**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 56‑5‑4140, AS AMENDED, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE MAXIMUM GROSS WEIGHT OF VEHICLES, COMBINATIONS OF VEHICLES, AND THEIR LOADS THAT ARE PERMITTED TO TRAVEL ALONG THE STATE’S HIGHWAYS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT COTTON MODULAR VEHICLES ARE EXEMPT FROM AXLE SPACING REQUIREMENTS CONTAINED IN THIS SECTION, AND TO ESTABLISH A MAXIMUM WEIGHT FOR THESE VEHICLES; AND TO AMEND SECTION 57‑3‑160, RELATING TO THE ISSUANCE OF PERMITS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION THAT ALLOW COTTON MODULAR VEHICLES TO OPERATE ALONG THE STATE’S PUBLIC HIGHWAYS, SO AS TO DELETE THE PROVISION THAT PROVIDES THAT THE PERMIT MUST BE CARRIED ON THESE VEHICLES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 56‑5‑4140 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 60 of 2009, is further amended by adding an appropriately lettered subsection at the end to read:

“( ) A cotton modular vehicle is not required to conform to the axle spacing requirements of this section. However, the vehicle is limited to sixty‑five thousand pounds gross vehicle weight and twenty‑five thousand pounds for each axle plus scale tolerances.”

SECTION 2. Section 57‑3‑160(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) Notwithstanding Section 56‑5‑4030 or another provision of Chapter 5 ~~of~~, Title 56, the Department of Transportation shall issue, under terms and conditions in the public interest for safety on the highways, a permit for the use on the public highways of cotton modular vehicles. The permit must be issued annually, and it allows movement on the highways at any time. For the purposes of this section, ‘cotton modular vehicle’ is defined as a single motor vehicle used only to transport seed cotton modules, cotton, or equipment used in the transporting or processing of cotton. This cotton modular vehicle may not exceed a width of one hundred ten inches and may not exceed a length of fifty feet extreme overall dimensions, inclusive of front and rear bumpers and load. ~~To be valid, the permit must be carried on the vehicle, and it~~ It is unlawful for a person to violate a provision, term, or condition of the permit. The fee for the permit is fifty dollars and authorizes the use of only one properly described cotton modular vehicle. Loaded cotton modular vehicles must not be operated on interstate highways.”

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

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑