A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION recognizing Lexington-Fayette County on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of its founding.

WHEREAS, in the spring of 1775, a group of explorers, including William McConnell, were camping by what is now known as McConnell Springs when word came of the Battle of Lexington in Massachusetts and the start of the Revolutionary War; and

WHEREAS, in honor of the battle, the explorers decided to found a community named Lexington; and

WHEREAS, by 1780, town founders began laying out lots in the town and forming a government, and the town was officially established in 1782. Lexington soon became a burgeoning frontier town with 300 settlers living in 50 log cabins; and

WHEREAS, in 1783, the first public school was established in Lexington by John McKinney, who was known for battling and killing a wildcat in his classroom; and

WHEREAS, the first university west of the Allegheny Mountains, Transylvania University, was founded in 1780. Transylvania University established the first law school and the first medical school in the west; and

WHEREAS, a Baptist congregation organized the first church in Lexington in 1783; and

WHEREAS, The Kentucky Gazette debuted in Lexington in 1787 and was the first newspaper published in the state of Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, horses have been a constant presence on the rolling, verdant fields of Lexington's farms since the early 19th Century. By the middle of the 19th Century, Lexington was surrounded, as it is today, by a magnificent panorama of the nation's finest and most picturesque horse and livestock farms; and

WHEREAS, in 1865, the land-grant University of Kentucky was founded; and

WHEREAS, during the Civil War, Lexington was a deeply divided city, with Confederate and Union forces occupying the city at different times; and

WHEREAS, prior to the 1890s, hemp was the most important crop in Lexington, but after that time, tobacco supplanted hemp's reign. By the early 1900s Lexington was the world's largest burley sales center; and

WHEREAS, Lexington was filled with patriotic fervor during World War I, as leaders organized the Hospital Corps of Good Samaritan Base Hospital No. 40, and residents of Lexington travelled to England to help treat the scores of wounded pouring across the English Channel. Later in the 1940s, Lexington made a strong commitment to the war effort during World War II; and

WHEREAS, in the post-war years, Lexington soon became one of the fastest growing cities in the country; and

WHEREAS, in the 1950s, out-of-state companies began to move to Lexington, including International Business Machines (IBM), which moved its electric typewriter division to the city. Employment in Lexington rose by 260 percent between 1954 and 1963; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, Lexington merged its city and county governments. Today, the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government is one of the few truly merged governments in the country; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the merged government has helped Lexington-Fayette County use public resources wisely and efficiently, taking on costly challenges such as protecting the environment with up-to-date sewers, developing a modern transportation system, protecting its neighborhoods, carrying out its rightful identity as the Horse Capital of the World, becoming a leading economic engine for the entire Commonwealth, keeping its cost of living low, engaging in smart, planned growth, keeping its downtown vibrant, and investing in quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the need for continuing change and improvement drives Lexington-Fayette County forward as it moves into the next 250 years;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the House of Representatives concurring therein:

➔Section 1. This august body recognizes Lexington-Fayette County on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of its founding this year, and furthermore celebrates its storied and rich history, manifold contributions not only to the Commonwealth, but beyond, and the vibrant and vital community of Lexington-Fayette County in the heart of this Commonwealth.

➔Section 2. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Senator Amanda Mays Bledsoe for presentation to Linda Gorton, Mayor of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government.