**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 40‑18‑75 SO AS TO PROHIBIT A PRIVATE INVESTIGATION BUSINESS FROM KNOWINGLY REPRESENTING MULTIPLE PARTIES WITH OPPOSING INTERESTS IN CIVIL OR CRIMINAL MATTERS AND TO PROVIDE PENALTIES.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 18, Title 40 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 40‑18‑75. (A) It is unlawful for a private investigator or private investigation business to knowingly provide services to multiple parties whose interests are diametrically opposed to one another in a civil or criminal matter.

(B)(1) In addition to other penalties for a violation of the provisions of this chapter, a person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than:

(a) five hundred dollars and his Private Investigation License and private investigator registration certificate, as applicable, must be suspended for two years for a first offense;

(b) one thousand dollars and his Private Investigation License and private investigator registration certificate, as applicable, must be suspended for three years for a second offense; and

(c) one thousand and five hundred dollars and his Private Investigation License and private investigator registration certificate, as applicable, must be suspended for five years for a third and all subsequent offenses.

(2) A private investigator or investigation business who violates the provisions of this section must reimburse the clients for all payments made to the investigator or investigation business.”

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

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