**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE RALPH ALLEN ATKINSON ON HIS HARD‑EARNED RETIREMENT AND TO WISH HIM MUCH HAPPINESS IN HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly would like to pause and honor Ralph Allen Atkinson on the occasion of his retirement from the Pee Dee Federal Savings Bank on December 31, 2021, where he has served as president and chief executive officer; and

Whereas, born on November 23, 1954, to Ebbie James “EJ” and Nettie H. “Judy” Atkinson, Ralph was raised at Ariel Crossroads, their farm in Marion County. He received his undergraduate degree from The Citadel in 1976. As a student, Ralph was a cheerleader for the Bulldogs and features editor for The Sphinx, the yearbook; and

Whereas, 1976 was an important year in Ralph’s life as he married the love of his life, Sandra Lynne Best, and received his commission in the United States Air Force. His loving marriage produced two lovely children, Ernest Johnson Atkinson and Catherine Melissa Atkinson; and

Whereas, Ralph retired from the Air Force Ready Reserve in 1992 with the rank of Captain. For a period thereafter, he served in the South Carolina State Guard, earning a rank of Major; and

Whereas, his career in banking began at C&S Bank in Florence, before moving to Marion National Bank in Marion, where he remained for seventeen years. Afterward, he spent the bulk of his career, twenty‑four years, at Pee Dee Federal Savings Bank, also in Marion. It was here that he served in several capacities including president and chief executive officer. These latter positions he has held since 2016 in addition to being a member of the board of directors of the same bank; and

Whereas, his distinguished career has been marked with educational successes, graduating from numerous banking schools including Southeast Agriculture Lenders School, South Carolina Bankers School, Graduate School of Banking at LSU, and Stonier Banking School. Additionally, he was elected vice president of the Young Bankers of South Carolina; and

Whereas, not only has Ralph enjoyed a successful work life, he also has committed himself to serving the Marion community. He was elected to the Marion City Council in 1989, faithfully serving in this capacity for thirty‑two years before his retirement in December, 2021, making him the longest serving councilman in recent memory. He has also been a faithful member of the Pee Dee Area Citadel Club, serving as president; the Marion County Rotary Club, receiving the distinguished Paul Harris Fellow award in 2004; the Clinton Masonic Lodge, serving as Worshipful Master; the Omar Shrine Temple; and the Wahee River Club, serving as secretary and treasurer for the better part of forty years. Further, he served one term as Mayor Pro Tempore of Marion; and

Whereas, a devout Christian, Ralph was raised in Ariel Baptist Church. After his marriage, he joined the First United Methodist Church in Marion, where he has served in many capacities including as trustee, church treasurer, a member of the finance committee, and a member of the foundation board; and

Whereas, despite his numerous professional achievements and community service contributions, Ralph is best known as a man of great character who exemplifies the sort of decency, integrity, civility, and humility that has earned him the genuine admiration of those fortunate enough to know him. Ralph Atkinson is a cherished member of the Marion community whose positive impact is impossible to overstate. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, congratulate Ralph Allen Atkinson on his hard‑earned retirement and wish him much happiness in his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Ralph Allen Atkinson.

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