**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 2-19-30, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION’S PUBLIC HEARINGS, SO AS TO INCLUDE THE PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY OF A JUDICIAL CANDIDATE WHO WITHDRAWS AT THE PUBLIC HEARING AFTER OFFERING HIS TESTIMONY.

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

SECTION 1. Section 2‑19‑30 (E) is amended to read:

“(E) A candidate may withdraw at any stage of the proceedings and in this event no further inquiry or consideration of his candidacy shall be made. All materials concerning that candidate including his report, ~~transcript,~~ application, materials, and other information gathered during the commission’s investigation must be kept confidential and destroyed as soon as possible after the candidate’s written notification to the commission of his withdrawal. The information concerning a withdrawn candidate also shall be exempt from disclosure pursuant to Chapter 4 of Title 30. However, if the judicial candidate testified at the public hearing and subsequently withdraws as a judicial candidate, the testimony of the judicial candidate will be included in the public hearing transcript and it will not be destroyed by the commission.

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

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