**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 1‑7‑45 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT IF PURSUANT TO FEDERAL LAW, REGULATION, OR POLICY, OBSERVERS FROM THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION ARE REQUIRED TO BE PRESENT IN RADIO OR TELEVISION STATION STUDIOS DURING CERTAIN BROADCASTS TO ENSURE ACCURACY, IMPARTIALITY, DECORUM, OR OTHER STATED GOALS OF THE FEDERAL LAW, REGULATION, OR POLICY, AND IF ANY STATION OR REPORTER, DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, OR OTHER EMPLOYEE OF THE STATION IS THE SUBJECT OF ANY FEDERAL LEGAL, CRIMINAL, OR DISCIPLINARY ACTION AS A RESULT OF THE OBSERVATIONS, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THIS STATE MAY REPRESENT THEM AS A MATTER OF STATE PUBLIC POLICY TO ENSURE A CITIZEN’S CONSTITUTIONALLY PROTECTED RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH, AND JURISDICTION IS CONFERRED UPON THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO PROVIDE SUCH REPRESENTATION.

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

SECTION 1. Article 1, Chapter 7, Title 1 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 1‑7‑45. If pursuant to federal law, regulation, or policy, observers from the Federal Communications Commission are required to be present in radio or television station studios during certain broadcasts to ensure accuracy, impartiality, decorum, or other stated goals of the federal law, regulation, or policy, the provisions of this section apply. Any station or reporter, director, producer, or other employee of the station who is the subject of any federal legal, criminal, or disciplinary action as a result of the observations may be represented by the Attorney General of this State as a matter of state public policy to ensure a citizen’s constitutionally protected right of free speech. Jurisdiction is hereby conferred upon the Attorney General to provide such representation.”

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

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