**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE SEPTEMBER AS “HUNGER ACTION MONTH” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, “Hunger Action Month” provides a unified opportunity for communities in the United States to focus attention on the persistent problem of domestic hunger and to mobilize to create a movement to help end hunger in America; and

Whereas, in 2017, 11.8% of United States households were food insecure, according to the United States Department of Agriculture; and

Whereas, in South Carolina, hunger is a reality for 19.8% of the population, or nearly one in five individuals. In 2016, 687,880 South Carolinians did not always know where they would find their next meal, according to a study published by Feeding America; and

Whereas, many households in this State and nation experience hunger, and some people in these households frequently skip meals or eat too little, even going without food for a whole day; and

Whereas, hunger dramatically affects all members of families, regardless of their age. Research shows that preschool and school‑aged children who experience severe hunger have higher levels of chronic illness, anxiety and depression, and behavioral problems than children receiving a well‑balanced diet; and

Whereas, food-insecure seniors have lower nutrient intakes than food-secure seniors, and without proper nutrients, seniors are at an increased risk of disability, deteriorated health conditions, decreased resistance to infections, lengthened hospital stays, deteriorated mental health, and being underweight; and

Whereas, the costs of other essentials, such as home heating, gasoline, housing, and medical care, have increased significantly over the years, and for families caught in the squeeze between declining wages and rising costs, the food budget becomes a frequent pressure point; and

Whereas, emergency food assistance can become a way for these individuals and families to keep food on the table while still paying the bills. In 2017, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, one in four food-insecure households in the United States was able to access emergency food from a food pantry one or more times; and

Whereas, individuals, charities, businesses, and the government all have a role to play in getting food to those in need. Food banks, soup kitchens, food pantries, faith‑based organizations, businesses, and individuals donate time, raise funds, and provide food to help their neighbors; and

Whereas, Harvest Hope Food Bank, as a member of Feeding America, provides guidance, support, and vital food resources to over four hundred sixty agencies and works to resolve the ongoing need for services by leveraging local community partnerships, providing an average of five meals with every dollar of support and saving taxpayers $22.22 with each hour of volunteer support; and

Whereas, in the most recently completed year, Harvest Hope Food Bank provided approximately 22,980,661 meals; and

Whereas, individuals benefiting from the availability of donated food range from infants, toddlers, school‑aged children, and adolescents to single mothers, single fathers, two‑parent families, veterans and their families, and seniors. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize September as “Hunger Action Month” in South Carolina.

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