**A** **JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT A HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION PILOT PROJECT TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF NONCONFORMING BILLBOARDS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

Whereas, the Highway Beautification Act of 1965 was enacted by Congress for the protection of the public investment in the controlled highways, the promotion of the safety and recreational value of public travel, and the preservation of natural beauty; and

Whereas, Congress has authorized the Federal Highway Administration to oversee the implementation of outdoor advertising control pilot projects throughout the country that promote the purposes of the Highway Beautification Act; and

Whereas, the Federal Highway Administration has identified the removal of nonconforming billboards as falling within the purposes of the Highway Beautification Act, yet few are removed; and

Whereas, nonconforming billboards can be seen along South Carolina’s roadways; and

Whereas, the removal of nonconforming signs will enhance the beauty of our State and reveal miles of picturesque rural scenery to those traveling within South Carolina. Now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. The Department of Transportation is authorized to develop and submit to the Federal Highway Administration an outdoor advertising control pilot project that permits qualified applicants to upgrade one nonconforming wooden or I‑beam sign adjacent to an interstate highway in exchange for the applicant’s removal of at least two of his other nonconforming signs of similar or larger size on routes regulated by the Highway Control Act.

SECTION 2. The department may charge application, annual, or other reasonable fees necessary to defray the administrative costs of implementing and maintaining the outdoor advertising program.

SECTION 3. The department may implement the pilot program at any time at the discretion of the Secretary of Transportation upon approval by the Federal Highway Administration.

SECTION 4. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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