**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 58‑25‑110 SO AS TO REQUIRE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITIES TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS WITHIN THEIR SERVICE AREAS THAT MAKE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE AT NO CHARGE FOR CERTAIN QUALIFYING VETERANS.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 25, Title 58 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 58‑25‑110. Notwithstanding another provision of law, within ninety days of the effective date of this act, each regional transportation authority created pursuant to this chapter must develop and implement a program within its service area that makes public transportation available at no charge to a veteran who can provide proof that he is a legal resident of this State and:

(1) is a member or former member of the armed forces who was a prisoner of war (POW) in World War II, the Korean Conflict, or the Vietnam Conflict;

(2) is a recipient of the Purple Heart;

(3) qualifies for the special license plate for wartime disabled veterans issued pursuant to Section 56‑3‑1110;

(4) has a qualifying service‑connected disability and is receiving United States Department of Veterans’ Affairs (USDVA) disability compensation of ten percent or greater; or

(5) has a qualifying service‑connected disability and is receiving military disability retirement pay in lieu of USDVA compensation at a rate of ten percent or greater.”

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

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