**A** **JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO ESTABLISH A STUDY COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE MINIMUM SAFETY STANDARDS FOR NATURAL GAS PIPELINE FACILITIES AND THE TRANSPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS IN THIS STATE, WITH EXCEPTIONS, TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE DESIGN, INSTALLATION, INSPECTION, TESTING, CONSTRUCTION, EXTENSION, REPLACEMENT, AND MAINTENANCE OF THESE FACILITIES, TO PROVIDE FOR THE STUDY COMMITTEE’S MEMBERSHIP, AND TO REQUIRE THE STUDY COMMITTEE TO REPORT ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY NO LATER THAN MARCH 19, 2011, AT WHICH TIME THE STUDY COMMITTEE IS ABOLISHED.

WHEREAS, natural gas provides a valuable source of energy in the Palmetto State and throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, a recent tragic natural gas pipeline explosion in California claimed one life, injured more than twenty other people, destroyed fifty‑three homes, and damaged one hundred twenty additional homes, providing a sobering reminder of the inherit dangers in the transportation of natural gas; and

WHEREAS, the portion of the California pipeline that exploded was built in 1956, and some pipelines in South Carolina were built around this same time, as well as before and after; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly seeks to promote public safety by avoiding a catastrophe like the natural gas pipeline explosion in California while ensuring the efficient delivery of natural gas to its appreciative users, and finds that a careful study of applicable safety standards and suggestions for their improvement merited. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. (A) There is established a study committee to review, study, and make recommendations concerning the minimum safety standards for natural gas pipeline facilities and the transportation of natural gas in this State, except for those facilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal Power Commission under the Natural Gas Act. These safety standards apply to the design, installation, inspection, testing, construction, extension, replacement, and maintenance of natural gas pipeline facilities in this State.

(B) In making its recommendations for improving these safety standards, the study committee shall consider:

(1) relevant pipeline safety data;

(2) whether the standards are appropriate for the particular type of pipeline transportation and distribution;

(3) the reasonableness of any proposed standards; and

(4) the extent to which the standards will contribute to the public safety.

SECTION 2. (A) The study committee must be composed of five members, as follows:

(1) one member appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

(2) one member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(3) one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

(4) one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives; and

(5) one member appointed by the Governor.

(B) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 8‑13‑770, a member of the General Assembly may be appointed to serve on this study committee.

(C) A member of the study committee shall serve until his successor is appointed and qualified, and a vacancy must be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the manner of original appointment.

(D) A member of the study committee must serve without pay.

SECTION 3. The study committee shall make a report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than March 19, 2011, at which time the study committee must be abolished.

SECTION 4. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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