**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE GUARD, ALL VOLUNTEERS WHO SHARE A PASSION FOR SERVICE AND A STRONG COMMITMENT TO THEIR FELLOW SOUTH CAROLINIANS, AND TO DECLARE MAY 2019 AS “SOUTH CAROLINA STATE GUARD MONTH” IN THE PALMETTO STATE.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives deeply appreciate the protection that the South Carolina State Guard has provided to the citizens of this great State for almost three hundred fifty years; and

Whereas, authorized by the South Carolina Code of Laws, the State Guard is a professional military organization and component of the South Carolina Military Department which supports a variety of critical functions of the State, county, and municipal governments, such as providing disaster‑relief assistance to communities and local first‑responder organizations; and

Whereas, the South Carolina State Guard traces its earliest manifestation to the formation of the Charleston Militia in 1670, the colony’s first military organization, protecting residents in earliest days from pirates, foreign invaders, and Native‑American raids; and

Whereas, in January 1775, the South Carolina First Provincial Congress convened in Charleston, appointing a Committee of Safety responsible for the command of the province’s military and decreeing that all inhabitants of the colony should become equipped in the use of arms and that their officers should train in the use of arms every other week; and

Whereas, leaders, such as Francis Marion, known as “The Swamp Fox”; Thomas Sumter; Andrew Pickens; and organizers of several artillery and naval components, fought scores of engagements against the British during the American Revolution; and

Whereas, in the early 1800s, the South Carolina Militia contributed in taking Florida from Spain, and individual members fought in the War of 1812 and the Mexican War from 1846 to 1848; and

Whereas, the State Guard is organized as an army brigade under the leadership of the Commander and is comprised of the Command Staff, the Chief of Staff Section, the Professional Services Command, and the 1st Civilian Support Brigade, which is further divided into three battalions. The battalions are divided into companies which correspond to the boundaries of the six regions of the South Carolina Emergency Management Division; and

Whereas, the State Guard trains new members at the McCrady Training Center in Eastover to provide a number of services: search and rescue operations, medical support, legal and engineering expertise, chaplain and counseling services, directing distribution of supplies, and providing military funeral honors to veterans; and

Whereas, when serious natural or man‑made disasters strike the State, the mission of the State Guard is to respond quickly to protect people and property and to help communities recover in coordination with the National Guard, law enforcement, and other state, county, and municipal agencies; and

Whereas, the State Guard is part of the South Carolina Military Department and directed by the adjutant general, and its commander in chief is the Governor of the State of South Carolina; and

Whereas, since 2015, the State Guard has answered when South Carolina has called by providing in excess of forty‑four thousand hours of professional services, including deployments for recovery operations after Hurricanes Joaquin, Harvey, and Matthew; and

Whereas, during 2018, the men and women of the State Guard provided in excess of ninety thousand hours to serve citizens of this State, and the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives value the sacrifice that those hours represent during times of disaster. 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 the members of the South Carolina State Guard, all volunteers who share a passion for service and a strong commitment to their fellow South Carolinians, and declare May 2019 as “South Carolina State Guard Month” in the Palmetto State.

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