**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 59‑26‑45 SO AS TO PROVIDE A PERSON WHO HAS TAUGHT IN THE SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM FOR AT LEAST TWENTY YEARS COLLECTIVELY WHILE HOLDING A TEMPORARY OR PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THROUGHOUT THIS TWENTY YEAR PERIOD IS NOT REQUIRED TO RENEW THESE CREDENTIALS TO MAINTAIN THEIR VALIDITY, AND TO PROVIDE THE CREDENTIALS REMAIN SUBJECT TO REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION FOR A DISCIPLINARY ACTION, TO PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DETERMINE WHETHER A TEACHER MEETS THESE CRITERIA BEFORE THE EXEMPTION MAY BE APPLIED TO THE TEACHER, AND TO PROVIDE THIS DETERMINATION ONLY MAY BE MADE AT THE REQUEST OF THE TEACHER, WHO MUST INITIATE THE PROCESS TO RECEIVE THE EXEMPTION.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 26, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑26‑45. A person who has taught in the South Carolina public school system for at least twenty years collectively while holding a temporary or professional certificate issued by the South Carolina Department of Education throughout this twenty year period, is exempt from the credential renewal process and is not required to renew these credentials to maintain their validity. Teaching credentials that are exempt from renewal requirements pursuant to this section, remain subject to revocation or suspension by the department for a disciplinary action. The department shall determine whether a teacher meets these criteria before the exemption may be applied to the teacher. This determination only may be made at the request of the teacher, who must initiate the process to receive the exemption.”

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

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