**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 17‑1‑40, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE DESTRUCTION OF CRIMINAL RECORDS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT NO PERSON WHO AFTER BEING CHARGED WITH A CRIMINAL OFFENSE AND THE CHARGE IS DISCHARGED, PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE PERSON ARE DISMISSED, OR THE PERSON IS FOUND NOT GUILTY OF THE CHARGE MAY BE HELD THEREAFTER TO BE GUILTY OF PERJURY OR OTHERWISE GIVING A FALSE STATEMENT BY REASON OF THE PERSON’S FAILURE TO RECITE OR ACKNOWLEGDE THE CHARGE IN RESPONSE TO AN INQUIRY MADE OF THE PERSON.

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

SECTION 1. Section 17‑1‑40 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 17‑1‑40. (A) A person who after being charged with a criminal offense and the charge is discharged, proceedings against the person are dismissed, or the person is found not guilty of the charge, the arrest and booking record, files, mug shots, and fingerprints of the person must be destroyed and no evidence of the record pertaining to the charge may be retained by any municipal, county, or state law enforcement agency. Provided, however, that local and state detention and correctional facilities may retain booking records, identifying documentation and materials, and other institutional reports and files under seal, on all persons who have been processed, detained, or incarcerated, for a period not to exceed three years from the date of the expungement order to manage their statistical and professional information needs and, where necessary, to defend such facilities during litigation proceedings except when an action, complaint, or inquiry has been initiated. Information retained by a local or state detention or correctional facility as permitted under this section after an expungement order has been issued is not a public document and is exempt from disclosure. Such information only may be disclosed by judicial order, pursuant to a subpoena filed in a civil action, or as needed during litigation proceedings. A person who otherwise intentionally retains the arrest and booking record, files, mug shots, fingerprints, or any evidence of the record pertaining to a charge discharged or dismissed pursuant to this section is guilty of contempt of court.

(B) A municipal, county, or state agency may not collect a fee for the destruction of records pursuant to the provisions of this section.

(C) This section does not apply to a person who is charged with a violation of Title 50, Title 56, an enactment pursuant to the authority of counties and municipalities provided in Titles 4 and 5, or any other state criminal offense if the person is not fingerprinted for the violation.

(D) The State Law Enforcement Division is authorized to promulgate regulations that allow for the electronic transmission of information pursuant to this section.

(E) No person who after being charged with a criminal offense and the charge is discharged, proceedings against the person are dismissed, or the person is found not guilty of the charge may be held thereafter under any provision of law to be guilty of perjury or otherwise giving a false statement by reason of the person’s failure to recite or acknowledge the charge in response to an inquiry made of the person for any purpose.”

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

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