**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑67‑270 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO THE INSPECTION OF SCHOOL BUSES, TO PROVIDE THAT A SCHOOL DISTRICT OWNED SCHOOL BUS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO AN ANNUAL FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION INSPECTION.

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

SECTION 1. Section 59‑67‑270(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A)(1) All publicly owned or leased school buses~~, including buses owned or leased by a public school district,~~ must be inspected annually in compliance with either the State Department of Education’s annual school bus inspection program or the federal Department of Transportation annual inspection program if the standards of the federal inspection program meet or exceed the standards of the state’s program. The State Department of Education shall assist school districts using the Department of Education’s program by providing the training and certification of a limited number of personnel designated by a school district to perform the inspection, providing the inspection manuals and forms, and supplying the inspection certificate stickers for the school buses. The State Department of Education’s assistance must be free of charge. Any savings resulting from the ability to be inspected by either the State Department of Education or the federal Department of Transportation shall be expended on accountability programs set forth in Chapter 18 of this title.

(2) All privately owned vehicles designed and used to transport ten or more preprimary, primary, or secondary students to or from school, school‑related activities, or childcare, including buses owned or leased by a public school district, must be inspected ~~annually~~ with an annual federal Department of Transportation inspection. Inspections for these privately owned vehicles must comply with applicable federal inspection requirements. A copy of the vehicle inspection report must be kept on these vehicles at all times.

(3) The owner or lessee of a school bus shall be solely responsible for the implementation and accountability of school bus inspections.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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