**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR MRS. BESSIE BOWMAN ABRAHAM FOR HER YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WORK, AND TO CONGRATULATE HER FOR BEING HONORED BY THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA AS A WOMAN OF DISTINCTION.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly are pleased to learn that Bessie Bowman Abraham will be honored by the Girls Scouts of the USA at their one hundredth birthday celebration in Florence on April 29, 2012; and

Whereas, a native of Rowesville, she earned a bachelor’s in sociology from South Carolina State University, and then earned a master’s in social work from the University of Pittsburgh where she was honored with the 2007 Distinguished Alumni Award for outstanding contributions in social work practice; and

Whereas, she served as director of children’s services for both Pittsburgh Child Guidance Center and Hope Mental Health Center in Detroit, Michigan, before returning to South Carolina; and

Whereas, for thirty‑three years, Mrs. Abraham has served the South Carolina Department of Mental Health at the Orangeburg Area Mental Health Center which services a quarter of a million residents in a three‑county area; and

Whereas, in 1978, she began as director of children’s services, later was named clinical director, and became the assistant director of the center in 1992 and executive director in 2002; and

Whereas, committed to the concept of recovery and community functioning for mentally‑ill clients, Mrs. Abraham has guided the Orangeburg Area Mental Health Center during difficult budget cuts as it consistently maintained the highest level of accreditation every three years from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, the outside agency that surveys mental‑health patient facilities in South Carolina; and

Whereas, her community commitment is evident in her service in the Mt. Olive Corporation and as president of the Abraham‑Moss Board and vice president of Jamison Village Board, which secured $1.2 million in funds for housing of the community’s elderly; and

Whereas, in May 2006, she completed a bachelor’s from Southern Methodist College with a double major in Bible and in leadership and ethics, where she was awarded the Louise R. Hassenplug Award and Most Helpful and Spirit Award; and

Whereas, she started Girl Scout troops in her church and served as a Girl Scout leader for six years, and in 1995, she was named a Woman of Distinction by the Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina Chapter; and

Whereas, as a devoted member of Hickory Grove Baptist Church, she serves as the Sunday school superintendent, as a member of the Mass Choir, and in various other capacities; and

Whereas, she reared two fine children, Sinclair Reginald Abraham, Jr., and Stephanie Abraham‑Robinson, who blessed her with an adoring grandson, Bryson Sinclair Abraham‑Robinson; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly are grateful for the years of dedication and service that Bessie Bowman Abraham has given to the field of mental health and to those who are most vulnerable and, along with the Girl Scouts, commend her outstanding service to the young people of her community. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize and honor Mrs. Bessie Bowman Abraham for her years of faithful service in the field of social work, and congratulate her for being honored by the Girl Scouts of the USA as a Woman of Distinction.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Mrs. Bessie Bowman Abraham.

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