**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF PIONEER AFRICAN‑AMERICAN AVIATOR SHIRLEY TYUS, A NATIVE OF SPARTANBURG.

Whereas, born on June 28, 1950, in Spartanburg to Martin Bullock and Marcelle Suber, Shirley Tyus was the first African‑American female pilot to fly for United Airlines, a distinction that makes her a trailblazer in aviation history; and

Whereas, Officer Tyus’ aviation career began as a United Airlines flight attendant in 1972. She soon realized that her real desire was to become an airline pilot. In 1977, she embarked on her mission by enrolling in flight training at the Professional Flight School in Friendly, Maryland. In August 1979, she acquired her commercial pilot’s license; and

Whereas, she balanced the demands of being a United flight attendant by day with piloting cargo aircraft for the African‑American‑owned Wheeler Airlines, based in Raleigh, North Carolina, by night. During this time, she also managed to enroll in the Embry Riddle Aeronautical University; and

Whereas, in 1985, she earned her Airline Transport Pilot Rating. In 1987, her dream was further fulfilled when United Airlines hired her as a pilot; and

Whereas, Officer Tyus is vice president of the Bessie Coleman Foundation, Inc. (BCF), founded in 1995 by a group of African‑American women involved in the aviation industry. One of the goals of BCF is to encourage young men and women to pursue aviation‑related careers; and

Whereas, Shirley Tyus has appeared on several television programs and has been featured in numerous newspaper and magazine articles, including the *Washington Post*, *Washington Times*, *Ebony*, *Jet*, and West African publications. Many organizations have honored her for her contributions to aviation and her interest in the advancement of women and black Americans in the field of aviation. On August 17, 2001, Ms. Tyus was inducted into the Black Aviation Hall of Fame in Memphis, Tennessee; and

Whereas, Officer Tyus adheres to this philosophy: “If we stand tall, it is because we stand on the backs of those who have gone before us.” She firmly believes we must keep our backs strong for those behind us and our hands united for those in front of us; and

Whereas, today, Officer Tyus spends her free time volunteering with the Ariolina Young Aviators in Durham, North Carolina, a program that provides education and training to low‑income high school students who have their sights set on aviation careers. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, honor the life and achievements of pioneer African‑American aviator Shirley Tyus, a native of Spartanburg.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Shirley Tyus.

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