**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 53‑3‑215 SO AS TO DECLARE THE THIRD WEEK IN OCTOBER OF EACH YEAR AS “SOUTH CAROLINA NATIVE PLANT WEEK” AND ENCOURAGE ALL SOUTH CAROLINIANS TO RECOGNIZE THE ESSENTIAL VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE NATIVE PLANTS OF SOUTH CAROLINA TO OUR STATE’S HISTORY, ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE, AND ENVIRONMENT.

Whereas, South Carolina’s native plants provide unparalleled and unique iconic, economic, artistic, historical, and environmental value to both the history and future of our State; and

Whereas, South Carolina is home to tremendously rich and diverse plant life, containing over four thousand native plant species, subspecies, and varieties of which twenty‑one specific species are considered federally threatened or endangered; and

Whereas, the planting, restoration, preservation, and cultivation of South Carolina’s indigenous plants provide a natural link to the wild land areas of the present and past, while introducing people to their beauty and instilling a greater understanding and appreciation for our State’s natural heritage. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 3, Title 53 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 53‑3‑215. The third week in October of each year is declared to be ‘South Carolina Native Plant Week’ in South Carolina, and all South Carolinians are encouraged to recognize the essential value and importance of the native plants of South Carolina to our state’s history, economic landscape, and environment.”

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

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