**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR DR. GENE C. FANT, JR., THE EIGHTH PRESIDENT OF NORTH GREENVILLE UNIVERSITY, AND TO CONGRATULATE HIM ON HIS FIVE YEARS OF INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP AT NORTH GREENVILLE UNIVERSITY.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that Dr. Gene C. Fant, Jr., is celebrating his fifth year as president of North Greenville University; and

Whereas, before taking the helm of the university in June 2017 after the search committee’s year‑long process, Dr. Fant had already been a leader in Christian higher education and a prolific writer; and

Whereas, born in Laurel, Mississippi, Gene Fant was blessed with a grandfather and a father who both served as pastors in churches on the opposite sides of town, and when Gene was four years old, his father moved the family to Upstate New York to plant churches; and

Whereas, Gene professed Christ as his Savior at an early age, and when he was eleven, his family moved to Hampton, Virginia, where his father served as pastor at Ivy Memorial Baptist Church; and

Whereas, young Fant played sports and music, and when his father traveled to preach revivals, the whole family would provide worship music with Gene on the bass and his younger brother on guitar to accompany their gospel singer‑songwriter mother; and

Whereas, after graduating from high school in 1981, Dr. Fant earned a bachelor’s degree in anthropology in 1984 from James Madison University and a master’s degree in English from Old Dominion University in 1987, a Master of Divinity in biblical languages from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1991, a doctorate in philosophy and Master of Education in Educational Supervision in English from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1995, and a Certificate in Educational Management from Harvard University in 2011; and

Whereas, he began his career in education in Gloucester County Public Schools in Virginia, where he met his future wife, Lisa Williams, who had graduated from the Baptist Carson‑Newman University. One year after meeting, they became engaged and they married in 1989. For the next several years both of them continued to earn several degrees. Together they reared two fine children, twins Ethan and Emily; and

Whereas, Dr. Fant has served as a graduate teaching fellow, an assistant professor, a full professor, the English Department chair at Mississippi College and at Union University and the latter’s chief academic officer, a college dean, a college vice president, and executive vice president. He recently served as provost and chief academic officer at Palm Beach Atlantic University; and

Whereas, when he learned that North Greenville produced graduates with an excellent education while helping them to grow in their relationship with Jesus, Dr. Fant was encouraged to apply for the position of the university’s president to help build transformational leaders engaged in the community and the local church who could share the Gospel in specific trades, like economics or medicine; and

Whereas, he has written chapters for several books and is the author of four books: *The Liberal Arts: A Student’s Guide*; *God as Author: A Biblical Approach to Narrative*; *Expectant Moments: Devotions for Expectant Parents*” with his wife; and *Petrarchan Hagiography, Gender, and Subjectivity in Lady Mary Wroth’s ‘Pamphilia to Amphilanthus’*; and

Whereas, Dr. Fant has prioritized rethinking North Greenville University’s organizational chart and encouraged the graduate school to be innovative in imagining new programs. His other priorities have included strengthening the university’s academic programs and residential life. Under his leadership, the university celebrated its 125th anniversary. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor Dr. Gene C. Fant, Jr., the eighth president of North Greenville University, and congratulate him on his five years of innovative leadership at North Greenville University.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. Gene C. Fant, Jr.

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