**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 1‑1‑711 SO AS TO DESIGNATE THE MARSH TACKY AS THE OFFICIAL STATE HORSE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

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

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

“Section 1‑1‑711. (A) The General Assembly finds:

(1) The Marsh Tacky, a rare Colonial Spanish horse breed unique to South Carolina, has played a significant role in South Carolina’s history. During the American Revolution, it is historically documented that Marsh Tackies assisted in the victories of the famous ‘Swamp Fox’, Brigadier General Francis Marion, whose troops of ‘irregulars’ had the advantage of being mounted on small, agile horses that were superbly adapted to the Lowcountry’s rough, swampy terrain. Marsh Tackies required little care from the troops, were able to travel long distances without fatigue, and survived on forage reducing the need for supply wagons carrying grain. The sure‑footed Marsh Tacky enabled the militia to out maneuver the British troops who rode larger European horse breeds that could not traverse the swampy forests.

(2) Marsh Tackies served the southern Confederate cavalry during the Civil War. Southern recruits were often required to provide their own horses, which were trained and familiar with their riders, giving an early advantage to the southern forces. After the Civil War, Marsh Tackies became an integral part of agricultural life and were used for everything from plowing fields and herding cattle to delivering the mail, taking children to school, and families to church. Most Lowcountry families had Marsh Tackies in their fields or gardens.

(3) Marsh Tackies have changed little since the colonial period. Relative isolation on the Sea Islands and secluded areas of the Lowcountry, along with owner dedication to the preservation of the breed has allowed the Marsh Tacky to remain relatively untouched. Owners often comment on the built‑in ‘woods sense’ of the breed and how the horses have a natural way of traversing water obstacles and swamps. Many horses display characteristics and primitive markings carried by their Spanish ancestors including dorsal stripes, zebra leg stripes, and lengthy manes and tails.

(4) Marsh Tacky owners and enthusiasts further supported the breed by forming the Carolina Marsh Tacky Association in 2007. National associations such as American Livestock Breeds Conservancy and Equus Survival Trust have joined local efforts to study, document, and provide a future plan to ensure the survival of the Marsh Tacky.

(5) The Marsh Tacky remains a living piece of history in its native region and has earned its title as the state horse of South Carolina.

(B) The Marsh Tacky is designated as the official State Horse of South Carolina.”

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

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