**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 48‑43‑395 SO AS TO PROVIDE A PERSON MAY EXPLORE THE ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY OF DRILLING AND PRODUCING OIL OR NATURAL GAS IN THE ATLANTIC OCEAN WITHIN THE TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION OF THIS STATE BY SURVEYING A PROSPECTIVE OFFSHORE DRILLING AND PRODUCTION SITE, IF HE OBTAINS AN APPLICABLE EXPLORATION PERMIT FROM THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL, AND TO PROVIDE A PERSON WHO CONSEQUENTLY DEMONSTRATES THIS ECONOMIC VIABILITY TO THE DEPARTMENT MAY DRILL FOR AND PRODUCE OIL OR NATURAL GAS AT THAT SITE, SUBJECT TO CERTAIN PERMITTING AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS.

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

SECTION 1. Article 2, Chapter 43, Title 58 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 48‑43‑395. (A) A person may explore the economic feasibility of drilling and producing oil or natural gas in the Atlantic Ocean within the territorial jurisdiction of this State by surveying a prospective offshore drilling and production site, if he obtains an exploration permit required by Section 48‑43‑310.

(B) A person who demonstrates to the department the economic viability of his drilling and producing oil or natural gas at a particular offshore site as provided under subsection (A) of this section may drill for and produce oil or natural gas at that site, subject to the permitting requirement of Section 48‑43‑370 and other requirements of this title.”

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

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