**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING CHAPTER 12 TO TITLE 23 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGISTRATION AND COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION OF ANIMAL ABUSERS.

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

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

“CHAPTER 12

Animal Abuser Registration and Community Notification

Section 23‑12‑10. (A) For purposes of this section:

(1) ‘animal abuser’ means a person over eighteen years of age who has been convicted of a felony violation of any provision of this State designed to protect animals from abuse; and

(2) ‘animal’ means a living vertebrate, except a homo sapien.

(B) An animal abuser physically within the boundaries of this State for more than ten consecutive days shall register with the county sheriff for the county in which he is located before the end of his eleventh day in the State.

(C) A previously registered animal abuser shall reregister with the county sheriff for the county in which he is located no later than ten days after moving to a new location within the State.

(D) When an animal abuser registers with a county sheriff, he shall provide the following registration information:

(1) his legal name and any other names or aliases that he is

using or has used;

(2) his date of birth;

(3) his social security number;

(4) his current address or location;

(5) his place of employment; and

(6) the animal protection offense for which he was convicted, and the date and place of the animal protection offense conviction.

(E) When an animal abuser registers with a county sheriff, the sheriff shall obtain:

(1) his photograph and a complete set of his fingerprints; and

(2) a description of any tattoos, scars or other distinguishing features on his body that would assist in identifying him.

(F) Following an animal abuser’s initial registration pursuant to the provisions of this section, he shall annually renew his registration with the county sheriff before December thirty‑first of each subsequent calendar year for a period of fifteen years.

(G) An animal abuser who intentionally or knowingly fails to comply with the registration requirements, or provides false information when complying with the registration requirements contained in this section, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than five years.

(H) Each county sheriff shall maintain a local registry of animal abusers in his jurisdiction who are required to register pursuant to this section.

(I) The county sheriff shall forward all registration information obtained from animal abusers to SLED.

(J) Within ten days of receiving initial registration information from an animal abuser, the county sheriff shall contact every residence, school, humane society, animal shelter and any other business within a half mile radius of the animal abuser’s residence or location and provide them with the animal abuser’s registration information, with the exception of his social security number.

(K) SLED shall maintain a central registry of animal abusers required to register pursuant to the provisions of this section. The central registry of animal abusers may be made available to the public through internet access, telephone access, written access and in person. The information contained in an animal abuser’s registration, with the exception of his social security number, may be made available. Records of each animal abuser’s registration may be maintained for the duration of the fifteen year period in which he is required to be registered.”

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

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