**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING ARTICLE 9 TO CHAPTER 7, TITLE 1, SO AS TO ENACT THE “PALMETTO PUBLIC SAFETY ACT”; TO VEST THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WITH EXCLUSIVE AUTHORITY REGARDING THE DETECTION, DETERRENCE, INVESTIGATION, REGULATION, AND PROSECUTION OF CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION OF MONEY SERVICES BUSINESSES IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, prevalent abuses of money services businesses, including money laundering and other illicit financial transactions in South Carolina, foster terrorist organizations, human trafficking, and drug cartels; and

Whereas, as chief prosecutor of South Carolina and the state officer who serves as legal advisor to and operates the State Grand Jury, as well as serving as the Securities Commissioner of South Carolina, the Attorney General possesses the authority, jurisdiction, and expertise to deal effectively with the problems that these money laundering and other abuses pose on a statewide basis. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 7, Title 1 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Article 9

The Palmetto Public Safety Act

Section 1‑7‑1105. This article may be cited as the ‘Palmetto Public Safety Act’.

Section 1‑7‑1110. As the State’s chief prosecutor and legal officer under the Constitution of South Carolina, as well as the Securities Commissioner of the State, the Attorney General is vested with exclusive authority and control over the State’s efforts to attack the ongoing misuse of money services businesses, including money laundering and related abuses. Notwithstanding another provision of law, the Office of the Attorney General has specific and exclusive authority regarding the detection, deterrence, investigation, regulation, and prosecution of these abuses and is the sole and exclusive authority for the enforcement of all associated laws.

Section 1‑7‑1115. Pursuant to Section 1‑7‑140, the Attorney General is required to report annually to the General Assembly his recommendations for changes in the criminal laws of this State. Not later than the start of the 2012 legislative session, the Attorney General shall submit his analysis regarding the misuse of money services businesses in South Carolina as well as specific legislative and prosecutorial recommendations, including the use of the State Grand Jury, to combat these abuses.”

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

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