**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS DEEP APPRECIATION TO DR. HELMUT ALBRECHT, DR. PHILLIP BUCKHAULTS, DR. DELPHINE DEAN, AND DR. MARK BLENNER FOR THEIR TIMELY EXPERTISE IN DEVELOPING, TESTING, SURVEILLING, AND ADMINISTERING EXCEPTIONAL AND EXPEDITIOUS COVID‑19 SALIVA TESTS FOR THE SAFETY OF SOUTH CAROLINIANS DURING THE COVID‑19 PANDEMIC.

Whereas, during 2020, many doctors were at the forefront of the battle to combat coronavirus in the Palmetto State, especially the doctors who collaborated to develop the saliva test for the virus; and

Whereas, Dr. Helmut Albrecht helped to establish the clinical trial that allowed testing of more than five thousand healthcare workers in the Prisma system and more than ten thousand community members in the research setting. His team not only accomplished this daunting task, but did so at cost, while quelling several potential outbreaks; and

Whereas, he helped create the convalescent plasma program, the first of its kind in the State, identifying donors and organizing plasma drives, with the Midlands alone supplying over five hundred treatment courses. He served as an advisor to the Legislature, the governor, DHEC, healthcare systems, the public, and thousands of patients; and

Whereas, Dr. Phillip Buckhaults, director of Cancer Genetics Lab and an associate professor in the Department of Drug Discovery and Biomedical Sciences at the University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy, improved on the CDC COVID‑19 test to make it work from saliva, SalivirDetect; and

Whereas, Dr. Buckhaults screened some one thousand samples from Pickens County alone. He helped to stop numerous outbreaks and enabled some businesses to stay open; and

Whereas, he helped to identify and recruit donors for convalescent plasma program, screened hundreds of Prisma healthcare workers and community samples, screened the University of South Carolina athletes, and squashed outbreaks among teams; and

Whereas, Dr. Buckhaults filed for emergency‑use authorization and created a CLIA validated set of protocols that were considered reportable by DHEC and were clinically actionable, established at the University of South Carolina a high throughput robotics pipeline able to handle testing all students, faculty, and staff, and helped academic friends at other universities to get a version of this test up and running; and

Whereas, Dr. Delphine Dean worked over the summer of 2020 to develop a highly sensitive and selective saliva‑based PCR test. She assisted in setting up Clemson University’s first high‑complexity clinical diagnostics lab and started running COVID‑19 tests for university athletes, students, faculty, and staff. The lab scaled up from running some one hundred tests per day to running about three thousand tests per day by the end of the semester, expanding to provide testing for the local community as well. Through the end of 2020, the lab had run over fifty‑one thousand COVID‑19 tests and identified one thousand one hundred forty‑five positives cases; and

Whereas, she helped to establish a free community testing program for the local Clemson community. From Thanksgiving through the end of 2020, over four thousand tests were run; and

Whereas, Dr. Mark Blenner, recently the McQueen Quattlebaum Associate Professor and ACS BIOT2020 Program chair in the Department of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering at Clemson University, led the development of Clemson’s COVID‑19 testing protocol and lab, which performed over fifty thousand CLIA certified tests from September to December 2020 and expanded capacity to over nine thousand samples per day. The Clemson CLIA lab has enabled fast, frequent, cheap, and easy testing for Clemson University, the local community, and other upstate colleges. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, express their deep appreciation to Dr. Helmut Albrecht, Dr. Phillip Buckhaults, Dr. Delphine Dean, and Dr. Mark Blenner for their timely expertise in developing, testing, surveilling, and administering exceptional and expeditious COVID‑19 saliva tests for the safety of South Carolinians during the COVID‑19 pandemic.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. Helmut Albrecht, Dr. Phillip Buckhaults, Dr. Delphine Dean, and Dr. Mark Blenner.

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