**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE, CONGRATULATE, AND HONOR DEBORAH COBLE ROBERTSON ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT FROM SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS, TO COMMEND HER FOR TWENTY‑ONE YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE CHILDREN OF SOUTH CAROLINA, AND TO WISH HER MUCH HAPPINESS AND FULFILLMENT IN THE YEARS TO COME.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are pleased to learn that Deborah Coble Robertson will begin a well‑deserved retirement after twenty‑one years of distinguished service with South Carolina First Steps; and

Whereas, Deborah is the daughter of Mr. Albert Bruce Coble and Mrs. Patricia Byars Coble. Married to Mark L. Robertson, she is the mother of Emily Robertson Bosch and Helen Patricia Robertson, and is the grandmother to Robertson Henry Bosch; and

Whereas, in preparation for her career, Deborah pursued her education as one of only the second class of women to attend the University of Virginia. While there, she earned both her bachelors and masters degrees; and

Whereas, throughout her career, Deborah gained significant experience in policy matters working for elected officials at both the local and national level, including service as a congressional aide to Florida Congressman Peter Deutsch; and

Whereas, Deborah joined First Steps in 2000, and supported local partnerships in completing needs assessments and their first applications for program funding, and from 2001 through 2005, she organized and directed South Carolina’s Family Friendly Workplace Awards; and

Whereas, over her career, Deborah served on many work and leadership teams that organized to improve outcomes for children, such as the Parent Involvement Work Team, a subgroup of the Education and Workforce Development Task Force of New Carolina ‑ The South Carolina Council on Competitiveness. The Parent Involvement Workgroup produced “Increasing Parent Involvement in Education: A Resource Guide” in 2006, which noted Family Friendly Workplace Awards as a best practice; and

Whereas, following Governor Mark Sanford’s executive order designating SC First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees as the State’s Early Childhood Advisory Council, Deborah again was selected to serve on one of the leadership teams. One hundred fifty representatives from state, local, public, and private child‑serving agencies; key state‑level dignitaries; stakeholders; and citizens reviewed reports, discussed needs and opportunities, and reached a consensus on the recommendations presented in the 2010 Strategic Report, which set the stage for the current mission and work of the Early Childhood Advisory Council; and

Whereas, in her work serving on the Early Childhood Task Force convened by the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness, Deborah led the production of the report, “Investing in South Carolina’s Talent: How Early Childhood Care and Education Can Help to Secure the State’s Economic Future.” The report asserted, “capable children are the foundation of a prosperous and sustainable society. Through early childhood care and education, we can ensure that South Carolina’s youngest citizens grow into responsible, successful adults‑‑and that our state’s talent pool of highly skilled workers continues to grow”; and

Whereas, Deborah was selected as one of thirty‑four fellows for the BUILD program, Equity Leaders Action Network (ELAN), a focused effort across twenty states, the District of Columbia, and Guam to advance racial equity in early childhood systems. ELAN was created by The Early Childhood Funders Collaborative as a catalyst for change and a national resource on early childhood development and policy; and

Whereas, taking on more responsibility, Deborah was promoted to chief partnership officer, a senior management position that worked with and on behalf of forty‑six local county partnerships; and

Whereas, as a result of her work, in 2021 Deborah was recognized as South Carolina First Step’s Early Childhood Champion for Children; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives is grateful for the consistent commitment and dedication Deborah Coble Robertson has shown for the children, families, and communities of the State of South Carolina, and takes great pleasure in wishing her well as she retires from service to this great State. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize, congratulate, and honor Deborah Coble Robertson on the occasion of her retirement from South Carolina First Steps, commend her for twenty‑one years of distinguished public service to the children of South Carolina, and wish her much happiness and fulfillment in the years to come.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Deborah Coble Robertson.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑