

RESOLUTION NO.: R-2016-053

*To Honor the City of Columbia, Mississippi with Official Sisterhood for
its Assistance during the October 2015 Flood*

WHEREAS, in expressing great pride in Columbia, South Carolina, the geographical center of "the Palmetto State," a city formed in 1786 by the State Legislature, which voted that year to place upon it the mantle of State Capital; and,

WHEREAS, Columbia, Mississippi, a city in Marion County, Mississippi, was formed on the banks of the Pearl River six years before Mississippi was admitted to statehood; and,

WHEREAS, the Mississippi site, first settled by John Lott and William Lott in the early 19th century and originally named Lott's Bluff, was incorporated as "Columbia," the fourth municipality in the state on June 25, 1819, "in memory of a district and town back in South Carolina," in recognition of the many early settlers who had migrated from that City; and,

WHEREAS, Columbia, South Carolina resident Catherine Fleming Bruce saw a Facebook post from classmate Danon Jones Vest describing the devastation in Columbia, Mississippi, after an EF3 tornado left five dead and 50 injured a few days before Christmas in December, 2014. Jones was assisting area relief efforts and had turned to social media, and in response Bruce created the Facebook page "Columbia SC for Columbia MS: Tornado Relief," took to local media to share the news, and residents of the "Famously Hot City" sent assistance; and,

WHEREAS, nine months later, Hurricane Joaquin struck, and Columbia, South Carolina experienced a flood on October 4, 2015 that was declared a federal disaster, took nine lives, destroyed homes and businesses, eviscerated neighborhoods and damaged roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure systems; and,

WHEREAS, after a city-wide water shutoff on October 4, 2015, and news that hospitals might have to evacuate patients, Bruce returned to the Facebook page, inviting the people of Columbia, Mississippi to help provide clean water to meet the needs of patients and health care workers in Columbia, South Carolina hospitals; and,

WHEREAS, the Columbia, Mississippi response was immediate: in less than two days, the plea for help from its new "sister city" had been shared more than 15,000 times. The City of Columbia, Mississippi declared October 10 and 11, 2015 "Days of Giving for Columbia, South Carolina!" "Columbia Strong," the Mississippi-based effort that provided tornado relief to its community conducted the flood relief drive over the weekend with support from KLLM Transport Services; on October 9, 2015, Sparta Water offices collected donations; on October 10 and 11, 2015, a trailer positioned in front of Wal-Mart collected donations and "Stars of Hope" were painted, to be sent on the truck along with the water. Jeremy Robbins of Columbia, Mississippi noted: "We have organized relief efforts for our sister city, Columbia, SC. They were among the first to respond to our needs after the December 23, 2014 tornado, so we shall return the kindness;" and,

WHEREAS, two 18-wheeler trucks, along with Mrs. Danon Jones Vest and Mr. Carlton Lewis Thornhill, the contingent from Columbia, Mississippi, arrived at the Charles R. Drew Wellness Center in Columbia, South Carolina on October 13, 2015 and presented a proclamation from the City of Columbia, Mississippi to Mayor Steve Benjamin; relief supplies for hospital operations, patients, their families and flood displaced staff to Providence Hospitals, Palmetto Health Hospitals, and the William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center. The contingent also presented Stars of Hope to leaders of community flood relief efforts. The Stars of Hope is a

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post 9-11 initiative designed to inspire, uplift, and empower natural disaster survivors through the arts. Each star was hand painted by members of the Columbia, Mississippi community; and,

WHEREAS, Tnovsa, LLC of Columbia, South Carolina partnered with the South Carolina Hospital Association to benefit and assist Columbia, South Carolina area hospital operations burdened due to the flood event, and presented relief checks from the Columbia, Mississippi effort to Samuel Tenenbaum and Katherine Davis of Palmetto Health Foundation; Kelly Perritt of Providence Hospital Foundation; and David Omura, Jeffrey Soots, Tammy Finney and Ruth Mustard of William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center in a ceremony on October 19, 2015; and,

WHEREAS, Columbia, South Carolina City Council is proud to recognize Columbia, Mississippi as a jewel of its State for the historic relationship and the continued sisterhood that bind the two cities, NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of Columbia, South Carolina this 16th day of August, 2016, that the Mayor and City Council honor and express deep gratitude to Columbia, Mississippi's leadership, residents and members for its outreach to Columbia, South Carolina in our time of great need; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Columbia, Mississippi join Kaiserslautern, Germany; Cluj-Napoca, Romania; Plovdiv, Bulgaria; Chelyabinsk, Russia; Yibin City, China; Taichung, Taiwan; and Accra, Ghana as an official Sister City to the City of Columbia, South Carolina; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Columbia, South Carolina staff will produce a framed copy of this resolution to accompany Catherine Fleming Bruce in August 2016 for presentation to the City of Columbia, Mississippi.

Requested by:

Mayor Benjamin _____



Mayor

Approved by:



City Manager

Approved as to form:



City Attorney

ATTEST:


City Clerk

Introduced: 8/16/2016
Final Reading: 8/16/2016