**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE WILLIE RAY FOX OF BATESBURG‑LEESVILLE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS NINETY‑NINTH BIRTHDAY AND TO WISH HIM MUCH HAPPINESS IN THE DAYS AHEAD.

Whereas, on July 17, 2022, Willie Ray Fox of Batesburg‑Leesville will awaken to the celebration of a landmark event: his ninety‑ninth birthday; and

Whereas, born on July 17, 1923, in Leesville, Willie Ray Fox came into this world the son of Eugene Charlie Fox and Willie Mae Cato Fox. One of six children, the young Ray, as he was called, grew up in Monetta, where he attended Monetta School and completed the ninth grade; and

Whereas, he wed the lovely Sara Mae Holmes in 1948, and the two were blessed with sons Bruce and Keith, as well as two grandchildren, Meaghan and Carson. The senior Foxes were married for seventy‑one years until Mrs. Fox passed away in 2019; and

Whereas, this patriotic American enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1943 and completed infantry training in Tyler, Texas, and parachute training at Ft. Benning, Georgia. Having traveled to Newberry, England, on the *Queen Elizabeth*, Ray served as a paratrooper in that country. He also served in the Netherlands, Belgium, and France. He was wounded while serving in France and was moved back to England for hospitalization for six weeks. He then returned to the United States for further recuperation and was discharged in September 1945 as a private, first class, and as an expert marksman with an M1 rifle; and

Whereas, during his military service, Ray earned his Parachute Wings, Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Good Conduct Medal, Presidential Unit Emblem, American Campaign Medal, European African Middle Eastern Medal with Three Bronze Stars and Arrow Head, World War II Victory Medal, Honorable Service Lapel Button, and Marksman Badge with Rifle Bar; and

Whereas, as a man of faith, he joined First Baptist Church of Batesburg on October 11, 1959, and has served there as a deacon, usher, and member of the Building and Grounds Committee. Further, he is a member of the D.A.V., V.F.W., and American Legion; and

Whereas, upon returning home after his military service, Ray Fox worked for Rawls Auto Sales in Leesville for ten years. He then became self‑employed in service station management for twenty‑five years; and

Whereas, still living by himself in the home he shared for many years with his wife, Ray cooks his own meals, cleans his home, and takes care of his yard without any assistance; and

Whereas, the House takes great pleasure in honoring this son of South Carolina at the celebration of his ninety‑ninth birthday, and the members join with his family and friends in congratulating him on reaching this important life milestone. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate Willie Ray Fox of Batesburg‑Leesville on the occasion of his ninety‑ninth birthday and wish him much happiness in the days ahead.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Willie Ray Fox.

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