**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR LANCE CORPORAL PAUL M. WILKINS OF CHEROKEE COUNTY AND TO CONGRATULATE HIM FOR EARNING THE HONOR OF BEING NAMED THE 2018 TROOPER OF THE YEAR FOR TROOP FOUR OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY PATROL.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is gratified to learn that Lance Corporal Paul M. Wilkins was named South Carolina Highway Patrol’s 2018 Trooper of the Year for Troop Four at ceremonies held in Columbia on Wednesday, April 3, 2019; and

Whereas, as a teenager, Paul Wilkins served as a volunteer junior firefighter with the Blacksburg Volunteer Fire Department where he served for more than sixteen years, and in 2004, he began serving as a reserve deputy with the Cherokee County Sheriff’s Office; and

Whereas, in 2012, he joined the South Carolina Highway Patrol (SCHP) and after graduating from Patrol School was assigned to Troop 3 Post D to serve Spartanburg County. He was transferred to Troop 4 Post A to serve Cherokee and Union counties in 2015; and

Whereas, Lance Corporal Wilkins was involved in numerous vehicle pursuits in 2018 involving felony charges that removed dangerous offenders from the state’s roadways. In one of those pursuits, he was stabbed by a violator after he responded to a BOLO on I‑85; and

Whereas, after attempting to conduct a traffic stop, the violator fled, and Lance Corporal Wilkins engaged in a vehicle pursuit, assisted by another trooper and a deputy. When the violator abandoned his vehicle and started to flee on foot with an unknown object that appeared to be a metal pole, Lance Corporal Wilkins advised the violator several times to drop the object before he turned to run, and after a short foot pursuit, the officer attempted to take the violator into custody when the subject stopped; and

Whereas, the object was actually a machete, and in the process of removing the weapon and apprehending the violator, Lance Corporal Wilkins was stabbed in the right rear shoulder. He was transported to Mary Black Hospital of Gaffney where he was treated and released, and he returned to work full duty without permanent damage. The violator was charged with multiple counts, including two counts of attempted murder and assault and battery charges; and

Whereas, a certified field training officer, Lance Corporal Wilkins’ activity for 2018 included almost fourteen hundred cases: seven drug cases, thirty‑eight DUI arrests, over five hundred restraint cases, and three hundred speeding cases. He also investigated over one hundred traffic collisions, including three fatal collisions; and

Whereas, in addition to his successful work with the SCHP, he owns and operates Wilkins Driving Academy, a school for teaching driving skills to teens, and he is certified to give the SCDMV road test and permit test; and

Whereas, Lance Corporal Wilkins earned a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from the University of South Carolina Upstate, and he is married and has two fine children; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives values his heroism and his dedication to the safety of our state’s citizens and of all who visit the Palmetto State, and the members wish him continued success in his tireless efforts to serve and protect. 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 Lance Corporal Paul M. Wilkins of Cherokee County and congratulate him for earning the honor of being named 2018 Trooper of the Year for Troop Four of the South Carolina Highway Patrol.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Lance Corporal Paul M. Wilkins.

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