**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE SEPTEMBER 2022 AS “KINSHIP CARE MONTH” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, South Carolina is steadfast in its commitment to promoting the safety and well-being of our children, including providing a loving, stable home for all youth in which they can be nurtured, succeed, and thrive; and

Whereas, relationships with kinship caregivers are crucial for children, and it is our responsibility to promote and preserve kinship, sibling, and other meaningful connections for children, helping them retain their cultural heritage, family, and community ties while preserving their safety and protecting them from abuse and neglect; and

Whereas, according to the latest Kids Count data, approximately seven percent of all children in South Carolina live with grandparents, other relatives, or fictive kin caregivers without a parent present; and

Whereas, kinship caregivers have stepped forward out of love and loyalty, taking on primary responsibility for the care of these children and providing them connection, security, positive identity, belonging, and higher levels of permanency; and

Whereas, kinship families residing across all of South Carolina often face daunting challenges. Partnerships among the education, legal, social services, mental health, justice, child welfare, medical, and other systems are important to ensure access to services that can enable youth in kinship care to flourish in all facets of their lives; and

Whereas, Kinship Care Month helps increase awareness and understanding of the positive family environment that kinship families offer many children in the Palmetto State. Kinship caregivers should be honored and the accomplishments of countless youth across our state who are thriving because of the love, safety, guidance, and nurturing support of kinship caregivers should be recognized. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize September 2022 as “Kinship Care Month” in South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the organizers of “Kinship Care Month.”

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