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A SENATE RESOLUTION

TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND THE ORGANIZERS AND PARTICIPANTS OF THE INAUGURAL SOUTH CAROLINA RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CONFERENCE AND THEIR EFFORTS TO REINFORCE PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN THE PALMETTO STATE, TO ENCOURAGE ALL SOUTH CAROLINIANS TO RECOGNIZE AND CELEBRATE THE ESSENTIAL IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY TO ANY AND ALL PEOPLE, AND TO DECLARE MARCH 1, 2025, AS “SOUTH CAROLINA, FIRST IN RELIGIOUS LIBERTY DAY” IN THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, South Carolina has a storied history in recognition of the significance of religious liberty and its establishment as a legal right; and

Whereas, on March 1, 1669, the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina drafted by Anthony Ashley Cooper with the help of philosopher John Locke was adopted by the eight Lord Proprietors of Carolina; and

Whereas, the guarantee of religious liberty and freedom of worship contained in the document is said to be the first such foundational government guarantee in the Americas and, indeed, in the world; and

Whereas, this guarantee of religious liberty, as enshrined in the Fundamental Constitutions, became a beacon of hope in Europe for those being oppressed because of their faith and made Charleston the center of the free world for religious expression; and

Whereas, on January 15, 2025, representatives of many faiths including, but not limited to, Christians, Jews, and Muslims, joined together for the inaugural South Carolina Religious Liberty Conference for the purpose of celebrating and promoting the Palmetto State’s historic and contemporary embrace of the freedom of religion and conscience; and

Whereas, the inaugural South Carolina Religious Liberty Conference was hosted by the University of South Carolina’s Rice School of Law and was organized by partnership between The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, International Center for Law and Religious Studies, J. Reuben Clark Law Society, and Interfaith Partners of South Carolina; and

1 Whereas, in addition to legal scholars and elected officials, presenters at the inaugural South Carolina
2 Religious Liberty Conference included representatives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day
3 Saints, South Carolina Historical Society, African Methodist Episcopalian (A.M.E.) Church, Aiken
4 Muslim Association, Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston, Center for Jewish Life-Chabad of
5 Charleston and the Low Country, Church of God in Christ, and Interfaith Partners of South Carolina;
6 and

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8 Whereas, by acclamation of the participants in the inaugural South Carolina Religious Liberty
9 Conference, it was resolved to promote contemporary support for the principles of religious liberty by
10 petitioning the South Carolina General Assembly to recognize South Carolina’s unique history in
11 promoting and safeguarding the members of a free society’s right to worship when, where, and how
12 their conscience may dictate, as first guaranteed by the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina; and

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14 Whereas, this daring and historic masterpiece is a source of pride for all South Carolinians and a reason
15 for all of our citizens to embrace, support, and celebrate our state’s legacy and leadership in the
16 promotion of religious liberty; and

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18 Whereas, while South Carolina has been a beacon of religious liberty, its history also includes periods
19 where the ideals of freedom were not fully realized. Let us honor South Carolina’s contributions to the
20 cause of religious liberty while committing ourselves to continue to learn from the lessons of our past
21 and ensure these sacred freedoms extend to all. Now, therefore,

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23 Be it resolved by the Senate:

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25 That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and commend the
26 organizers and participants of the inaugural South Carolina Religious Liberty Conference and their
27 efforts to reinforce principles of religious liberty in the Palmetto State, encourage all South Carolinians
28 to recognize and celebrate the essential importance of religious liberty to any and all people, and declare
29 the anniversary of the adoption of the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina, March 1, 2025, as “South
30 Carolina, First in Religious Liberty Day” in the State of South Carolina.

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