**A** **JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO ESTABLISH A COMMUTER RAIL SYSTEM COMMISSION TO EXAMINE AND DEVELOP A PLAN OF ACTION FOR A HIGH SPEED RAIL SYSTEM IN THIS STATE, TO PROVIDE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION, TO PROVIDE FOR THE DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION, AND TO REQUIRE THAT THE COMMISSION REPORT ITS FINDINGS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

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

SECTION 1. There is established a Commuter Rail System Commission to examine the needs and opportunities, including economic development opportunities, within this State presented by high speed rail and in conjunction with the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor (SEHSR), and to develop a plan of action for the development of a high speed rail system to tie into the SEHSR Corridor and, if feasible, to connect regions and cities of South Carolina with each other and with neighboring states.

SECTION 2. The commission is composed of the following nine members:

(1) three members appointed by the Secretary of Transportation;

(2) three members appointed by the Secretary of Commerce; and

(3) three members appointed by the Governor, upon the recommendation of the South Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Government.

SECTION 3. The specific duties of the commission in developing its plan and recommendations include the following:

(1) study, assess, develop, and promote effective and competitive plans for the design, construction, financing, and operation of light rail service and intercity passenger rail service through and between points in this State and to other states;

(2) assess, advise, and assist this State’s efforts to coordinate federal, state, and regional planning that best establish light rail service and high speed rail service in and through South Carolina;

(3) coordinate with counterparts in other states on the SEHSR Corridor and, in turn, assess and advise on matters that ensure that compatible long‑term criteria are adopted and that optimum train scheduling is obtained to best provide high speed rail service to all applicable regions in South Carolina, including through‑service passenger train options; and

(4) assess, advise, and assist this State’s efforts to maximize federal funding in support of the establishment of high speed interstate rail service for certain parts of South Carolina as elements of the SEHSR Corridor.

SECTION 4. (A) The staff of the appointing authorities shall assist the commission in the performance of its duties.

(B) Members of the commission shall serve without pay but shall receive mileage, subsistence, and per diem as provided by law for members of state boards, commissions, and committees.

(C) The commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly by July 1, 2020. Upon filing its report, the commission is dissolved.

SECTION 5. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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