**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE THE JAMES F. BYRNES HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY SOFTBALL TEAM, COACHES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY SEASON AND TO HONOR THEM FOR WINNING THE 2021 SOUTH CAROLINA CLASS AAAAA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the members of the James F. Byrnes High School softball team of Spartanburg County captured the state title in the championship series on Thursday, June 3, 2021; and

Whereas, the Byrnes High School fans were exuberant to see their Lady Rebels claim a repeat state trophy by defeating Ashley Ridge High School 4‑0; and

Whereas, since the inception of the AAAAA classification, Byrnes has played in every championship series. This year produced back‑to‑back victories, the team’s third title since 2014 and the fifth overall; and

Whereas, in the second inning, senior starter first baseman Laurin Nodine had a second‑inning sacrifice, and she drove in a run that doubled the Byrnes lead with a bunt single in the fourth and was hit by a pitch in the fifth; and

Whereas, senior starter Haylee Whitesides, who is committed to Clemson University for the fall, has been the Lady Rebels’ all‑everything pitcher. In the best‑of‑three series, her dominant pitching helped her team sweep the series in two games, posting 14 strikeouts in each game and securing a second game shutout. In the fifth inning at bat, she hit a home run to stretch the lead to 3‑0; and

Whereas, Calee Smith singled and scored on two errors and a wild pitch for Byrnes’ first run, and Molly Mattas hit a double to drive in teammate Ansley Fowler in the sixth for the Lady Rebels’ fourth and final score; and

Whereas, the win was celebrated on Byrnes’ home field at Beech Springs Intermediate School, and the team anticipates playing another state championship series on a new softball facility to be constructed at the site during next year’s offseason; and

Whereas, in a sport that demands strength, agility, and teamwork, Head Coach Brandi Aiken and her skilled coaching staff maximized their own experience and passion to build a championship‑caliber team and teach these athletes lessons that will prove invaluable through life both on and off the diamond; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives value the pride and recognition that the Byrnes softball players have brought to their school and their community and look to hear of their continued accomplishments in the days ahead. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate the James F. Byrnes High School varsity softball team, coaches, and school officials for an extraordinary season and honor them for winning the 2021 South Carolina Class AAAAA State Championship title.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Principal Todd Hardy and Coach Brandi Aiken.

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