**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 1‑23‑560, AS AMENDED, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE APPLICATION OF THE CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT TO ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES AND THE ENFORCEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THESE RULES BY THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION, SO AS TO PROVIDE INSTEAD THAT THE JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT SHALL HANDLE COMPLAINTS AGAINST ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES FOR POSSIBLE VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT IN THE SAME MANNER AS COMPLAINTS AGAINST OTHER JUDGES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 1‑23‑560 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 334 of 2008, is further amended to read:

“Section 1‑23‑560. Administrative law judges are bound by the Code of Judicial Conduct, as contained in Rule 501 of the South Carolina Appellate Court Rules. The sole grounds for discipline and sanctions for administrative law judges are those contained in the Code of Judicial Conduct in Rule 502, Rule 7 of the South Carolina Appellate Court Rules. ~~The State Ethics Commission, which is responsible for enforcement and administration of those rules shall use the procedure contained in Section 8‑13‑320.~~ The Judicial Department shall handle complaints against administrative law judges for possible violations of the Code of Judicial Conduct in the same manner as complaints against other judges. Notwithstanding another provision of law, an administrative law judge and the judge’s spouse or guest may accept an invitation to attend a judicial‑related or bar‑related function, or an activity devoted to the improvement of the law, legal system, or the administration of justice.”

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

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