**A** **JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO SUSPEND CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF LAW RELATED TO THE FILING DEADLINE FOR CANDIDATES IN THE 2018 ELECTION, TO SUSPEND CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF LAW RELATED TO THE DATE UPON WHICH PRIMARY ELECTIONS DURING THE 2018 ELECTION CYCLE SHALL BE HELD, AND TO PROVIDE FOR A NEW CANDIDATE FILING PERIOD AND NEW PRIMARY AND RUNOFF DATES.

Whereas, in the general election of 2012, the qualified electors of the State of South Carolina overwhelmingly voted in favor of amending the State Constitution to provide that the Lieutenant Governor must be elected jointly with the Governor in a manner prescribed by law; and

Whereas, in 2014, the General Assembly ratified the amendment approved by the electors of this State thus declaring the amendment to be part of the State Constitution; and

Whereas, the final step in bringing the will of the people of this State to fruition is the General Assembly enacting the laws necessary to implement the new constitutional provision; and

Whereas, the will of the people of this State is being thwarted by opposition to implementing legislation that is based upon an issue that was not contained in the question on the 2012 ballot, was not contemplated by the voters when voting in favor of the constitutional amendment, and has nothing to do with the question of how to implement the will of the voters; and

Whereas, without implementing legislation, the upcoming gubernatorial election will be thrown into chaos. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. The provision in Section 7-11-15(A) of the 1976 Code, relating to the period during which candidates seeking nomination by political party primary or political party convention must file a statement of intention of candidacy and party pledge together with accompanying filing fees, is suspended for the 2018 election cycle.

In order to qualify as a candidate to run in the 2018 general election, all candidates seeking nomination by political party primary or political party convention must file a statement of intention of candidacy and party pledge and submit any filing fees between noon on April thirteenth and noon on April twenty-seventh.

SECTION 2. The provision in Section 7-13-40 of the 1976 Code, relating to when a party primary to nominate candidates for the general election must be held, is suspended for the 2018 election cycle.

Party primaries held during the 2018 election cycle shall be held by the party and conducted by the State Election Commission and the respective county boards of voter registration and elections on July tenth. If a second and third primary are necessary, then each shall be held two weeks successively after July tenth.

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

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