**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEND THE ROTARY CLUB OF LITTLE RIVER FOR ITS EXEMPLARY EFFORTS TO EDUCATE CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS ABOUT WATER SAFETY, TO ENCOURAGE ALL CITIZENS OF THIS GREAT STATE TO BECOME BETTER INFORMED ABOUT PREVENTION OF CHILD DROWNINGS AND THE PRACTICE OF WATER SAFETY, AND TO DECLARE SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 2022, AS “JOSH THE OTTER WATER SAFETY DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, 1.2 million people around the world die by drowning every year, equaling more than two people per minute, and of that number, more than 50% are children. There are perhaps eight to ten times that many who experience a drowning process but reach safety alone or who are rescued by their peers, by others, or by 1ifesavers/lifeguards; and

Whereas, in 2014, 784 children fatally drowned in the United States, more than half of them being under age 5. In fact, among preventable injuries, drowning is the leading cause of death for children 1‑4 years of age. Further, it is the second leading cause of death for children 5‑14 years of age and the third leading cause for children under 1 year old and older teens ages 15‑17; and

Whereas, the vast majority of drownings occur in open water: the sea, lakes, ponds, and rivers. However, drownings occur in all water, including swimming pools and bathtubs. Small children have been known to drown in just a few inches of water in buckets and ditches; and

Whereas, in cooperation with Rotary International, the Rotary Club of Little River is engaged in an educational project that aims at bettering these statistics. Rotarians accomplish this through introducing children to Josh the Otter and using this charming costumed character to teach the children how to be safe around water. As part of the program, on Saturday, April 2, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., the Little River Rotarians will host a water safety Community Call to Action at the North Myrtle Beach Aquatics Center that will engage the children in several ways. The attending children will hear a reading of the *Josh the Baby Otter* book, meet Josh, and have fun learning about water safety. Balloons, food and drink, giveaways, and special guests will add to the festivities; and

Whereas, understanding the precious gift South Carolina’s children are to the future of the Palmetto State, the Senate is pleased to salute the Rotary Club for its excellent work in promoting water safety for our young ones. In addition, the members urge all South Carolinians to attend the family‑friendly Josh the Otter Water Safety and Awareness event on Saturday, April 2, 2022, sponsored by the Little River Rotary Club. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, commend the Rotary Club of Little River for its exemplary efforts to educate children and their parents about water safety, encourage all citizens of this great State to become better informed about prevention of child drownings and the practice of water safety, and declare Saturday, April 2, 2022, as “Josh the Otter Water Safety Day” in South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the Rotary Club of Little River.

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