**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE SUNDAY, MAY 9, THROUGH SATURDAY, MAY 15, 2021, AS “NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK” IN SOUTH CAROLINA AND TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATING THE CHILDREN OF THIS STATE IN INNOVATIVE CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS.

Whereas, in the 2020‑2021 academic year, eighty‑one charter schools are serving students across South Carolina, thereby helping create new jobs and opportunities for educators and other professionals in South Carolina. Charter schools, which are public schools, increase learning opportunities for all pupils and provide parents and students with expanded choices within the public school system; and

Whereas, forty‑five states and the District of Columbia have charter schools. In South Carolina, our eighty‑one charter schools serve more than forty‑four thousand students; and

Whereas, the Palmetto State passed the South Carolina Charter School Act in 1996, and the first established charter schools opened their doors in 1998; and

Whereas, many charter schools are designed specifically to serve children from traditionally underserved communities. These schools have made dramatic gains in accelerating the closing of the achievement gap for underserved populations, resulting in an increase in the graduation rate and improvement in college readiness; and

Whereas, charter schools offer a variety of innovative learning environments, including college preparedness, alternative education campuses, career technical education, arts, and sciences; and

Whereas, charter schools play an integral role in South Carolina’s public education system, the communities in which they operate, the families they serve, and the pupils’ lives they impact; and

Whereas, by providing high‑quality education to students, charter schools contribute to the statewide effort to improve education in 2021, and they encourage community and parental involvement in the education of our youth. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize Sunday, May 9, through Saturday, May 15, 2021, as “National Charter Schools Week” in South Carolina and acknowledge the importance of educating the children of this State in innovative classrooms and schools.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Molly Spearman, State Superintendent of Education; the South Carolina Public Charter School District Board of Directors; Carol Aust, Executive Director of the Public Charter School Alliance of South Carolina; and Cameron Runyan, the Chief Executive Officer of the Charter Institute at Erskine.

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