**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 24‑21‑705 TO PROVIDE THAT, UPON RECEIPT OF THE NOTICE OF A PAROLE HEARING, THE VICTIM AND MEMBERS OF THE VICTIM’S IMMEDIATE FAMILY MAY SUBMIT WRITTEN STATEMENTS TO THE BOARD OF PROBATION, PAROLE AND PARDON SERVICES, TO PROVIDE THAT THE STATEMENTS MUST BE CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD IN MAKING ITS DETERMINATION OF PAROLE, AND TO PROVIDE THAT THE STATEMENTS MUST BE RETAINED BY THE BOARD AND MUST BE SUBMITTED AT SUBSEQUENT PAROLE HEARINGS IF THE SUBMITTING PERSON DECLARES THAT THE STATEMENT STILL REPRESENTS THE PERSON’S PRESENT POSITION.

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

SECTION 1. Article 7, Chapter 21, Title 24 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 24‑21‑705. (A) Upon receipt of the notice required by Section 24‑21‑221, the victim of the crime for which the prisoner has been sentenced and members of the victim’s immediate family may submit written statements to the Board of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services.

(B) The statements must be considered by the board in making its determination of parole.

(C) The statements must be retained by the board. At subsequent parole hearings, the statements must be submitted again if the department verifies that it has contacted the submitting person since the prisoner’s most recent parole hearing and that the submitting person declares that the statement still represents the person’s present position.

(D) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit submission of information in other forms as provided by law.”

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

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