**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO HONOR THE GRADUATES OF THE GREENWOOD HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1972 ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY, TO CONGRATULATE THEM ON THEIR MANY SUCCESSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS, AND TO RECOGNIZE THEIR VALIANT EFFORTS IN OVERCOMING ADVERSITY.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are pleased to celebrate the golden anniversary of the Class of 1972 of Greenwood High School; and

Whereas, the Greenwood High School Class of 1972 was the first class to complete their high school tenure under mandatory racial integration in the Greenwood School District; and

Whereas, while in attendance at Greenwood High School, the Class of 1972 experienced significant moments of racial unrest and tension, and often African American students experienced difficulty with inclusion and inequity. While incidents had occurred since the commencement of integration, unrest boiled over on March 1, 1972, when an assault on an African American student at Northside Junior High School by two white individuals spurred a protest at Greenwood High. The protest led to multiple skirmishes; and

Whereas, in the wake of the incident, input from Black students was taken by the school district in an attempt to cool the tensions. Group sessions were established for students to discuss all manner of issues in the hopes of coming to a better understanding of each other. There were student biracial committees that were divided into groups consisting of fifteen to twenty students and a teacher or staff member as mediators; and

Whereas, eventually, a ballot and write‑in campaign were created to reorganize the school’s mascot, colors, and yearbook name to create a new identity in which all students could take pride. Student consensus changed Greenwood High School to black and gold Eagles and rebranded the yearbook “Aquila;” and

Whereas, the Class of 1972 celebrated their commencement on the school’s athletic field where five hundred and fifty‑five of the six hundred and thirty‑five members of the class participated in their much awaited graduation ceremony; and

Whereas, members of the Class of 1972 have gone on to make significant contributions to their communities and this State. Many have trained in specific trades and industrial arts or have received advanced degrees. They have worked in all employment sectors of this State including education, government, social services, arts, sciences, technology, engineering, management and administration, and the military; and

Whereas, the Class of 1972 will memorialize over one hundred of their deceased classmates and hold onto their memories as they gather to celebrate Friday, May 27, 2022, through Sunday, May 29, 2022, with a Gala scheduled for Saturday, May 28, 2022; and

Whereas, the Greenwood High School Class of 1972 began the march towards integration for Greenwood County schools and worked tirelessly to provide a more prosperous and just future for each class and all students to follow. It is a great pleasure to wish that they enjoy their golden anniversary together, united once more to share in their experiences and reinforce their lasting bonds; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives recognize and salute the members of the Class of 1972 for their many achievements and their contributions to this great State. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, honor the graduates of the Greenwood High School Class of 1972 on the occasion of their golden anniversary, congratulate them on their many successes and achievements, and recognize their valiant efforts in overcoming adversity.

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