**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND ARTICLE 5, CHAPTER 1, TITLE 59 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO EDUCATION, TO ENACT THE “STUDENT ASSOCIATION FREEDOM OF RELIGION ACT”, BY ADDING SECTION 59-1-436 TO PROVIDE FOR DEFINITIONS RELATED TO THE ACT, AND THAT NO PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING SHALL TAKE ANY ACTION OR ENFORCE ANY POLICY THAT WOULD DENY A RELIGIOUS STUDENT ASSOCIATION ANY BENEFIT AVAILABLE TO ANY OTHER STUDENT ASSOCIATION BASED ON THE RELIGIOUS STUDENT ASSOCIATION’S REQUIREMENT THAT ITS LEADERS OR MEMBERS ADHERE TO ITS SINCERELY HELD RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OR STANDARDS OF CONDUCT.

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

SECTION 1. This act may be known and cited as the “Student Association Freedom of Religion Act”.

SECTION 2. Article 5, Chapter 1, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59-1-436. (A) As used in this section:

(1) ‘Benefits’ include, without limitation:

(a) recognition;

(b) registration;

(c) the use of facilities of the public institution of higher learning for meetings or speaking purposes;

(d) the use of channels of communication of the public institution of higher learning;

(e) funding sources that are otherwise available to any other student association in the public institution of higher learning.

(2) ‘Public institution of higher learning’ shall have the meaning provided in Section 59‑103‑5.

(B) No public institution of higher learning shall take any action or enforce any policy that would deny a religious student association any benefit available to any other student association based on the religious student association’s requirement that its leaders or members adhere to its sincerely held religious beliefs or standards of conduct.”

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

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑