**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 1‑1‑696, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE STATE’S OFFICIAL LANGUAGE, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT AFTER JULY 1, 2009, ALL STATE AGENCIES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF THE STATE SHALL OFFER ALL SERVICES, PUBLICATIONS, PRINTED, AUDIO AND VIDEO MATERIALS, AND TEST IN AN ENGLISH‑ONLY FORMAT, UNLESS OTHERWISE REQUIRED BY FEDERAL LAW OR REGULATION, AND TO PROVIDE EXCEPTIONS.

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

SECTION 1. Section 1‑1‑696 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 1‑1‑696. (A) The English language is the official language of the State of South Carolina.

(B) Except as provided for in Section 1‑1‑698, after July 1, 2008, all state agencies and political subdivisions of the State shall offer all services, publications, tests, and any other material, whether in printed, audio, or video format, only in an English language format unless otherwise required by federal law or regulation, or as provided for in subsection (C).

(C) State agencies and political subdivisions of the State may offer services, publications, tests, and any other material, whether in printed, audio, or video format, in a language other than the English language when prepared or offered:

(1) by public libraries, schools, or institutions of higher learning to meet the academic or other purposes of their missions;

(2) to protect the health or safety of any person;

(3) to promote trade, tourism, or commerce;

(4) to use proper names, terms of art, or phrases from languages other than the English language;

(5) to protect the rights of victims of crime or criminal defendants; or

(6) by the South Carolina Educational Television Network (ETV) for educational purposes only.”

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

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