**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING ARTICLE 3 TO CHAPTER 17, TITLE 60 SO AS TO CREATE THE SOUTH CAROLINA AFRICAN‑AMERICAN CONFEDERATE VETERANS MONUMENT COMMISSION, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE PURPOSE, COMPOSITION, FUNCTIONS, AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION; AND TO DESIGNATE THE EXISTING PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 17, TITLE 60, AS ARTICLE 1, “GENERAL PROVISIONS”.

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly finds that the contributions made by African Americans in service to the State of South Carolina during the War Between the States are not reflected in the South Carolina Social Studies Academic Standards, curriculums of local educational agencies, posteducational agencies, and historical institutions and agencies, and while there is representation of those African Americans from South Carolina who took up arms for the Union, there is nothing to show the contributions, sacrifices, and honor of their Confederate counterparts; and

Whereas, it is reflected in our state records that in the 1920s, hundreds of still‑living African‑American Confederate pensioners drew pensions in relation to their service to our State, but their contributions and service are not included in the current academic standards; and

Whereas, we find the exclusion of African‑American Confederate soldiers in the current academic standards to be completely unacceptable, that this type of manipulation and exclusion of facts in historic record and representation creates a distorted perspective of our State and national history, and to exclude, neglect, or otherwise disregard the contributions of African‑American Confederate soldiers is a gross disrespect to their service and memory; and

Whereas, all people should know of, and remember, African‑American Confederate soldiers who served South Carolina and the United States during the America Civil War and others, and it is in fact vital to educate our citizens on their stories during the war and afterwards; and

Whereas, it is the policy of the State of South Carolina that the history of the African‑American Confederate soldiers, the depth of their impact in our society, and the triumphs of African‑American Confederate soldiers and their significant contributions to the development of this State and our nation is the proper concern of all people, particularly students enrolled in the schools of the State of South Carolina; and

Whereas, it is therefore desirable to create an organized body to survey, design, encourage, and promote the implementation of education and awareness programs in South Carolina concerned with African‑American Confederate soldiers’ stories and the contributions of African‑American Confederate soldiers in building our State and country, to develop workshops, institutes, seminars, and other teacher‑training activities designed to educate teachers on this subject matter, and to be responsible for the coordination of events on a regular basis, throughout the State, that provide appropriate memorialization of the events concerning African‑American Confederate soldiers and their descendants in South Carolina and the United States, as well as their contributions. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 17, Title 60 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Article 3

South Carolina African‑American Confederate Veterans Monument Commission

Section 60‑17‑210. (A) There is established the South Carolina African‑American Confederate Veterans Monument Commission (ACVMC) by the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission to honor the group of African‑Americans Confederates who served South Carolina during the American Civil War.

(B) The ACVMC consists of eleven members, including:

(1) the Chairman of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum or his designee, to serve as chairman of the ACVMC;

(2)    five members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

(3)    five members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

(C) A public member of the ACVMC shall serve for a term of three years and until his successor is appointed and qualified, with the first members appointed effective July 1, 2018, to serve three‑year terms from that date. A vacancy occurring before the expiration of a term must be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(D) A member of the ACVMC serves without compensation but is entitled to mileage and per diem as provided for boards and commissions.

(E) A majority of the members serving is required to conduct meetings.

(F) Staff members of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum shall serve as staff for the ACVMC. The ACVMC may, subject to the availability of appropriations, hire additional staff and consultants to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the ACVMC.

Section 60‑17‑220. The South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission shall:

(1) assist the ACVMC in marketing and distributing to educators, administrators, and school districts in the state educational information and other materials on African‑American Confederates and their contributions to our State and nation;

(2) conduct at least one teacher workshop annually on African‑American Confederates and their contributions to our State and nation;

(3) assist the ACVMC in monitoring the inclusion of such materials and curricula in the state’s educational system;

(4) consult with the ACVMC to determine how it may survey, catalog, and extend American Civil War education presently being incorporated into the social studies standards for public education;

(5) allocate funding to the ACVMC solely for the ACVMC to provide:

(a) grants to communities and nonprofit organizations for the development of programs relating to South Carolina African‑American Confederate Veterans;

(b) grants to scholarly organizations solely for researching, publishing, and distributing information relating to South Carolina African‑American Confederate veterans; and

(c) technical assistance to localities and nonprofit organizations to further this research.

Section 60‑17‑230. The South Carolina African‑American Confederate Veterans Monument Committee shall:

(1) provide, based upon the collective interest of the members and the knowledge and experience of its staff and consultants, assistance and advice to public and nonpublic schools within the State with respect to the implementation of education, awareness programs, textbooks, and educational materials concerned with African‑American Confederates and their contributions to our State and nation;

(2) survey and catalog the extent and breadth of education concerning African‑Americans Confederate and their contributions to our State and nation presently being incorporated into the curricula and textbooks and taught in the social studies standards for public education;

(3) inventory relevant African‑American history memorials, exhibits and resources which should be incorporated into the social studies standards for public education;

(4) assist the State Department of Education and other state and educational agencies to develop and implement African‑American Confederate History Education programs;

(5) act as a liaison with textbook publishers, public and nonpublic schools, public and private nonprofit resource organizations, members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, and members of the General Assembly to facilitate the inclusion of the history of African‑American Confederates in this State and our country in the social studies standards for public education;

(6) compile a roster of individual volunteers who are willing to share their knowledge and experience in classrooms, seminars, and workshops with students and teachers about African‑American Confederates and their contributions to our State and nation;

(7) coordinate events memorializing the sacrifices and contributions of African‑American Confederates in our State and nation and seek volunteers who are willing and able to participate in commemorative events that will enhance student awareness of the significance of African‑American Confederates and their historical impact;

(8) prepare reports for the Governor, the State Superintendent of Education, and the General Assembly regarding its findings and recommendations on facilitating the inclusion of African‑American Confederates, South Carolina History, United States History, African‑American history, and special programs in the educational system of the State;

(9) develop, in consultation with the State Department of Education, curriculum guidelines for the teaching of information on African‑American Confederates and their contributions to our State and nation, which every board of education shall incorporate in an appropriate place in the curriculum of its elementary and secondary school students; and

(10) solicit, receive, and accept appropriations, gifts and donations.

Section 60‑17‑240. The ACVMC may call upon any department, office, division, or agency of the State, or of any county, municipality, or school district in the State to supply data, program reports, and other information, personnel, and assistance it considers necessary to execute the provisions of this article. These departments, offices, divisions, agencies, counties, municipalities, and school districts shall, to the extent possible and not inconsistent with any other provision of law, cooperate with the ACVMC and furnish it with information, personnel, and assistance requested by the ACVMC pursuant to this section.”

SECTION 2. The existing provisions of Chapter 17, Title 60 of the 1976 Code are designated as Article 1, “General Provisions”.

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

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