**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 58‑27‑260 SO AS TO REQUIRE AN ELECTRICAL UTILITY THAT OPERATES A SOLAR FARM TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN A VEGETATIVE BUFFER AROUND THE FARM AND TO DEFINE NECESSARY TERMS.

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

SECTION 1. Article 1, Chapter 27, Title 58 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 58‑27‑260. (A) An electrical utility, electric cooperative, governmental entity, corporation, or individual producing electricity for sale or distribution by operating a solar farm must build and maintain a vegetative buffer around the perimeter of the solar farm.

(B) As used in this section:

(1) ‘Solar farm’ means an energy facility or area of land used to convert solar energy into electricity which includes, but is not limited to, the use of one or more solar panels or similar solar energy systems for the purpose of generating electricity to be used off site.

(2) ‘Vegetative buffer’ means an area of vegetation extending fifty feet from the outer perimeter of the solar farm. The buffer must have an opacity of no less than sixty percent and be capable of growing at least eight feet tall within two years.”

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

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