**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO CELEBRATE CAJ THE COMFORT DOG OF THE MARION COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE AND TO THANK THE AGENCY FOR ITS WONDERFUL GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY OF THIS COMFORTING CANINE CHARMER.

Whereas, everyone loves a spaniel, and the cheerful, playful, energetic English springer spaniel is no exception to the rule. Since last fall, when Caj the Comfort Dog joined the Marion County Sheriff’s Office, all of Marion County has enjoyed indisputable proof that this affectionate breed can produce outstanding therapy dogs; and

Whereas, as the first and only law enforcement therapy dog in the State, Officer Caj’s sole responsibility is to brighten the faces of those going through difficult times. In carrying out his duty, Caj specializes in comforting children who must take the witness stand in a courtroom. However, it’s clear that having Caj around calms down adults, as well as children, and can even lower their blood pressure; and

Whereas, purchased in October 2017 through victim service funds, Caj began his training as a therapy dog at only eight days old and now serves crime victims in the sheriff’s office, court, and community. He lives with, and is handled by, victim advocate Deputy Tammy Erwin. Caj visits the sheriff’s office every day and is a tremendous blessing not just to victims but also to staff in lifting everyone’s spirits and improving morale; and

Whereas, very active in community functions and recognized by everyone, Caj (pronounced “cage”) has become a Facebook sensation and often is called the sheriff’s office mascot. Also a regular visitor to the local preschool and nursing home, he most recently held a presentation at a county school. At this event, approximately three hundred students lined up to pet Caj, some of them never having had the opportunity to pet a dog before. This positive encounter also taught the children they can trust the Marion County Sheriff’s Office. Further, with his badge and vest Caj goes forth to the citizenry at large as an ambassador for the Marion County Sheriff’s Office, giving many their first positive encounter with a “deputy”; and

Whereas, grateful for the pride and recognition Caj has brought to his county and State, the General Assembly takes immense pleasure in saluting this beloved canine spaniel, who represents joy and comfort to so many. 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, celebrate Caj the Comfort Dog of the Marion County Sheriff’s Office and thank the agency for its wonderful gift to the community of this comforting canine charmer.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Caj the Comfort Dog and the Marion County Sheriff’s Office.

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