**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS PROFOUND SORROW AND EXTEND DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO THE PEOPLE OF OMAN IN THE DEATH OF SULTAN QABOOS BIN SAID, TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR SULTAN HAITHAM BIN TARIQ AL SAID, WISH HIM SUCCESS IN HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS AS THE SULTAN OF OMAN, AND TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE FOR AND HOPE TO CONTINUE THE STRONG RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND OMAN THAT HAS BEEN IN PLACE SINCE 1790.

Whereas, upon the death of Sultan Qaboos Bin Said on January 10, 2020, who died without any children or direct heirs, the Oman Constitution requires the Omani royal family to choose a new sultan within three days of the passing of the sitting Sultan; and

Whereas, Haitham Bin Tariq Al Said, first cousin to Sultan Qaboos Bin Said and previous Minister of Heritage and Culture in the Sultanate of Oman, was named by the royal family as the Sultan of Oman; and

Whereas, Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq is experienced in Omani political life, formerly serving as the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Political Affairs, the Secretary General for the ministry of Foreign Affairs, and chairing the national census committee; and

Whereas, Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq’s service to his country leaves him well‑prepared for his new position as Sultan of Oman; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly was deeply saddened by the passing of Sultan Qaboos Bin Said on January 10, 2020, at the venerable age of 79; and

Whereas, born on November 18, 1940, Sultan Qaboos Bin Said was a graduate of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in England and served in the British army; and

Whereas, Qaboos rose to power by overthrowing his father in a bloodless coup in 1970, making him the longest serving Arab leader; and

Whereas, the head of one of the world’s few remaining monarchies, Qaboos was seen as a modernizing leader who played a key role in diplomacy and mediation in the Middle East and maintained strong ties with Western nations. Qaboos established Oman’s written constitution during the 1990s and encouraged the greater involvement of women in roles in politics, business, and sports, allowing women to enter the workforce in the 1990s; and

Whereas, Qaboos played a critical role in the release of two American hikers from Iran and received praise from American leadership, including President Barack Obama, for this effort; and

Whereas, the passing of Qaboos is a historical moment worthy of condolences and an expression of hope for continuing a strong relationship with the United States; and

Whereas, the first contact between Oman and the United States took place when an American vessel reached Muscat in 1790; and

Whereas, the “Treaty of Amity and Commerce,” the first bilateral treaty between the United States and an Arab Gulf State, which opened the path to diplomatic ties between the two nations, was signed in 1833; and

Whereas, since 1938, seven United States Presidents have traveled to Oman or met with Omani leadership in the United States; and

Whereas, this trade is part of an ongoing free trade agreement our country has with Oman; and

Whereas, this State has other connections with Oman, particularly through the University of South Carolina’s “Omani boom,” which began in 2005 when two Omani students enrolled at the University of South Carolina and continued through 2014 when there were seventy‑five Omani students studying at the University; and

Whereas, the University of South Carolina participated in a Global Classroom Maymester entitled, “Media and Culture of the Mideast” sending thirteen undergraduate students to Oman to participate in the study abroad program; and

Whereas, the University of South Carolina and Sultan Qaboos University have forged and maintained a friendship through campus visits to include a 2015 visit by former president Dr. Harry Pastides and a 2020 visit by Dr. Allen Miller, Vice Provost and Director of Global Carolina; and

Whereas, a delegation from Oman traveled to Columbia, South Carolina, in 2017 to participate in the conference entitled, “The Importance of Tourism and Ports in Economic Development: Best Practices in Oman and the USA”; and

Whereas, Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq promised to uphold his predecessor’s peace‑making foreign policy and to further develop Oman’s economy, which includes importing over $99.33 million worth of goods that were shipped out of the Port of Charleston in 2018; and

Whereas, forging strong diplomatic, economic, and academic ties with Oman improves the relationship between our two countries. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, express profound sorrow and extend deepest sympathy to the people of Oman in the death of Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, recognize and honor Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq Al Said, wish him success in his future endeavors as the Sultan of Oman, and express gratitude for and hope to continue the strong relationship between the United States and Oman that has been in place since 1790.

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