**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

EXPRESSING CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES TO THE PEOPLE OF BENNETTSVILLE ON THE OCCASION OF THE CITY’S BICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY.

Whereas, on December 14, 1819, the city of Bennettsville was founded in the Marlboro District on the Great Pee Dee River and named after Thomas Bennett, Jr., the newly‑elected forty‑eighth governor of South Carolina; and

Whereas, that same year of 1819, the South Carolina General Assembly authorized the relocation of the courthouse from the eastern bank of the Great Pee Dee River to a more central location, originally an apple orchard, about ten miles from the North Carolina state line. The new courthouse was designed by renowned South Carolina architect Robert Mills, and streets were developed radiating from the courthouse square, though the original Mills building was replaced in 1852 with a red brick twin‑towered Moorish fortress‑style structure; and

Whereas, the city of Bennettsville was captured and occupied in 1865 by Union troops during the last year of the Civil War. During this time the Jennings‑Brown House and the third Marlboro County Courthouse were used as headquarters for Major General Frank B. Blair, Jr., of the 17th Army Corps. As such, the courthouse escaped burning and allowed Bennettsville to be one of few county seats within the State that holds preserved records dating back as far as 1785. These preserved records continue to be made available to the public for genealogical research; and

Whereas, in 1884, a Second Empire‑style courthouse was built on the site, with later additions being added between 1952 and 1954. The designs of the additions are attributed to Bennettsville’s own architect Henry D. Harrall; and

Whereas, from the early days, agriculture has continued to be the number one revenue source in and around Bennettsville. By 1885, Duncan Donald McColl, an entrepreneur, had financed development of the first railroad, bank, and textile mills in Bennettsville. This development connected the city to other markets, stimulated the economy, and helped to build an industry. This allowed the city to become the center of one of the richest agricultural areas in the state; and

Whereas, Bennettsville continues to cultivate grain, indigo, cotton, tobacco, corn, peanuts, soybeans, timber, fruit, vegetables, and hay, as well as raising cattle, poultry, and swine in an ever evolving agricultural industry that now includes agritourism and agritainment for the local community. However, as modern farming methods have changed and the employment needs of Bennettsville’s citizens has changed, the city has also adapted. Beginning as early as the 1940s, Bennettsville became the home of numerous industries, giving employment back to farm workers idled by modern agricultural innovation; and

Whereas, the City of Bennettsville was formally chartered on December 20, 1866, and incorporated on March 4, 1976. It continues to function as the political and economic center for Marlboro County; and

Whereas, as a symbol of America’s past grace and charm, Bennettsville stands as a reminder of another era in which the lifestyle and affluence of bygone years are captured within its architecture and held proudly within its history. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, express congratulations and best wishes to the people of Bennettsville on the occasion of the city’s bicentennial anniversary.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the City of Bennettsville.

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