**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE EFFORTS NOW UNDERWAY BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE TO SUPPORT TEACHERS, EDUCATIONAL LEADERS, AND FAMILIES OUTSIDE THE REGULAR SCHOOL DAY BY BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER PROGRAMS TO ENSURE THEY ARE OF HIGH QUALITY TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS.

Whereas, our complex and changing world demands an adaptable workforce that is prepared to reason through tough problems and come up with creative solutions to the challenges of tomorrow in a collaborative manner; and

Whereas, in order to teach students to work as a team, base their reasoning on evidence, and solve problems through experimentation, afterschool and summer learning programs engage students on healthy eating; physical fitness; science, technology, engineering, and math, or the STEM field; workforce skills; and educational opportunities and cultivate students’ curiosity and creativity; and

Whereas, exposure to high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs, beginning at an early age and continuing through high school, prepares South Carolina’s students for the future ahead; and

Whereas, in ensuring that their programs are healthy, safe, and of high quality, afterschool and summer learning programs in turn are able to implement innovative best practices supporting student success; and

Whereas, afterschool and summer learning programs have been shown to contribute to young people’s interest in and understanding of the STEM field and STEM careers, to connect young people to caring adults who serve as role models, and to reduce the achievement gap between young people from low-income and high-income families; and

Whereas, the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance is a statewide youth development organization with an established history of managing quality improvement systems and evaluating statewide and local programs to support young people across the State; and

Whereas, under the South Carolina Senate’s direction, the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance has worked to establish health and safety standards using a tiered quality improvement process for a pilot project with fifteen to twenty programs providing services related to, but not limited to, academic enrichment, STEM, college and career readiness, and social development; and

Whereas, it is vital that entities like the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance collect and understand data and information on the success and viability of pilot projects such as this. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize the importance of high-quality afterschool, out-of-school, and informal programs in contributing to student achievement and encourage the South Carolina Department of Education, Department of Social Services, and Education Oversight Committee to continue to support such programs.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance.

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