

A RESOLUTION recognizing Kentucky's educational progress and welcoming the Commonwealth's new Commissioner of Education, Dr. Stephen L. Pruitt.

WHEREAS, the right to a quality education is fundamental to American citizenship as enumerated in Section 183 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, which directs the General Assembly to provide for "an efficient system of common schools throughout the State"; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth's public education system, once viewed as among the nation's most distressed and neglected, is now recognized as a national leader in innovative educational reform; and

WHEREAS, this transformation has occurred steadily over a span of nearly three decades of continual bipartisan legislative leadership and support, as reflected in the 1990 Education Reform Act, the 1997 Higher Education Reform Act, and 2009 Senate Bill 1; and

WHEREAS, the results of these efforts reveal that Kentucky's high school graduation rate is ranked among the nation's top ten states, and the low-income student graduation rate is the highest in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky elementary and middle school students outperform their collective national counterparts in reading, mathematics, and science, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); and

WHEREAS, in the last five years, students in Kentucky have made significantly greater gains on the American College Test (ACT) than those in any other state in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the effort goes beyond students to include teachers, of whom Kentucky ranks seventh in the nation in the percentage who hold National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification; and

WHEREAS, this effort at persistent progress continues with the appointment of Dr. Stephen L. Pruitt as Kentucky's sixth Commissioner of Education; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Pruitt comes to Kentucky with an extensive background in education at the local, state, and national levels, including service as a high school chemistry teacher, the director of academic standards with the Georgia Department of Education, and the senior vice president for Achieve, Incorporated, a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit education reform organization based in the nation's capital; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Pruitt also served as president of the Council of State Science Supervisors and on the National Academies of Science Committee on Conceptual Framework for New Science Education Standards; and

WHEREAS, a native of Georgia, Dr. Pruitt holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from North Georgia College and State University, a master's degree in science education from the University of West Georgia, and a doctorate in chemistry education from Auburn University;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. The members of the House of Representatives hereby recognize Kentucky's significant educational progress and welcome Dr. Stephen Pruitt as Kentucky's Commissioner of Education.

➔Section 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Dr. Stephen Pruitt, Commissioner of Education, Kentucky Department of Education, Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601.