**A** **JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO CREATE THE TEACHER RETENTION STUDY COMMITTEE TO REVIEW TEACHER COMPENSATION IN THIS STATE, PARTICULARLY THE IMPACT OF LOW TEACHER PAY AND OTHER COMPENSATION INCENTIVES ON TEACHER RETENTION, AND TO EXAMINE THE PROSPECT OF INCREASING TEACHER PAY BY FIFTEEN PERCENT TO PROVIDE TEACHERS WITH A MORE ATTRACTIVE SALARY AND BE MORE COMPETITIVE WITH OTHER STATES; TO PROVIDE FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE, TO PROVIDE FOR THE STAFFING OF THE COMMITTEE; AND TO REQUIRE THE COMMITTEE TO REPORT ITS FINDINGS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY BEFORE APRIL 1, 2018.

Whereas, high‑quality teachers are an essential component of any path to progress in our public schools; and

Whereas, from a financial standpoint, wages that fall below the Southeastern average and revised pension plans that have substantially extended the retirement horizon for teachers have combined to make South Carolina public schools a less attractive place to teach than other states, and also have made teaching in general a less attractive career option than many available in the private sector; and

Whereas, although teaching is a labor of love, it is a matter of reality that teachers, like all professionals and hard workers, are drawn to work opportunities that enable them to pay student loans, buy a home, raise a family, and put money aside for emergencies and retirement; and

Whereas, unless South Carolina takes immediate action to provide competitive compensation to its public school teachers, it will continue to see unacceptable attrition rates as teachers leave the profession or move to other states. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. (A) There is created a study committee that must be known as the “Teacher Retention Study Committee” to address the issue of educator retention, particularly the impact of low teacher pay and other compensation incentives on teacher retention, and to examine the prospect of increasing teacher pay by fifteen percent to provide teachers with a more attractive salary and be more competitive with other states. The study committee shall develop recommendations for the General Assembly to consider, which include, but are not limited to, financial incentives and the feasibility of increasing teacher pay by fifteen percent.

(B)(1) The study committee is comprised of the following members:

(a) Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, or his designee;

(b) Chairman of the House Education and Public Works Committee, or his designee;

(c) Senate Majority Leader, or his designee;

(d) Senate Minority Leader, or his designee;

(e) House Majority Leader, or his designee;

(f) House Minority Leader, or his designee;

(g) Chairman of the State Board of Education, or his designee;

(h) Chairman of the Palmetto State Teachers Association, or his designee;

(i) Chairman of the South Carolina Education Association, or his designee;

(j) Executive Director of CERRA;

(k) Chairman of the Education Oversight Committee;

(l) State Superintendent of Education who shall serve as chairman of the committee;

(m) superintendent from a small school district appointed by the Governor;

(n) superintendent from a medium school district appointed by the Governor; and

(o) superintendent from a large school district appointed by the Governor;

(2) The superintendents appointed by the Governor must come from a plaintiff district in the Abbeville lawsuit, and have worked in the district for at least five years.

(3) Vacancies in the membership of the study committee must be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the manner of original appointment.

(C) Meeting space and staff support must be provided by the staff of the Senate Education Committee and the House Education and Public Works Committee.

(D) Findings and recommendations must be submitted to the General Assembly before April 1, 2018, at which time the study committee is dissolved.

SECTION 2. If any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this act is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this act, the General Assembly hereby declaring that it would have passed this act, and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

SECTION 3. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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