**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND ARTICLE 9, CHAPTER 1, TITLE 1 OF THE 1976 CODE, BY ADDING SECTION 1-1-711 TO DESIGNATE THE BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN AS THE OFFICIAL STATE MARINE MAMMAL OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

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

SECTION 1. Article 9, Chapter 1, Title 1 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

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

(1) The bottlenose dolphin (Tursiops truncatus) is one of the most well known of all marine mammals. The dolphin’s natural curiosity and intelligence are well documented in scientific research. Dolphins are often trained for therapeutic purposes and even for military operations. They have also been known to rescue human divers in dangerous situations.

(2) Dolphins, which can grow to be up to twelve feet long and weigh over one thousand pounds, are well adapted to warm, shallow waters like those of the South Carolina coast. Interaction with humans is common in South Carolina, and seeing dolphins is an exciting and very enjoyable experience for the citizens of this State and tourists alike. They can often be found frolicking in the ocean and surrounding coastal rivers on calm days, or following the fishing and shrimping boats that travel South Carolina waters.

(B) In recognition of the value of this extraordinary marine mammal to this State, the bottlenose dolphin (Tursiops truncatus) is designated as the official State Marine Mammal of South Carolina.”

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

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