**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND ARTICLE 6, CHAPTER 38, TITLE 44 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO HEAD AND SPINAL CORD INJURIES, BY ADDING ARTICLE 6 TO CREATE THE SOUTH CAROLINA BRAIN INJURY LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, TO PROVIDE FOR THE RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF THE COUNCIL, TO PROVIDE FOR THE COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT OF THE COUNCIL, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE POWERS AND AUTHORITY OF THE COUNCIL.

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

SECTION 1. Article 6, Chapter 38, Title 44 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Article 6

South Carolina Brain Injury Leadership Council

Section 44‑38‑610. There is created the South Carolina Brain Injury Leadership Council, within the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, to provide statewide coordination in promoting support services to persons with brain injuries, their families, and caregivers, and to identify emerging issues and innovations, foster education and advocacy, and build consensus to support necessary policies and programs.

Section 44‑38‑620. The South Carolina Brain Injury Leadership Council shall:

(1) advise and make recommendations to the State on ways to improve services coordination regarding traumatic brain injury;

(2) encourage citizen participation through the establishment of public hearings and other types of community outreach programs;

(3) identify emerging issues and expand methods and resources to enhance statewide services;

(4) serve as a resource for education, research, and training and provide information and referral services;

(5) provide technical assistance for the development of support groups and other local initiatives to serve individuals, families, and caregivers;

(6) consult with federal, state, and local government agencies and with citizens groups and other private entities to recommend public policy concerning brain injuries to state policymakers.

Section 44-38-630. (A) The South Carolina Brain Injury Leadership Council shall be comprised of representatives of the following agencies and organizations, who should have knowledge or expertise in the area of brain injury or related services, and shall serve ex officio:

(1) South Carolina Department of Education;

(2) South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services;

(3) South Carolina Department of Mental Health;

(4) South Carolina Department of Social Services;

(5) South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control;

(6) South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department;

(7) South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs;

(8) Head and Spinal Cord Injury Division within the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs;

(9) Medical University of South Carolina;

(10) University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities within the University of South Carolina School of Medicine;

(11) South Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council;

(12) South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council;

(13) Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc.; and

(14) Brain Injury Alliance of South Carolina.

(B) Council members shall include persons who are survivors of traumatic brain injury or the family members of such persons.

(C) Officers of the Council shall be as follows: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. Council officers are to be elected at the final quarterly council meeting of the year, and shall serve a two year term starting the next calendar year.

(D) Council members shall be appointed with consideration given to statewide geographic and demographic representation. When an appointed vacancy on the council exists, nominations to fill the vacancy may be received from members of the council by the secretary.

(E) Members and officers of the council are not entitled to mileage, per diem, subsistence, or any other form of compensation.

Section 44-38-640. The South Carolina Brain Injury Leadership Council shall have the authority to apply for grants for the purposes of carrying out the responsibilities and duties of the council.”

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

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