**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, SO AS TO ENACT THE “SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST IN THE SOUTH PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION ACT” BY ADDING SECTION 7‑11‑22 SO AS TO REQUIRE A PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION IN THIS STATE MUST BE HELD BEFORE THAT OF ANOTHER SOUTHERN STATE, SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY HOLDING THE ELECTION, TO DEFINE THE TERM “SOUTHERN STATE”, AND TO STATE THE PURPOSE OF THE STATUTE IS TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE TRADITION OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA “FIRST IN THE SOUTH” PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION.

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

SECTION 1. This act may be cited as the “South Carolina First in the South Presidential Primary Preservation and Protection Act”.

SECTION 2. Article 1, Chapter 11, Title 7 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 7‑11‑22. (A)(1) The presidential preference primary election of a certified political party in this State must be held on a date selected by the chairman of the party and this date must be at least seven days immediately preceding the date on which any other Southern state holds a similar presidential preference primary election, except when the chairman of the party determines that extraordinary circumstances exist that necessitate holding the primary on a date other than the date herein required. This determination is within the sole discretion of the party chairman.

(2) For the purposes of this section, ‘Southern state’ means the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

(B) The purpose of this section is to preserve and protect the tradition of the South Carolina ‘First in the South’ presidential primary election.

(C) To the extent the provisions of this section conflict with those of Section 7‑11‑20, the provisions of this section must control.”

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

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