**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR ABDULLAH MUHAMMAD OF CHARLESTON COUNTY FOR HIS MANY YEARS OF DEDICATED AND OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO HIS COMMUNITY.

Whereas, it is with much pleasure that the South Carolina House of Representatives honors those individuals who give tirelessly of themselves to the welfare of this great state’s citizenry. Abdullah Muhammad of Charleston County stands among those who strive to make themselves benefactors to their communities; and

Whereas, born on Christmas Day to Herbert and Mamie Cason, this native of Brooklyn, New York, was named Christopher, due to his parents’ firm belief in Jesus Christ. The youngest of three siblings, Christopher became a great hustler: hustle for the bus, the train, and bottle sales at the corner store to get some extra money; and

Whereas, at the age of nine, he concluded that being poor was not an option. He started mixing with the wrong crowds, sold marijuana, and eventually earned five thousand dollars a day. He acquired flashy cars, flashy jewelry, and, in 1988, a baby son. Unfortunately, life on the streets did not include time off to take care of children; and

Whereas, his first run‑in with the law came from possession of marijuana and additional charges that ended in a Youthful Offender Act prison sentence. During this prison time, one of the sentencing requirements was the earning of a GED, and Christopher completed it. Life in prison was not the way he wanted his life to go, so he began working during the day and going to night school at Nielson’s Electronics. He obtained an associate degree in electronics; and

Whereas, still a hustler, Christopher was pulled over in 1991 in a traffic stop, an event that changed his life. Police found a gun and drugs in his vehicle, and Christopher faced more felony charges. The judge sentenced Christopher to five years in prison, during which time he converted to Islam and changed his name to Abdullah Muhammad. But when he got out of prison, his downward cycle continued. Another five‑year prison sentence, due to an arrest on drug charges in Rock Hill, changed his attitude because prison life was much harder than before and he wanted more to life than prison sentences. Reading for hours as a way to elevate his mind became a habit. He read books on Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Marcus Garvey, among others. As a result, he wanted to uplift his community, rather than tear it down; and

Whereas, after being released from prison, Muhammad came home to a huge epidemic of gun violence within the community. He began to motivate and inspire young people to see that there is more to life than violence and prison. In 2000, Muhammad (affectionately known as “Smurf”) and a group of men created Unity Day in Mt. Pleasant’s Snowden Community. In the summer months, Unity Day would sponsor a huge community cookout during which school supplies were provided to school‑age children. The smiles on the children’s faces motivated Muhammad to do more; and

Whereas, since that time, he has mentored at Pepperhill Elementary School, spoken at several other schools, volunteered his time working on playground and cleanup projects at Chicora Elementary School, and worked with many South Carolina political, educational, and law enforcement figures. Encouraging young people to follow a better life path has become his life’s mission; and

Whereas, cognizant of his fine contributions to the people of the Palmetto State, the House extends grateful thanks to Abdullah Muhammad for his committed service. As he continues to serve, the members wish him much happiness and fulfillment in all his future endeavors. 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 Abdullah Muhammad of Charleston County for his many years of dedicated and outstanding service to his community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Abdullah Muhammad.

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