**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 7‑11‑20, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES, SO AS TO DECREASE THE MAXIMUM FILING FEE THAT MAY BE CHARGED BY THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSION TO EACH CANDIDATE CERTIFIED BY A POLITICAL PARTY FOR THE CONDUCT OF A PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY.

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

SECTION 1. Section 7‑11‑20(B)(2) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(2) If the state committee of a certified political party which received at least five percent of the popular vote in South Carolina for the party’s candidate for President of the United States decides to hold a presidential preference primary election, the State Election Commission must conduct the presidential preference primary in accordance with the provisions of this title and party rules provided that a registered elector may cast a ballot in only one presidential preference primary. However, notwithstanding any other provision of this title, (a) the State Election Commission and the authorities responsible for conducting the elections in each county shall provide for cost‑effective measures in conducting the presidential preference primaries including, but not limited to, combining polling places, while ensuring that voters have adequate notice and access to the polling places; and (b) the state committee of the party shall set the date and the filing requirements, including a certification fee. Political parties must verify the qualifications of candidates prior to certifying to the State Election Commission the names of candidates to be placed on primary ballots. The written certification required by this section must contain a statement that each certified candidate meets, or will meet by the time of the general election, or as otherwise required by law, the qualifications in the United States Constitution, statutory law, and party rules to participate in the presidential preference primary for which he has filed. Political parties must not certify any candidate who does not or will not by the time of the general election meet the qualifications in the United States Constitution, statutory law, and party rules for the presidential preference primary for which the candidate desires to file, and such candidate’s name must not be placed on a primary ballot. Political parties may charge a certification fee to persons seeking to be candidates in the presidential preference primary for the political party. A filing fee not to exceed ~~twenty~~ two thousand five hundred dollars, as determined by the State Election Commission, for each candidate certified by a political party must be transmitted by the respective political party to the State Election Commission and must be used for conducting the presidential preference primaries.”

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

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