**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR COACH DAMONE LEAPHART, HEAD ATHLETIC TRAINER FOR THE LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL WILDCATS, UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AFTER THIRTY‑SIX YEARS OF DEVOTED SERVICE, AND TO WISH HIM CONTINUED SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS IN ALL HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives has learned that Coach Damone Leaphart began a well‑deserved retirement after thirty‑six years of leadership in his field as an athletic trainer in Lexington County School District One and as the highly regarded athletic trainer at Lexington High School (LHS); and

Whereas, he graduated from LHS in 1976, where he was selected for All‑Region football teams his junior and senior years and for two All‑State teams as a senior, and he was inducted into the LHS Athletic Hall of Fame for football in 1997. A multiyear staff member and sports editor for the *Wildcat* student newspaper, he served on student council all four years at LHS; and

Whereas, at Newberry College, Damone Leaphart earned a bachelor’s degree in physical education and lettered all four years in football. He also was chosen to the SAC All‑Conference, NAIA All‑American, and All‑Lutheran Academic All‑American teams. He was the sports editor for the student newspaper and was honored with inclusion in Who’s Who Among American Colleges and Universities, and he received his alma mater’s Young Alumni Award in 1993 for actively recruiting trainers and athletes for Newberry College; and

Whereas, in 1982, he earned a bachelor’s degree in physical therapy from the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and completed a sports medicine rotation at the Hugheston Clinic and Rehabilitation Services of Columbus in Columbus, Georgia; and

Whereas, Lexington County School District One selected Coach Leaphart as its first athletic trainer in 1982, a post he left from 1984 to 1985 to serve as head athletic trainer at Newberry College and head of the Newberry Memorial Hospital physical therapy department. He returned to Lexington to serve as an athletic trainer to district high schools and as the sole physical therapist in the district until 1998 and continued as the athletic trainer at LHS until 2018, working 444 varsity football games for the Wildcats; and

Whereas, he was selected to the All‑Region and All‑State teams and served as an athletic trainer for the North‑South All‑Star Football Game, South Carolina Shrine Bowl Game, and South Carolina All‑Star Baseball Game during his tenure at LHS, as well as head athletic trainer for the North/South All‑Star Basketball Game; and

Whereas, a member of numerous professional organizations, Coach Leaphart was honored as the 2010 South Carolina Athletic Trainer of the Year by the South Carolina Athletic Trainers’ Association and South Carolina Athletic Coaches’ Association, and he continued to support the LHS student newspaper, *Wildcat*, serving many years as a staff member and sports editor while an athletic trainer; and

Whereas, supervising physical therapy students in a sports medicine clinical experience, Coach Leaphart served MUSC as an adjunct faculty member for eight years and supervised hundreds of physical therapy students in a pediatric and sports medicine clinical experience at LHS and throughout the district, some of whom received athletic training college scholarships, went into healthcare fields, and are now employed in Southeast sports programs; and

Whereas, a devoted member of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Gilbert, he and his beloved wife, Janis Kruger Leaphart, are blessed with two fine children, Felder Leaphart and Jennifer Leaphart; and

Whereas, during his career as a physical trainer, he has used millions of yards of athletic tape, enough to tape the entire boundary of the State of South Carolina. Now in his retirement, he plans to compile a history of Lexington High School football, including an extensive collection of facts and personal anecdotes; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is grateful for the years of unparalleled dedication that Coach Leaphart has eagerly devoted to the young athletes and aspiring athletic trainers in Lexington County, and the members wish him many years of enjoyment in his well‑earned retirement. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor Coach Damone Leaphart, head athletic trainer for the Lexington Wildcats, upon the occasion of his retirement after thirty‑six years of devoted service, and wish him continued success and happiness in all his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Coach Damone Leaphart.

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