**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND ARTICLE 5, CHAPTER 71, TITLE 38 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO GROUP ACCIDENT AND HEALTH INSURANCE, TO PROVIDE FOR COVERAGE FOR TREATMENT FOR FUNCTIONAL DEFORMITY AND DYSFUNCTION OF THE TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT, TO PROVIDE EXCEPTIONS, AND TO DEFINE NECESSARY TERMS.

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

SECTION 1. Article 5, Chapter 71, Title 38 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 38-71-880. (A) For the purposes of this section:

(1) ‘Functional deformity’ means a deformity of the bone or joint structure of the maxilla or mandible such that the normal character and essential function of the bone structure are impeded.

(2) ‘Temporomandibular joint’ means the connection of the mandible and the temporal bone through the articular disc surrounded by the joint capsule and associated ligaments and tendons.

(3) ‘Temporomandibular joint dysfunction’ means that congenital or developed anomalies of the temporomandibular joint.

(B) Any policy or contract of group accident, group health, or group accident and health insurance may include provisions for payment by an insurer of benefits to an employee or other member of the insured group for treatment of the functional deformity of the temporomandibular joint or for temporomandibular joint dysfunction for himself, his spouse, his child or children, or other persons chiefly dependent upon him for support and maintenance.

(C) The provisions of this section do not apply to cosmetic or elective orthodontic, periodontic, or general dental care.”

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

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