**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE HEMINGWAY HIGH SCHOOL BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM, COACHES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY SEASON AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM FOR SECURING THE 2017 SOUTH CAROLINA CLASS A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the members of the Hemingway High School boys varsity basketball team of Williamsburg County took top honors at the state competition held at Colonial Life Arena in Columbia on Friday, March 3, 2017; and

Whereas, in a nail‑biting finish to the 2017 championship game, Hemingway High defeated Lewisville High School 72‑71 to claim the team’s sixth state title and an impressive 22‑5 season. After losing to Calhoun County High School in the state match in 2016, Hemingway dug deep to garner its first state victory since 2010; and

Whereas, as the teams took to the lockers at halftime, the Hemingway Tigers trailed the Lewisville Lions 28‑26, but when the Tigers took the floor in the third quarter, they proved that they owned the court with a 12‑4 game‑changing run; and

Whereas, near the end of the third quarter, Hemingway had a 47‑40 advantage, but the Tigers did not post a double‑digit lead until the score was 62‑52 with four minutes left in the fourth quarter; and

Whereas, the lead grew to 66‑54, and with only 3:16 remaining in the game, Lewisville took out their shears and began trimming the Tigers’ twelve‑point lead, the widest spread of the game. When the clock ticked down to 1:14, the Lions still faced a 68‑60 deficit; and

Whereas, the teams battled furiously for the title until only twenty seconds remained in the championship game, but Hemingway still held a 72‑67 lead. A technical foul on the Tigers sent the Lions to the free‑throw line, and the Lions made only the first free throw but still cut the deficit to 72‑70 when they rebounded the missed second shot and were fouled making a possible game‑tying putback; and

Whereas, in spite of Lewisville’s run in the last three minutes of the game for the state title, Hemingway had hit nineteen free throws out of twenty‑six times at the line in the final game and displayed the team’s depth and resilience to hold the victory; and

Whereas, Hemingway’s senior Desmond Pressley, named the Class A Player of the Year, posted a game‑high twenty‑one points for Hemingway before fouling out in the fourth quarter. Teammate Darius Williams contributed sixteen points and pulled down fourteen rebounds, while Darius Taylor posted double digits with ten points and senior Solomon Skinner added nine; and

Whereas, in a sport that demands strength, agility, and accuracy, Head Coach Gregory Lawson and his skilled coaching staff maximized their own experience and passion to forge a championship‑caliber team and teach these athletes to hit the backboards and press their way to victory, lessons that will prove invaluable through life both on and off the court; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives appreciates the distinction that the Hemingway basketball players have earned for their school and their community, and the members look expectantly to hear of their continued success in the days ahead. 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 the Hemingway High School boys varsity basketball team, coaches, and school officials for an extraordinary season and congratulate them for securing the 2017 South Carolina Class A State Championship title.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Principal Glen Kennedy and Coach Gregory Lawson.

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