**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE 1976 CODE, BY ADDING ARTICLE 8 TO CHAPTER 25, TITLE 57, TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO CREATE AND SUPERVISE A STATEWIDE PROGRAM RELATED TO PROVIDING DIRECTIONAL SIGNS ALONG THE STATE’S MAJOR HIGHWAYS AND INTERCHANGES LEADING TO AGRITOURISM ORIENTED FACILITIES ENGAGED IN EDUCATIONAL OR AGRITOURISM ACTIVITIES.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 25, Title 57 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Article 8

Agritourism‑Oriented Signage Program

Section 57-8-800. As used in this article ‘Agritourism-oriented facility’ means a location where an agritourism activity, as defined in Section 46‑53‑10(1), is carried out by an agritourism profession, as defined in Section 46-45-10(2).

Section 57‑25‑810. In an effort to promote and assist South Carolina agritourism‑oriented facilities that have an interest in educating, sharing, and selling their programs and products to the general public, the Department of Transportation is directed to create and supervise a coordinated, statewide program related to providing directional signs along the state’s major highways and interchanges leading to agritourism‑oriented facilities engaged in educational activities or agritourism activities, or both.

Section 57‑25‑820. (A) The department shall be responsible for the erection and maintenance of the official signs giving specific information to the traveling public regarding the direction of agritourism‑oriented facilities. All signs must conform to department rules and regulations regarding the size and placement of the signs, and be in compliance with all federal and state regulations.

(B) The department shall coordinate with the Department of Agriculture to promote agritourism oriented facilities participating in this directional signage program.

(C) All signs used as part of the program must bear the South Carolina agritourism logo.

(D) Criteria of the program and selection of agritourism oriented facilities and locations must be determined by an oversight committee. The oversight committee shall consist of the:

(1) Director of the Department of Transportation, or his designee;

(2) Director of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, or his designee;

(3) Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, or his designee;

(4) President of the South Carolina Association of Tourism Regions (SCATR), or his designee, and a member of SCATR appointed by its president; and

(5) President of the South Carolina Convention and Visitors Bureau Association (CVB), or his designee, and a member of the CVB appointed by its president.

Section 57‑25‑830. (A) Qualified facilities which elect to participate in the directional signage program must submit an application to the department on a form to be supplied by the department. Eligibility and approval to participate in the signage program must be determined by written criteria to be set forth by the department in regulation.

(B) Participating facilities are responsible for the cost of the signs and their installation.”

SECTION 2. The Department of Agriculture must develop a South Carolina agritourism logo to be utilized for the signage authorized by this act and for other purposes related to the promotion of agritourism in this State.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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