**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑19‑117 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO SCHOOL TRUSTEES AND EMPLOYEES, TO REQUIRE ATHLETIC OFFICIALS, REFEREES, AND COACHES TO UNDERGO A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK PRIOR TO WORKING WITH STUDENTS.

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

SECTION 1. Section 59‑19‑117(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) An individual hired by a local school district board of trustees to serve in any capacity in a public school in this State, or an athletic official, referee, or coach who works with students in any capacity, shall undergo a name‑based South Carolina criminal record search conducted by the local school district using records maintained by the State Law Enforcement Division pursuant to regulations contained in subarticle 1, Article 3, Chapter 73 of the Code of Regulations. By August 1, 2010, a school district board of trustees shall adopt a written policy that specifies the required criminal record search as well as how the information received from the search impacts hiring decisions. The district policy must stipulate whether the district assumes the cost of the criminal record search or that the applicant assumes the cost. The policy must include, at a minimum, a prohibition of hiring individuals convicted of violent crimes as defined in Section 16‑1‑60 and hiring recommendations relative to felony convictions and relevant just‑cause examples provided in Section 59‑25‑160. The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, working with the Department of Education, shall provide training to appropriate school district personnel regarding appropriate use of the information provided in criminal record searches.”

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

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