**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR DR. JOHN M. KIRBY, JR., UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AFTER FIVE DECADES OF EXEMPLARY SERVICE, AND TO WISH HIM CONTINUED SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS IN ALL HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, it is altogether fitting that the South Carolina General Assembly should pause in deliberations to express gratitude to John Kirby for his significant contributions to education in our State; and

Whereas, born in Charlotte, North Carolina, on August 11, 1950, John Kirby moved with his family when he was an infant to Mullins where he graduated Mullins High in 1968; and

Whereas, while a student at Francis Marion University (FMU), formerly the University of South Carolina at Florence, he met and married his beloved wife, Vicki Helms Kirby; and

Whereas, together John and Vicki Kirby reared two fine boys, John III who attended FMU, then graduated from Clemson University, and Michael who attended Clemson, then graduated from FMU; and

Whereas, over the course of a fifty‑year career in education, he has taught, coached, and served as a middle and high school principal, and since the 1990s, he has served as superintendent of Latta School District; and

Whereas, to improve community life and transition students to the workforce, Dr. Kirby worked vigorously to bring industry training opportunities to the Latta area, partnering with Northeastern Technical College (NETC) and serving on the board of trustees. He now serves as chair of the NETC Foundation Board and will continue serving as chair of the Latta Educational Foundation; and

Whereas, devoted to his community, Dr. Kirby has served as a member of the Marion County Arts Council Board of Directors, on the Latta Springfest Committee, and as chair of the Latta Arts Committee board and the Town of Latta Revitalization Executive Committee board; and

Whereas, he founded and developed the Latta Educational Foundation, secured major donors to convert a 1954 gym into the Ellis Performing Arts Center to promote the performing arts within the Latta schools, and is a patron and financial sponsor of the architecturally historic Latta Edwards House and of emerging minority artists; and

Whereas, he was a founding supporter of the historical downtown Veteran’s Park, an ongoing sponsor of the annual Latta Pig Pickin’, and an avid program and financial supporter of a local group of senior citizens who knit hats and blankets to share with those in need in the community; and

Whereas, his service has been recognized with selection as Latta Rotary Citizen of the Year, the SCASA State Superintendent of the Year, the 2006 FMU Educational Administration Award, the 2012‑13 Rotary Outstanding Service Award, The FMU Foundation Lifetime Award, and the 2018 Chamber of Commerce Dolph Braddy award; and

Whereas, he and his wife of more than fifty years have endowed scholarships at FMU, as well as NETC and Florence Darlington Technical College. They received the 2015 Marion Medallion award sponsored and presented jointly by Francis Marion University and the *Florence Morning News*, which recognizes significant contributions and service to the people of the Pee Dee area, and they are both Rotarian Paul Harris Fellows; and

Whereas, grateful for his many years of distinguished service to education in our great State, the South Carolina General Assembly takes great pleasure in extending best wishes to John Kirby as he transitions to a richly deserved retirement and the leisurely pace of the days ahead. 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, recognize and honor Dr. John M. Kirby, Jr., upon the occasion of his retirement after five decades of outstanding service, and wish him continued success and happiness in all his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. John M. Kirby, Jr.

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