**South Carolina General Assembly**

119th Session, 2011-2012

**S. 127**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Senators Campsen, McConnell and Rose

Document Path: l:\council\bills\nbd\11061ahb11.docx

Introduced in the Senate on January 11, 2011

Currently residing in the Senate Committee on **Judiciary**

Summary: Judicial Election Reform Act

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

12/1/2010 Senate Prefiled

12/1/2010 Senate Referred to Committee on **Judiciary**

1/11/2011 Senate Introduced and read first time ([Senate Journal‑page 61](file:///h:\sj%20archive\2011\01-11-11.docx))

1/11/2011 Senate Referred to Committee on **Judiciary** ([Senate Journal‑page 61](file:///h:\sj%20archive\2011\01-11-11.docx))

1/9/2012 Senate Referred to Subcommittee: L.Martin (ch), Malloy, Sheheen, Campsen, Massey

**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[12/1/2010](file:///p:\pprever\2011-12\127_20101201.docx)

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, SO AS TO ENACT THE “JUDICIAL ELECTIONS REFORM ACT” BY AMENDING SECTION 2‑19‑70, RELATING TO A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY PLEDGING VOTES TO A JUDICIAL CANDIDATE, SO AS TO PROHIBIT A PERSON OR JUDICIAL CANDIDATE FROM DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY SEEKING THE PLEDGE OF A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REGARDING SCREENING FOR ANY JUDICIAL OFFICE UNTIL THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ALL THE CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN DETERMINED BY THE JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION AND THE COMMISSION HAS FORMALLY RELEASED ITS REPORT.

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

SECTION 1. This act may be cited as the “Judicial Elections Reform Act”.

SECTION 2. Section 2‑19‑70(C) and (D) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(C) ~~No candidate for judicial office~~ A person may not directly or indirectly seek ~~directly or indirectly~~ the pledge of a member of the General Assembly’s vote or, directly or indirectly, contact a member of the General Assembly regarding screening for ~~the~~ any judicial office until the qualifications of all candidates for that office have been determined by the Judicial Merit Selection Commission and the commission has formally released its report as to the qualifications of all candidates for the vacancy to the General Assembly. ~~No~~ A member of the General Assembly may not directly or indirectly offer his pledge to any person who plans to seek any judicial office or to any candidate until the qualifications of all candidates for that office have been determined by the Judicial Merit Selection Commission and until the commission has formally released its report as to the qualifications of its nominees to the General Assembly. The formal release of the report of qualifications shall occur no earlier than forty‑eight hours after the nominees have been initially released to members of the General Assembly. For purposes of this section, indirectly seeking a pledge means ~~the~~ a person, a candidate, or someone acting on behalf of and at the request of ~~the~~ a person or a candidate, requesting ~~a person~~ someone to contact a member of the General Assembly on behalf of ~~the~~ a person or a candidate before nominations for that office are formally made by the commission. The prohibitions of this section do not extend to an announcement of candidacy by the candidate and statements by the candidate detailing the candidate’s qualifications.

(D) ~~No~~ A member of the General Assembly may not trade anything of value, including pledges to vote for legislation or for other persons or candidates, in exchange for another member’s pledge to vote for a candidate for judicial office.”

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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