

WHEREAS, performing as well-trained teams in defense of Americans and their allies in times of combat as well as peace, military working dogs and their handlers have served in our armed forces since World War II; and

WHEREAS, military working dogs and their handlers undergo extensive basic and specialized training to prepare for their assignments, which have included sentry, scout, messenger, tracker, and mine and tunnel duty, and to help reduce the casualty rate during combat, with an estimated 10,000 American soldiers' lives saved during Vietnam alone; and

WHEREAS, the natural instincts and keen senses of hearing and smell inherent to the working dogs enable them to serve as an extension of their handlers, deterring attacks, enhancing the safety of our men and women in uniform, and faithfully serving as valuable members of our military; and

WHEREAS, military working dog teams remain an active part of our country's armed forces, helping protect our troops overseas and our bases at home, including Charleston Air Force Base, Fort Jackson, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, Naval Weapons Station Charleston, and Shaw Air Force Base.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mark Sanford, Governor of the Great State of South Carolina, do hereby proclaim September 5, 2009, as

MILITARY WORKING DOG TEAMS DAY

throughout the state and encourage all South Carolinians to recognize military working dog teams for their valuable contributions to saving lives during armed conflict and peacetime in the defense of our country.