**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 59‑3‑115 SO AS TO CREATE THE SOUTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE REVIEW PANEL, TO PROVIDE FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE PANEL AND RELATED MATTERS CONCERNING ITS RULES, THE AVAILABILITY OF REIMBURSEMENT FOR CERTAIN EXPENSES, AND ITS RIGHT TO ACCESS REASONABLE FACILITIES AND RESOURCES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; AND BY ADDING SECTION 59‑3‑120, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT A DECISION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE MAY BE APPEALED TO THE PANEL, THAT THE PANEL MUST CONDUCT A HEARING AND RENDER A FINAL DECISION IN A CERTAIN MANNER, AND THAT NO RIGHT OF REVIEW OR APPEAL FROM THE FINAL DECISION OF THE PANEL EXISTS.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 3, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑3‑115. (A) There is created the ‘South Carolina High School League Review Panel’ to consider appeals from decisions of the High School League.

(B)(1) The panel consists of five members constituted as follows:

(a) the State Superintendent of Education or his designee;

(b) the Chairman of the State Board of Education or his designee; and

(c) three people currently employed as athletics coaches or athletics directors in a public high school in this State with one appointed by the Governor, one by the Speaker of the House, and one by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

(2) Terms of all members are for four years and until successors are appointed and qualify. Vacancies must be filled in the original manner of selection for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(3) The panel shall meet at the Department of Education within thirty days after the appointment and qualification of all members. At its initial meeting, the panel shall:

(a) elect a chairman, vice chairman, and other officers it considers necessary; and

(b) adopt rules as it considers necessary.

(4) Members may not receive salary per diem, but are entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred pursuant to the discharge of official duties, not to exceed the per diem, mileage, and subsistence amounts allowed by law for members of boards, commissions, and committees.

(C) The department shall provide access to a conference room, and reasonable secretarial and administrative support to the panel.”

SECTION 2. Chapter 3, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑3‑120. A decision made by the South Carolina High School League that affects a student, team, or program in a South Carolina public school may be appealed to the South Carolina High School League Review Panel within sixty calendar days after the decision. The panel shall conduct a hearing on the merits of the appeal within sixty calendar days after receiving the appeal, and shall render a final decision in writing within fifteen calendar days of this hearing. A simple majority vote of the members present at the hearing is necessary to render a decision. The affected party and the South Carolina High School League shall abide by the final decision. The panel may not reconsider its final decision and no party to the action may appeal the final decision to another forum. The panel is the forum of last resort and the final appellate authority over an issue it considers on appeal.”

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

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑