

STATEMENT

MAYOR JOSEPH P. RILEY, JR

CITY OF CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

“Today, in South Carolina, division has been replaced with unity. Our state capitol building -- a building that belongs to all South Carolinians -- will house flags that belong to all South Carolinians as does the flag of our state and the flag of our country.

For more than half a century, the confederate battle flag has been atop our state capitol or in front. This reasonably insulted many of our citizens and kept alive wounds of prejudice and hate. For many years, efforts have been made to have this flag retired to a museum.

Today, at long last, this has been done. Our state’s response to a horrific act of racial hatred has been a clear and decisive act of graceful unity, respect and healing for all of our citizens.

Governor Haley and members of our General Assembly deserve the highest praise from our citizens. They will be able to carry with them for the rest of their lives deserved pride for this historic and healing action.

We have an opportunity to work together and build new bonds of acceptance, tolerance and inclusiveness for our children and grandchildren.”