**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR BRENT D. GROOME, CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOR CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS WITH THE HORRY TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE, UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AFTER THIRTY YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE, AND TO WISH HIM CONTINUED SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS IN ALL HIS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate have learned that Brent Groome will begin a well‑deserved retirement after thirty years as a chief executive with the Horry Telephone Cooperative (HTC); and

Whereas, as a vital member of HTC for over thirty years, Mr. Groome has made an impact throughout Horry County. He had an integral part in the rollout of high‑speed internet service to Horry County from the early days of dial‑up internet to cable modems and DSL service to finally overseeing one of the largest local fiber optic networks in our State, and making HTC the first provider of 1 GIG internet speeds to residential members in Horry County. He has been a leader for improving connectivity across South Carolina, most recently by advocating for legislative programs that will improve broadband access to rural communities throughout our State. Because of HTC and Brent Groome’s efforts, 99.3 percent of residents in Horry County now have access to broadband; and

Whereas, when schools closed at the onset of the COVID‑19 pandemic, Mr. Groome worked with Horry County Schools to identify student households that did not have internet access to ensure students were able to continue learning. HTC connected 675 households to free broadband through the spring of 2020. This collaborative effort was a unique partnership that school districts and providers across the State used as a model for connectivity; and

Whereas. Mr. Groome’s commitment to students and their success led him to found the REEL Kids Program, Recognizing Exceptional Examples of Leadership in Students, throughout the Horry County School District. He has served in leadership roles at Horry‑Georgetown Technical College and Coastal Carolina University and was instrumental in establishing the HTC Honors College at Coastal Carolina University; and

Whereas, he has always worked to assure that HTC members are prepared before severe weather events, and he led efforts to support the community after Hurricane Florence and other severe storms. He established the HTC Connect Fund, which allowed Horry Telephone Cooperative to provide waterproof document protection kits to one hundred fifty members of the Bucksport Community, where regular flooding occurs; and

Whereas, a deacon and choir director at Good Hope Baptist Church, Mr. Groome is an active member of his community; and

Whereas, grateful for his many years of distinguished service to the Horry Telephone Cooperative, the South Carolina Senate takes great pleasure in extending best wishes to Brent Groome as he transitions to a richly deserved retirement and the leisurely pace of the days ahead. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the Senate of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, recognize and honor Brent D. Groome, Chief Executive, Corporate Communications and Government Relations with the Horry Telephone Cooperative, upon the occasion of his retirement after thirty years of outstanding service and to wish him continued success and happiness in all his future endeavors.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Brent D. Groome.

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