**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 59‑101‑115 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT RECEIPT OF AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE FROM A PUBLIC COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY IN THIS STATE REQUIRES A DEMONSTRATED PROFICIENCY IN THE CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS THAT PLAYED A CRITICAL ROLE IN THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES AND DEVELOPMENT OF ITS SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, AND TO PROVIDE RELATED REQUIREMENTS OF PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, STUDENTS, TRUSTEES OF PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, AND THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION; TO AMEND SECTION 59‑29‑120, 59‑29‑130, 59‑29‑140, AND 59‑29‑150, ALL RELATING TO MANDATORY STUDY OF THE CONSTITUTION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES AND TO REMOVE AN OBSOLETE REFERENCE.

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

SECTION 1. Article 1, Chapter 101, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑101‑115. (A)(1) As a condition to receiving an undergraduate degree from a state‑supported college or university, a student shall demonstrate proficiency in the content and purpose of certain documents that played critical roles in the founding of the United States and development of its system of government by successfully completing certain related coursework. This coursework must provide instruction in the essentials of the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Federalist Papers, including the study of and devotion to American institutions and ideals.

(2) To accomplish this goal:

(a) each public college and university shall offer courses in American government for the purposes of satisfying the requirements of this section;

(b) each undergraduate student attending a public college or university must enroll in and satisfactorily complete courses provided by this section as a requirement for graduation;

(c) courses must be provided so that students satisfactorily complete the equivalent of six semester hours, ten quarter hours, or other equivalent to equal one academic year of instruction; and

(d) the board of trustees of a public college or university shall ensure that the school it governs complies with the provisions of this section. A trustee who neglects or wilfully fails to ensure this compliance is considered to have vacated his office. The board annually shall correct its compliance records in a manner prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education based on records from the previous year. This information must be reported to the commission, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, and the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

(B) The provisions of the section are subject to the requirements of any accrediting body of a public college or university in this State, and to the extent that a provision of this section conflicts with a requirement of that accrediting body, the conflicting provision from this section must be considered void.”

SECTION 2. Section 59‑29‑120(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) All high schools~~, colleges, and universities~~ in this State that are sustained or in any manner supported by public funds shall give instruction in the essentials of the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Federalist Papers, including the study of and devotion to American institutions and ideals, and no student in any such school, college, or university may receive a certificate of graduation without previously passing a satisfactory examination upon the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Federalist Papers, and, if a citizen of the United States, satisfying the examining power of his loyalty thereto.”

SECTION 3. Section 59‑29‑130 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 59‑29‑130. The instruction provided for in Section 59‑29‑120 ~~shall~~ must be given for at least one year of the high school~~, college and university~~ grades~~, respectively~~.”

SECTION 4. Section 59‑29‑140 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 59‑29‑140. The State Superintendent of Education shall make ~~due~~ appropriate arrangements for carrying out the provisions of Sections 59‑29‑120 and 59‑29‑130. For ~~such~~ this purpose the State ~~Superintendent~~ Board of Education shall prescribe suitable texts adapted to the needs of the high schools~~, universities and colleges~~ for the instruction required under Sections 59‑29‑120 and 59‑29‑130.”

SECTION 5. Section 59‑29‑150 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 59‑29‑150. ~~Willful~~ Wilful neglect or failure on the part of any public school superintendent, principal or teacher or the president, teacher or other officer of any high school~~, normal school, university or college~~ to observe and carry out the requirements of Sections 59‑29‑120 to 59‑29‑140 ~~shall~~ must be sufficient cause for the dismissal or removal of ~~such~~ the person from his position.”

SECTION 6. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑