**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO CELEBRATE THE CLEMSON UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL TEAM AND COACHES FOR CAPTURING THE 2016 COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE AND TO SALUTE THEM FOR THEIR POSTSEASON RANKING AS NUMBER 1 IN THE NATION.

Whereas, the pride of the entire Palmetto State, the Clemson University football team climaxed a fabulous 2016 season with an already‑legendary, never‑to‑be‑forgotten national playoff that lifted the Tigers to the top of the mountain and handed defeat to top‑ranked defending national champ Alabama; and

Whereas, Tampa, Florida, was the lucky town that hosted the national championship thriller between these two powerhouses, who had faced off a year ago for the same title. On January 9, 2017, Clemson fans crowded into every allotted seat at Tampa’s Raymond James Stadium to view what proved a riveting rematch. This time, they tasted sweet revenge for the 2015 national playoff loss and earned its first national title since 1981; and

Whereas, on the 99th offensive play, and the Tigers trailing by three, quarterback Deshaun Watson found Hunter Renfrow on the right side of the end zone for a game‑winning touchdown with only one second remaining; and

Whereas, it wasn’t the first time this Clemson team had brought down the mighty. The 2016 season saw the Tigers topple each of the past seven national title winners including, Auburn, Florida State, Ohio State, and Alabama; and

Whereas, gratified by the praise heaped on his players, Coach Swinney has also come in for his share of well‑deserved accolades. He got what he called “the cherry on top” when he took home the Paul “Bear” Bryant Coach of the Year Award. It’s the second straight year Coach Swinney has won it, and he is one of only two coaches to win the award twice since its 1986 inception; and

Whereas, also for the second straight year, Clemson’s Deshaun Watson received the Davey O’Brien Award, which honors college football’s best quarterback, as well as the 2016 Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award. During the championship game, Deshaun proved why he’s considered the best by many: he finished the evening 36‑of‑56 for 420 yards and three touchdowns and rushed for 43 yards and another score. Unsurprisingly, he was tapped to receive the game’s Offensive Most Valuable Player Award; and

Whereas, Clemson’s brilliant fourth quarter sealed the game’s status as an instant classic. Having completed key hookups with Mike Williams and Jordan Leggett, Deshaun Watson sliced and diced the Tide for a nine‑play, 68‑yard march to the end zone; and

Whereas, Ben Boulware led the Tigers’ defense in holding the Crimson Tide to a 2‑15 performance on third down, and was named the Defensive Most Valuable Player; and

Whereas, Coach Swinney rightly has his sights set on a return to the national playoff game. The Senate is pleased to hear this news, delighted to raise its collective salute to him and his fine group of young athletes, and proud to declare its members among the team’s most ardent fans. On behalf of the people of South Carolina, the Senate offers its congratulations on a class act and best wishes for continued success. Go, Tigers! Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, celebrate the Clemson University football team and coaches for capturing the 2016 College Football Playoff National Championship title and salute them for their postseason ranking as number one in the nation.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the Clemson University football team and Coach Dabo Swinney.

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