**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CELEBRATE THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2022 NCAA CHAMPIONSHIP.

Whereas, the pride of the entire Palmetto State, the University of South Carolina women’s basketball team once again has shown its championship form in delivering an exciting 2021‑2022 season culminating with a thrilling victory over the University of Connecticut to win its second national championship; and

Whereas, led by Head Coach Dawn Staley, the Lady Gamecocks entered the NCAA Tournament as a number one seed after being ranked number one in the nation all season and winning the SEC Regular Season Championship; and

Whereas, after reaching the team’s fourth NCAA Final Four in school history, the Lady Gamecocks easily overcame the Louisville Cardinals in the semifinal game before soundly defeating Connecticut 64-49 in the NCAA Tournament championship game, thus establishing the University of South Carolina as the premier women’s basketball program in the country; and

Whereas, the national title victory also clinched a program‑record with thirty-five wins, breaking a tie with the 2014‑15 team. Of those thirty-five wins, the Gamecocks finished the season with a perfect 14‑0 record against nationally‑ranked teams, another program single‑season record; and

Whereas, making a sweet season even sweeter, several USC players were honored for their individual performances, including junior forward Aliyah Boston, the national player of the year, who recorded her thirtieth double‑double of the season with eleven points and sixteen rebounds and was named the Final Four’s Most Outstanding Player; and

Whereas, Gamecocks guard Destanni Henderson became the first player since 2000 to set a career high in scoring in the national championship game, finishing with twenty-six points in the final performance of her collegiate career. She also contributed four assists, two rebounds and a tough defensive effort against 2020‑21 national player of the year Paige Bueckers; and

Whereas, Coach Staley is also now undefeated in NCAA national championship games and is the first Black coach to win multiple Division I basketball national championships; and

Whereas, assistant coaches and support staff have also proven integral to the team’s success, including Lisa Boyer, Jolette Law, Fred Chmiel, Cynthia Jordan, Freddy Ready, Ariana Moore, Hudson Jacobs, Payten Martin, Molly Binetti, Craig Oates, Diana Koval and Dianne Palmer; and

Whereas, Head Coach Staley rightly has her sights on a return to the Final Four next year. The members of the Senate are pleased to hear this news, delighted to raise their collective salute to her and her fine group of young athletes, and proud to declare themselves among the team’s most ardent fans. On behalf of the people of South Carolina, the members offer their congratulations on a class act and best wishes for continued success. Go, Gamecocks! Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and celebrate the University of South Carolina women’s basketball team for another outstanding season capped-off by winning the 2022 NCAA Tournament championship.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the USC women’s basketball team and Head Coach Dawn Staley.

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