**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING ARTICLE 11 TO CHAPTER 31, TITLE 23 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGISTRATION OF ALL FIREARMS BROUGHT INTO THE STATE OR PURCHASED WITHIN THE STATE WITH THE SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT OF THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE OWNER RESIDES OR IS LODGING.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 31, Title 23 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Article 11

Firearm Registration

Section 23‑31‑1110. (A) Every person arriving in this State who brings or by any other manner causes to be brought into this State a firearm of any description, whether usable or unusable, serviceable or unserviceable, modern or antique, shall register the firearm within five days after arrival of the person or of the firearm, whichever arrives later, with the sheriff’s department of the county of the person’s place of business or, if there is no place of business, the person’s residence or, if there is neither a place of business nor residence, the person’s place of lodging.  The registration shall be on forms prescribed by SLED. A nonresident may bring firearms not otherwise prohibited by law into the State for a continuous period not to exceed ninety days. However, the person must meet the registration requirement of this section and the person must possess:

(1) a valid South Carolina hunting license;

(2) a written document indicating the person has been invited to the State to shoot on private land;

(3) written notification from a firing range or target shooting business indicating that the person will engage in target shooting; or

(4) a concealed weapon permit that is valid in South Carolina.

The nonresident shall be limited to a nontransferable registration of not more than ten firearms for the purpose of the above activities.

Every person registering a firearm under this subsection shall be fingerprinted and photographed by the sheriff’s department of the county of registration. This requirement shall be waived where fingerprints and photographs are already on file with the sheriff’s department.  The sheriff’s department shall perform an inquiry on the person by using the National Instant Criminal Background Check System before a determination to register a firearm is made.

(B) Every person who acquires a firearm in this State shall register the firearm with the sheriff’s department in the county in which he resides within five days of acquisition.  The registration shall be on forms prescribed by SLED and shall include: the name of the manufacturer and importer; model; type of action; caliber or gauge; serial number; and source from which receipt was obtained, including the name and address of the prior registrant.  If the firearm has no serial number, the permit number shall be entered in the space provided for the serial number, and the permit number shall be engraved upon the receiver portion of the firearm prior to registration.  All registration data that would identify the individual registering the firearm by name or address shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed to anyone, except as may be required for processing the registration or as may be required by a law enforcement agency for the lawful performance of its duties or as may be required by order of a court.

(C) Licensed firearms dealers shall register firearms pursuant to this section on registration forms prescribed by SLED and shall not be required to have the firearms physically inspected by the sheriff’s department at the time of registration.

(D) Registration is not required for:

(1) a device that is designed to fire loose black powder or that is a firearm manufactured before 1899;

(2) a device not designed to fire or made incapable of being readily restored to a firing condition; or

(3) an unserviceable firearm or destructive device registered with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms of the United States Department of Justice.

(E) A fee shall not be charged for the registration of a firearm under this section, except for a fee chargeable by and payable to the registering county for persons registering a firearm under subsection (A), in an amount equal to the fee actually charged by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to the registering sheriff’s department for a fingerprint check in connection with the registration.”

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

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