**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND CHAPTER 39 OF TITLE 34, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO DEFERRED PRESENTMENT SERVICES BY ADDING TO SECTION 34‑39‑130, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT PERSONS ENGAGING IN THE BUSINESS OF DEFERRED PRESENTMENT SERVICES MUST OBTAIN A LICENSE PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 39, TITLE 34; BY ADDING SECTION 34‑39‑175, SO AS TO ESTABLISH A DEFERRED PRESENTMENT TRANSACTION DATABASE; BY AMENDING SECTION 34‑39‑180, SO AS TO LIMIT THE AMOUNT ADVANCED TO A CUSTOMER FOR DEFERRED PRESENTMENT TO SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS; BY ADDING SECTION 34‑39‑270, SO AS TO ESTABLISH REGULATIONS FOR LICENSEES OF DEFERRED PRESENTMENT TRANSACTIONS; AND BY ADDING SECTION 34‑39‑280, SO AS TO DETERMINE PROVISIONS FOR DEFERRED PRESENTMENT EXTENDED PAYMENT PLANS.

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

SECTION 1. Section 34-39-130 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“(C) A person may not engage in the business of deferred presentment services with a customer residing in this State, whether or not that person has a location in South Carolina, except in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and without having first obtained a license pursuant to this chapter.”

SECTION 2. Chapter 39 of Title 34 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 34-39-175. (A) In order to prevent any person from having more than one deferred presentment transaction at any one time, the Consumer Finance Division of the Board of Financial Institutions shall implement a common database with real-time access through an Internet connection for deferred presentment providers, as provided in this subsection. The board is authorized to enter into a contract with a single-source private vendor to develop and operate the database. The database must be accessible to the board and the deferred presentment providers to verify if deferred presentment transactions are outstanding for a particular person. Deferred presentment providers shall submit that data before entering into a deferred presentment transaction and once a deferred presentment transaction has been paid in full, in a format the board requires by regulation, including the drawer’s name, social security number or employment authorization alien number, address, driver’s license number, amount of the transaction, date of transaction, the date the transaction is closed, and additional information required by the board. The database provider may impose the database verification fee authorized by Section 34-39-270(G) for data required to be submitted by a licensee. The board may adopt procedures to administer and enforce the provisions of this section and to ensure that the database is used by licensees in accordance with this section.

(B) The information provided in the database is limited for the use in determining if a customer is eligible or ineligible to enter into a new deferred presentment transaction and to describe the reason for the determination of eligibility or ineligibility.”

SECTION 3. Section 34-39-180 (B) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(B) ~~The face amount of a check taken for deferred presentment or deposit may not exceed three hundred dollars, exclusive of the fees allowed in Section 34‑39‑180(E).~~ The total amount advanced to any customer for deferred presentment or deposit, exclusive of the fees allowed in Section 34-39-180(E), may not exceed six hundred dollars. A licensee may not advance to a customer an amount for deferred presentment or deposit which causes this limit to be exceeded by that customer.”

SECTION 4. Chapter 39, Title 34 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 34-39-270. (A) A licensee may not enter into a deferred presentment transaction with a person:

(1) who has an outstanding deferred presentment transaction with any licensee; or

(2) who has entered into an extended payment plan agreement with any licensee as provided in Section 34-39-280, which has not been paid in full or terminated.

(B) Before entering into a deferred presentment transaction with a person, a licensee shall verify whether the person is eligible to enter into the transaction by accessing the deferred presentment transaction database established pursuant to subsection (C).

(C) The board shall contract with a single third-party database provider to establish and operate a deferred presentment transaction database for the purpose of verifying whether a person is eligible to enter into a deferred presentment transaction. The board shall supervise the establishment and operation of the database and shall ensure that the database provider establishes and operates the database pursuant to the provisions of this section. The board shall have full access to the database and all records related to the database for purposes of supervising the establishment and operation of the database. If the database provider violates a provision of this section, the board shall terminate the contract and immediately substitute another qualified third-party database provider. The database must have real-time access through an Internet connection and be accessible at all times to the board and licensees. The database provider shall establish and maintain a process for responding to transaction verification requests when technical difficulties prevent the licensee from accessing the database through the internet including, but not limited to, verification by telephone. The database must be established and operated so as to prevent a licensee from entering into a transaction that violates the provisions of this section.

(D) To conduct an inquiry as to whether a person is eligible to enter into a deferred presentment transaction, a licensee shall submit to the database provider such information as the board may require. The response to an inquiry to the database provider by a licensee must state only that a person is eligible or ineligible to enter into a transaction and describe the reason for that determination. The person seeking to enter into the transaction may make a direct inquiry to the database provider to request a more detailed explanation of the basis for the database provider’s determination that the person is ineligible to enter into the transaction.

(E) A licensee shall notify the database provider immediately when the licensee enters into a deferred presentment transaction. The licensee shall submit to the database provider such information as the board requires. When the transaction is paid in full, the licensee shall designate the transaction as closed and immediately notify the database provider. When the database provider receives notification that the transaction is paid in full, the database provider immediately shall designate the transaction as paid in full in the database.

(F) A licensee shall notify a person seeking to enter into a deferred presentment transaction that the licensee shall access the database to verify whether the person is eligible to enter into a transaction. The licensee also shall notify the person that information related to a new transaction must be entered into the database.

(G) The database provider may charge a database verification fee to a licensee for an inquiry as to whether a person is eligible to enter into a deferred presentment transaction, if that transaction is consummated by the licensee. The fee must be established by the board as the actual cost of verifying a person’s eligibility, not to exceed one dollar. A licensee may charge a person seeking to enter into a deferred presentment transaction one-half of the actual cost of the verification fee.

(H) Except as otherwise provided in this section, all personally identifiable information regarding a person contained within or obtained by way of the database is strictly confidential and is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. The database provider and licensees shall use the information collected pursuant to this section only as prescribed in this section and for no other purpose.

(I) A licensee may rely on the information contained in the database as accurate and is not subject to any administrative penalty or civil liability as a result of relying on inaccurate information contained in the database.

SECTION 5. Chapter 39, Title 34 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 34-39-280. (A) At the time of application or renewal of a license to engage in the business of deferred presentment, every licensee must provide to the Consumer Finance Division for approval an extended payment plan to be offered for any customer who is unable to repay a deferred presentment transaction when originally due. No license may be granted unless the Consumer Finance Division approves an extended payment plan for the licensee.

(B) If, before the due date of a deferred presentment transaction, a customer notifies the licensee with which the customer has a deferred presentment transaction that the customer is unable to repay the deferred presentment transaction when due, the licensee must provide to the customer the right to repay the deferred presentment transaction under the terms and conditions of the extended payment plan as approved by the Consumer Finance Division.

(C) If a customer enters into an extended repayment plan, the licensee must enter that information into the database established in Section 34-29-175, and the customer and any licensee is prohibited from entering into any subsequent deferred presentment transaction until repayment in full of the original deferred presentment transaction.”

SECTION 6. If any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this act is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this act, the General Assembly hereby declaring that it would have passed this act, and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

SECTION 7. This act takes effect the later of either one hundred eighty days after signature of the Governor or at such time as the Board of Financial Institutions has a binding contract with a vendor for the database authorized in Section 34-39-175.

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