**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR BRIGADIER GENERAL ROSS E. BEARD, JR., OF THE JOINT SERVICES DETACHMENT OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA MILITARY DEPARTMENT FOR HIS DEVOTED SERVICE TO THE PALMETTO STATE AND TO EXPRESS PROFOUND GRATITUDE TO HIM UPON THE OPENING OF THE ROSS BEARD COLLECTION AT THE CAMDEN ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM.

Whereas, born in Florence on June 30, 1929, Ross E. Beard, Jr., is the son of the late Crystel Ray Beard and Ross E. Beard, Sr., and graduated from Florence High School in 1945; and

Whereas, as a youngster during the Great Depression, he earned eight dollars a week in his first employment at Keiserman’s grocery store, and then he was hired to clean and maintain the remarkable gun collection of famed FBI agent, Melvin H. Purvis, who captured gangster John Dillinger, “Pretty Boy” Floyd, and “Baby Face” Nelson and whose guidance influenced his entire life with a wealth of knowledge and a deep interest in history; and

Whereas, he worked with the South Carolina Highway Department “strapping” an asphalt distributor, which entailed riding on the back of the tanker as it sprayed asphalt on roads being built; and

Whereas, always interested in motorcycles and flying, he washed airplanes on weekends at the Florence airport in exchange for thirty minutes of flying time, and too young to serve during World War II, he received his parents’ permission to fly as an observer with pilots patrolling for enemy submarines off the coast; and

Whereas, Ross Beard became a cadet member of the Florence Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol, for which he received numerous awards during twenty years of service, eventually as a lieutenant colonel and commandant of cadets for the State and beyond; and

Whereas, old enough to serve during the Korean crisis, he took basic training in the United States Army at Ft. Jackson and served in the Pennsylvania 28th Division at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, in the Headquarters Company of the 110th Infantry, earning the rank of sergeant; and

Whereas, after serving his country with distinction, he returned to Camden in 1953 and served E. I. DuPont de Nemours for sixteen years in production, planning, and control where he led the forecasting, scheduling, and accounting for all the chemicals and raw materials used in making and packaging Orlon; and

Whereas, he left DuPont to lead the Greater Kershaw County Chamber of Commerce for several years, learning the special nature of the historic city of Camden and its wonderful people; and

Whereas, for his work of developing industry in South Carolina, Governor John West awarded him the Order of the Palmetto, the highest civilian honor awarded in the State; and

Whereas, in thirty‑eight states and several countries, Mr. Beard served as the director of management for a large company that built shopping malls and high‑rise offices, monitoring construction of projects and setting up the management, marketing, and maintenance of the properties; and

Whereas, he served Columbia scientist Dr. William Merritt Quattlebaum as a plant manager of one of his three chemical plants, and upon the death of Dr. Quattlebaum, he returned to Camden where he served the Kershaw County School District for several years building and renovating schools; and

Whereas, he has contributed articles to *Sandlapper* magazine and wrote the award‑winning biography of weapons’ genius David M. “Carbine” Williams, the subject of a movie starring Jimmy Stewart; and

Whereas, a serious collector of antique weapons for over seventy years, Mr. Beard has one of the largest collections in the Southeast and was elected to the New York Hobby Hall of Fame for his collecting and preservation of historic items; and

Whereas, when the South Carolina Military Museum was built in Columbia, he placed over two thousand collectibles in it for five years, and many remain there on display. He served on the board of the museum and in the Joint Services Command, where he was promoted to brigadier general in 2010; and

Whereas, on May 23, 2013, a large part of his lifelong collection of antique and historic guns and military collectibles will go on loan to the Camden Archives and Museum for the benefit of downtown merchants and enjoyment by citizens and visitors, and since the museum cannot display the entire collection, objects will be rotated every few months in the museum wing; and

Whereas, the Camden Police Department and Camden Fire Department have assisted in transporting, cataloging, and photographing many of the display items, including a Chinese wheel‑lock circa 1514, long rifles of the American Revolution, a French LeMat pistol made for the Confederacy, a sawed‑off shotgun and pistols belonging to notorious gangster John Dillinger, one of the best carbine collections from the 1940s, and Russian spy guns; and

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly appreciates the legacy of industry and history that Ross Beard has given to our State and celebrates the opening of the Ross Beard Collection at the Camden Archives and Museum. 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, recognize and honor Brigadier General Ross E. Beard, Jr., of the Joint Services Detachment of the South Carolina Military Department, for his devoted service to the Palmetto State and express profound gratitude to him upon the opening of the Ross Beard Collection at the Camden Archives and Museum.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Brigadier General Ross E. Beard, Jr.

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