, improved radar systems, enhanced battlespace awareness, and new automated systems to avoid collisions and crashes at its Greenville Operations facility; and

Whereas, manufacturing the F‑16 Block 70 in Greenville will create approximately one hundred fifty new jobs in the Upstate; and

Whereas, Bahrain and Slovakia have already announced they will purchase F‑16 Fighting Falcons manufactured in Greenville, and additional countries are in negotiations to purchase F‑16s manufactured in the Upstate; and

Whereas, in supporting national defense initiatives, South Carolina has a strong and continuing legacy and is home to numerous military bases; and

Whereas, investing in the technological superiority of our military is a fitting honor to the millions of citizens of South Carolina and the United States who have served our nation by protecting our freedom through military service. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize that the F‑35 Lightning II and F‑16 Fighting Falcon are critical to America’s security, as well as important to South Carolina, and to call for full F‑35 funding by the United States Congress.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the South Carolina Congressional Delegation to express the high regard the South Carolina House of Representatives holds for Lockheed Martin and the F‑16 and F‑35 programs, the members recognizing their importance to our national security and economic growth, both nationally and in South Carolina.

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