**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE SUMTER HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY BASEBALL TEAM, COACHES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR AN OUTSTANDING SEASON AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM FOR WINNING THE 2014 CLASS AAAA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the members of the Sumter High School varsity baseball team of Sumter County took top honors at the state competition at the Gamecock Baseball Stadium in Columbia on Wednesday, May 21, 2014; and

Whereas, to the delight of their fans, the Sumter High Gamecocks finished their season with a twenty‑one‑game winning streak, when they defeated Northwestern High School 2‑0 to take home their third state title in nine years; and; and

Whereas, ranked as the number‑one team in the South Carolina Baseball Coaches Association preseason poll, the Sumter Gamecocks posted an astounding 29‑2‑1 record for the season; and

Whereas, in the first game of the championship two days earlier, senior Gamecock Charlie Barnes, who will play on Clemson University’s diamond next year, pitched a complete game in a 6‑1 game victory over Northwestern’s Trojans, and in the second game he played first base; and

Whereas, Sumter’s right‑hander Phillip Watcher pitched the second game, a four‑hit shutout with twelve strikeouts and just two walks, ending the best‑out‑of‑three series 2‑0 and snatching a 2‑0 series victory over Northwestern. He and his twin brother, Jacob Watcher, are set to take the diamond at The Citadel next year; and

Whereas, the Gamecocks’ first run in the second game came in the third inning when Chris Crawford hit a single into left field and then stole second base. He went to third on a sacrifice bunt by teammate Tee Dubose, and after a well laid bunt from Ian McCaffrey, he beat the Trojan throw to take home; and

Whereas, the team’s only other run came in the next inning after Javon Martin was hit by a pitch and was sacrificed to second by Gamecock Charlie Barnes. Left‑handed swinging Phillip Watcher, who had hit two home runs as a freshman in the state championship series against Byrnes in 2011, hit a line drive for an RBI double that made the game 2‑0; and

Whereas, for the Gamecock seniors who started in the program as freshmen, this victory is a sweet finale that has come full circle from where the team started, from the 2011 state title to this year’s 2014 championship; and

Whereas, in a sport that demands strategy and strength, quickness and patience, Head Coach Brooks Shumake and his skilled coaching staff capitalized on their own athletic ability and training to mold a championship team and teach these athletes lessons that will prove invaluable through life both on and off the diamond; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives appreciate the pride and recognition that the Sumter baseball players have brought to their school and their community and look to hear of their continued accomplishments 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 Sumter High School varsity baseball team, coaches, and school officials for an outstanding season and congratulate them for winning the 2014 Class AAAA State Championship title.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Principal Dana Fall and Coach Brooks Shumake.

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