**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE WILLIAM RIVERS “SKEET” VON HARTEN OF BEAUFORT COUNTY UPON THE CELEBRATION OF HIS NINETIETH BIRTHDAY; TO SALUTE HIM FOR A LIFETIME OF SERVICE TO HIS COMMUNITY, STATE, AND NATION; AND TO WISH HIM MUCH HEALTH AND HAPPINESS IN THE DAYS AHEAD.

Whereas, on July 1, 2022, William Rivers “Skeet” Von Harten will awaken to the celebration of a milestone event: his ninetieth birthday. Born in Beaufort County on July 1, 1932, he has lived a life devoted to serving others, both at home and abroad, and is a remarkable son of South Carolina deserving of much praise; and

Whereas, he received his early education in the Beaufort County schools and graduated from Beaufort High School. At the age of 17, the young William enlisted in the South Carolina National Guard. Upon graduating from The Citadel with a degree in business administration, he was commissioned in the U.S. Marine Corps, where he served two tours in Vietnam and earned a Silver Star for valor; a Purple Heart; and two Bronze Stars; and

Whereas, following his first tour in Vietnam, Mr. Von Harten was given a three‑year assignment to Vanderbilt University, where he was the Marine officer instructor at the Naval ROTC unit. Upon completing this assignment, he was ordered to attend the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. Taking advantage of the location, he enrolled at the George Washington University extension campus in Newport. At the end of the academic year, he graduated from the war college as a Distinguished Graduate and from George Washington with a master’s degree in foreign affairs; and

Whereas, following graduation, he was assigned to the Third Marine Division on Okinawa as commanding officer of his regiment. Deployed to Vietnam for a second tour, Skeet Von Harten led his battalion in fighting to repel the North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam in 1972. After twenty years of service, he retired from the U.S. Marine Corps as a lieutenant colonel, and, returning to civilian life, served as the founding director of the Beaufort County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission. He then became president and general manager of New Kingdom Building Supply Company. Also, named director of project planning and development for Gray Holdings L.P., he later formed Von Harten Consulting; and

Whereas, in the field of public service, Mr. Von Harten made his mark. He served two terms on Beaufort County Council, where he was vice chair and chair, and retired from that body in 2010. In his community, he was chair, president, or a member of the board of directors of at least fifteen civic organizations. Commodore of the Beaufort County Water Festival in 1983, he also served as chair of the Burton Fire District Commission and Beaufort Economic Development Board. In addition, he was president of the Sea Island Rotary Club and Beaufort Citadel Club; and

Whereas, in recognition of his dedicated labors, Skeet Von Harten was granted South Carolina’s highest civilian honor, the Order of the Palmetto, in 2009. He also received the governor’s award as South Carolina Ambassador for Economic Development and a presidential citation as one of ten outstanding Vietnam veterans in South Carolina. Further, the University of South Carolina awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Public Service in 2019; and

Whereas, it is a very great pleasure to celebrate this son of South Carolina on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday and to honor his many years of service to his community, State, and nation. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate William Rivers “Skeet” Von Harten of Beaufort County upon the celebration of his ninetieth birthday; to salute him for a lifetime of service to his community, State, and nation; and wish him much health and happiness in the days ahead.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to William Rivers “Skeet” Von Harten.

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