**A** **JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO ESTABLISH BEGINNING WITH THE 2015‑2016 SCHOOL YEAR A TWO‑YEAR PILOT PROGRAM IN FIVE SPECIFIC COUNTIES TO FACILITATE THE USE OF GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CAMPS TO HELP PEOPLE OBTAIN THEIR GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATES, TO PROVIDE PROGRAM ELEMENTS, AND TO PROVIDE THE STATE BOARD FOR TECHNICAL AND COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH AND OVERSEE THE PROGRAM.

Whereas, the General Assembly finds that an educated citizenry is essential to providing a workforce attractive to business and industry, which is crucial to the economic vitality of this State; and

Whereas, the General Assembly finds that circumstances sometimes prevent individuals from completing their high school studies in the traditional manner, and that efforts to help these individuals earn a General Educational Development (GED) certificate benefit these individuals and the State; and

Whereas, the General Assembly finds that the Hilton Head GED Camp has enjoyed tremendous success in helping people in Beaufort County earn GED certificates by using volunteers to provide intense GED training for nominal costs; and

Whereas, the General Assembly finds the success of the Hilton Head GED Camp encouraging, and replication of the program statewide merits further consideration that may best be achieved through a pilot study of the program in various areas of the State. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. (A)(1) Effective beginning with the 2015‑2016 school year, the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education shall establish a two‑year pilot program to be known as the General Educational Development (GED) Camp Pilot Program, which must develop, implement, and monitor GED Camps to provide a volunteer‑based system to assist people who do not have a high school diploma earn their GED certificates and advance to higher education, the military, an occupation, and so forth.

(2) To ensure that the program concentrates on areas served by technical colleges, the GED Camp program must be implemented in the following five counties: Bamberg, Beaufort, Berkeley, Orangeburg, and Williamsburg.

(B) The GED Camp program must focus on the use of volunteers to provide tutorial assistance for community members without a high school diploma who seek to obtain a GED certificate using a concentrated “boot camp” model lasting approximately six to eight consecutive weeks during which students must:

(1) undergo direct instruction by teacher volunteers and test for vocational interests;

(2) participate in college and career readiness workshops related to interviewing skills, resume building, enrollment, and education financing; and

(3) receive direct and indirect mentoring.

(C) Based on the outcomes achieved by the GED Camp program, the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education shall make recommendations regarding statewide expansion of the program to the General Assembly before July 1, 2017.

(D) The State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education may create policies to implement the provisions of this joint resolution.

SECTION 2. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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