**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING ARTICLE 16 TO CHAPTER 3, TITLE 23 SO AS TO ESTABLISH THE BLUE ALERT PROGRAM THAT IS DESIGNED TO APPREHEND A SUSPECT THAT ALLEGEDLY KILLS, SERIOUSLY INJURES, OR ABDUCTS A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER BY RAPIDLY DISSEMINATING INFORMATION REGARDING THE SUSPECT.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 3, Title 23 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Article 16

Blue Alert Program

Section 23‑3‑1400. (A) The Blue Alert Program is established within the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED). The program is designed to apprehend a suspect that allegedly kills, seriously injures, or abducts a law enforcement officer by rapidly disseminating information regarding the suspect. The purpose of the program is to reduce the suspect’s ability to flee thereby posing a serious threat to the safety of others.

(B) SLED shall adopt guidelines and establish procedures for issuing a blue alert, which include the rapid dissemination of information regarding the suspect through the use of the South Carolina Department of Transportation electronic traffic signage system and other law enforcement mechanisms. The Director of SLED shall act as the statewide coordinator of the program.

(C) To aid in hindering the suspect’s ability to flee and to threaten citizens, communities, and other law enforcement personnel, SLED shall encourage and recruit television and radio broadcasters and other organizations to assist in the program by quickly disseminating information regarding the suspect.

(D) A blue alert shall be issued if:

(1) a local, state, or federal law enforcement officer is killed, seriously injured, or abducted; and

(2) the law enforcement agency of jurisdiction:

(a) determines that the suspect poses a serious risk or threat to the public and other law enforcement personnel;

(b) possesses sufficient information that could assist in locating the suspect, including information regarding the suspect’s vehicle; and

(c) recommends the issuance of a blue alert to SLED.

(E) Upon confirmation of the requirements of subsection (D), SLED shall issue a blue alert. Upon activation, the information that could assist in locating the suspect shall be displayed across the State via South Carolina Department of Transportation message signs and other law enforcement mechanisms. Also, the information shall be disseminated to organizations assisting the program.

(F) A blue alert may be canceled at the request of the law enforcement agency of jurisdiction or by the Director of SLED when appropriate.”

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

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑