**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 56‑3‑9600 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO “NO MORE HOMELESS PETS” LICENSE PLATES, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE SOUTH CAROLINA ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL ASSOCIATION SHALL COORDINATE THE GRANT PROGRAM, BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT, AND DISTRIBUTE GRANT MONEY; TO REQUIRE AN ANNUAL ACCOUNTING FOR THE PROGRAM; AND REQUIRE CERTAIN INFORMATION BEFORE A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION CAN RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THE GRANT PROGRAM.

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

SECTION 1. Section 56‑3‑9600 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 56‑3‑9600. (A) The Department of Motor Vehicles may issue ‘No More Homeless Pets’ special motor vehicle license plates to owners of private passenger motor vehicles as defined in Section 56‑3‑630 registered in their names, which may have imprinted on the plate ‘No More Homeless Pets’. The special license plate must be issued or revalidated for a biennial period which expires twenty‑four months from the month it is issued. The fee for this special license plate is the regular motor vehicle registration fee contained in Article 5, Chapter 3 of this title and a special motor vehicle license fee of seventy dollars.

(B) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, of the fees collected pursuant to this section, the Comptroller General shall place sufficient funds into a special restricted account to be used by the Department of Motor Vehicles to defray the expenses of the Department of Motor Vehicles in producing and administering the special license plates. The remaining funds collected from the special motor vehicle license fee must be deposited in a special account, separate and apart from the general fund, designated for use by the South Carolina Department of Agriculture to support local animal spaying and neutering programs. The South Carolina Department of Agriculture may use up to ten percent of the fees deposited in the special account for the administration of the program. Local private nonprofit tax exempt organizations offering animal spaying and neutering programs may apply for grants from this fund to further their tax exempt purposes. Grants must be awarded not more than once a year, and an applicant must receive as a grant an amount of the total revenues in the fund multiplied by the percentage that the applicant’s caseload in the preceding calendar year was of the total caseload of all applicants in that year. The South Carolina Animal Care and Control Association (SCACCA), or its successor organization, on behalf of the tax exempt organizations, shall coordinate the grant program, make the request for reimbursement from the Department of Agriculture, and distribute the individual grants to the participating tax exempt organizations.

(C) Before the Department of Motor Vehicles produces and distributes a special license plate pursuant to this section, it must receive:

(1) four hundred or more prepaid applications for the special license plate or a deposit of four thousand dollars from the individual or organization seeking issuance of the license plate. If a deposit of four thousand dollars is made by an individual or organization pursuant to this section, the department must refund the four thousand dollars once an equivalent amount of license plate fees is collected for that organization’s license plate. If the equivalent amount is not collected within four years of the first issuance of the license plate, the department must retain the deposit; and

(2) a plan to market the sale of the special license plate that must be approved by the department.

(D) If the department receives less than three hundred biennial applications and renewals for a particular special license plate authorized under this section, it shall not produce additional special license plates in that series. The department shall continue to issue special license plates of that series until the existing inventory is exhausted.

(E) An annual accounting and summary of this program must be provided by the Department of Agriculture to the Chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and to the Chairman of the House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee by September 1 of each year.

(F) Any local private nonprofit animal spaying and neutering program requesting reimbursement for services related to this program must provide to the SCACCA the name and address of each person who brought the animal to the program. Before the Department of Agriculture may send the reimbursement to the SCACCA, the SCACCA must provide to the Department of Agriculture a list of all the individuals who brought a pet in for spaying or neutering and the number of animals the individual brought in.”

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

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