**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO EXPRESS PROFOUND SORROW UPON THE PASSING OF MARK WESLEY BRAX OF RICHLAND COUNTY, A LIFE TAKEN SO VERY EARLY IN A TRAGIC ACCIDENT, AND TO CONVEY DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO HIS PARENTS, FAMILY, AND MANY FRIENDS.

Whereas, the members of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina were deeply saddened by the news of the death of Mark Wesley Brax on April 14, 2012; and

Whereas, Wesley was born in Columbia on February 8, 1989, to Mary Beth Sims Branham and Robert Harri Brax; to maternal grandparents, Mrs. Lana Hancock Sims and the late Mr. Sims; and to paternal grandparents, Caryl Brax and Harri Brax; and

Whereas, Wesley attended Lexington and A. C. Flora high schools and graduated from the Governor’s School for Arts and Humanities and earned a bachelor of music in vocal performance, *magna cum laude*, from Florida State University; and

Whereas, in the midst of pursuing a master’s of music in voice from the University of Cincinnati’s College Conservatory of Music, Wesley died on April 14, 2012, in a tragic accident; and

Whereas, Wesley participated in several operas in both ensemble and leading capacities while at Florida State University, and he recently performed as the bass soloist for the College Conservatory of Music performance of Bach’s *St. Matthau Passion* and premiered a solo work at the Midwest Composers Symposium; and

Whereas, Wesley received honors from Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Palm Beach Opera, Opera Birmingham, and the Southeastern Regional NATS Auditions; and

Whereas, Wesley spent the summer of 2011 as a vocal fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center in Lenox, Massachusetts, and was invited to return in 2012. He was also the baritone soloist for the performance of Handel’s *Messiah* at St. Peter’s Catholic Church and Washington Street United Methodist Church, and he was also a vocalist in the St. Joseph Catholic Church choir, Shandon Methodist Church choir, and various churches in Tallahassee, Florida, and Cincinnati, Ohio; and

Whereas, Wesley recently received the honor of grand‑prize winner of the student category in the National Orpheus Vocal Competition; and

Whereas, as a devout Catholic, Wesley considered it a high honor of his life to sing with the Florida State University Singers for Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican; and

Whereas, Wesley is survived by his parents; stepmother Sharon Brax; brother Daniel Branham; stepbrothers Craig Archer (Kim) and Chris Cooper (Lindsay); grandparents Priscilla Sims, Caryl Brax, and Harri Brax; uncles and aunts Lana H. Sims, Jr. (Anne), Ted Sims (Allison), Cathy Sims Phoenix (David), Russ Brax (Debbie), Don Brax (Jennifer), Debbie Brax Hacek (Jack); and his loving cousins of the Sims and Brax families; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly express deepest sympathy upon the passing of this talented son of the Palmetto State and, with his loving family and many friends, honor the life and memory of Mark Wesley Brax. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, express their profound sorrow upon the passing of Mark Wesley Brax of Richland County, a life taken so very early in a tragic accident, and convey deepest sympathy to his parents, family, and many friends.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Mary Beth Sims Branham, Robert Harri Brax, Priscilla Sims, and Caryl Brax.

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