**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, TO ENACT “CHARLIE’S LAW”; TO AMEND SECTION 56‑5‑5150, RELATING TO THE USE OF SAFETY DEVICES BY A VEHICLE WHICH IS TOWING ANOTHER VEHICLE, SO AS TO DEFINE THE TERM “VEHICLE”, TO REVISE THE TYPE OF EQUIPMENT THAT MUST BE USED TO ATTACH A TOWING VEHICLE TO A TOWED VEHICLE, TO PROVIDE THAT THIS SECTION DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH THE FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY REGULATIONS, TO PROVIDE A PENALTY FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION, AND TO PROVIDE A LIST OF VEHICLES THAT ARE EXEMPT FROM THIS SECTION.

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

SECTION 1. This act may be cited as “Charlie’s Law”.

SECTION 2. Section 56‑5‑5150 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 56‑5‑5150. (A) As used in this section, a ‘vehicle’ includes, but is not limited to, a utility trailer. When a vehicle is towing another vehicle on a public road or highway, the towing vehicle must be attached to the towed vehicle by ~~a~~ two safety ~~chain,~~ chains or cable devices~~, or equivalent device~~ in addition to the regular drawbar, tongue, trailer hitch, ~~or other connection~~ trailer coupler with trailer ball and hinch pin.

(B) The safety connections or attachments must be of sufficient strength to maintain connection of the towed vehicle to the pulling vehicle under all conditions while the towed vehicle is being pulled by the towing vehicle.

(C) The provisions of this section do not apply to vehicles using a hitch known as a fifth wheel and kingpin assembly. No part of this section shall conflict with the requirements of a vehicle subject to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

(D) A violation of this section is subject to a penalty not to exceed five hundred dollars or thirty days imprisonment.

(E) The provisions of this section do not apply to vehicles or utility trailers:

(1) used for farming purposes; or

(2) that utilize a chain that is adequate for the weight capacity of the trailer.”

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

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