**A** **JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO PROHIBIT A MAGISTRATE OR CIRCUIT COURT FROM COMMENCING AN EVICTION PROCEEDING FOR THE NONPAYMENT OF RENT WITHIN A NINETY‑DAY GRACE PERIOD.

Whereas, the spread of COVID‑19, commonly known as the coronavirus, in the United States prompted the declaration of a national emergency on March 13, 2020; and

Whereas, in response to the declaration, many states closed public schools and universities. Additionally, many professional and collegiate athletic seasons were postponed or cancelled to allow for social distancing; and

Whereas, while these measures are critical in stemming the spread of the coronavirus, it has also caused several businesses, predominantly restaurants and bars, to lose potential business. This has led to many Americans, especially those working in the service industry, expressing anxiety over their inability to work and receive the paycheck they need to pay their rent and other bills. A ninety‑day moratorium on evictions would greatly assist these individuals. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. A magistrate or circuit court is prohibited from commencing or ordering an eviction proceeding for nonpayment of rent within a ninety‑day grace period beginning on the effective date of this resolution. An eviction proceeding that is in process but not completed by the effective date of this resolution must be stayed by the magistrate or circuit court until the expiration of the ninety‑day grace period. Nothing in this resolution may be construed to prohibit the landlord and tenant from terminating the lease agreement with the informed consent of both parties.

SECTION 2. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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