**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE PICKENS HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY VOLLEYBALL TEAM, COACHES, AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS FOR A STELLAR SEASON AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM FOR WINNING THE 2021 SOUTH CAROLINA CLASS AAAA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that the members of the Pickens High School volleyball team captured the state title at the state championship game held at Dreher High School in Columbia on Saturday, November 6, 2021; and

Whereas, to the delight of their exuberant fans, the Pickens High Lady Blue Flame aced and dug their way to defeat a fine, competitive Aiken High team in three straight sets; and

Whereas, although Pickens has enjoyed fifteen previous volleyball state championships, the team had not taken a title since 2014 until the sweet sixteen victory in 2021; and

Whereas, the Blue Flame took a 5‑0 lead to start the first set and with All‑State junior setter Lauren Dow serving and senior middle hitter Caroline Lucas defending the net, Pickens posted a 25‑17 score after staying ahead the entire set; and

Whereas, in the second set, Aiken took a threatening 8‑2 lead, forcing a Blue Flame timeout after which Pickens fought its way back as sophomore setter Hannah Campbell assisted teammate Lauren Dow to a 10‑10 tie, winning the second set with a 25‑19 victory; and

Whereas, when senior defensive specialist Ali Pace started serving for Pickens in the third set, the Blue Flame scored eight straight points, which led to a 25‑11 victory in the set, a 3‑0 sweep, and another state title for the Blue Flame; and

Whereas, the Pickens Blue Flame did not lose a set since before the beginning of region play, including an impressive 12‑0 run through the playoffs against the best teams in the State; and

Whereas, in a sport that demands strength, agility, and speed, Head Coach Rikki Owens led the Lady Blue Flame to take the Upstate title all four of her first years as head volleyball coach, but the state title had eluded her until this fifth season; and

Whereas, she maximized her experience and passion to forge a championship‑caliber team in 2021 and teach these athletes lessons that will prove invaluable through life both on and off the court; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives appreciate the pride and recognition that the Pickens volleyball players have brought to their school and their community and look to hear of their continued accomplishments in the days ahead. 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 Pickens High School varsity volleyball team, coaches, and school officials for a stellar season and congratulate them for winning the 2021 South Carolina Class AAAA State Championship title.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Principal Jeff Duncan and Coach Rikki Owens.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑