**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 40‑63‑20, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS, SO AS TO DEFINE THE TERM “TELEHEALTH”; TO AMEND SECTION 40‑63‑290, RELATING TO CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF PERSONS EXEMPT FROM REGULATION AS SOCIAL WORKERS, SO AS TO SIMILARLY EXEMPT CERTAIN INDEPENDENT SOCIAL WORKERS LICENSED IN THIS STATE OR ANOTHER STATE WHEN PROVIDING SERVICES USING TELEHEALTH TO PATIENTS LOCATED IN THIS STATE; TO AMEND SECTION 40‑75‑20, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS CONCERNING THE REGULATION OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS, AND LICENSED PSYCHO‑EDUCATIONAL SPECIALISTS, SO AS TO DEFINE THE TERM “TELEHEALTH”; AND TO AMEND SECTION 40‑75‑290, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF PERSONS EXEMPT FROM REGULATION AS PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS, AND LICENSED PSYCHO‑EDUCATIONAL SPECIALISTS, SO AS TO SIMILARLY EXEMPT SUCH PROFESSIONALS LICENSED IN THIS STATE OR ANOTHER STATE WHEN PROVIDING SERVICES USING TELEHEALTH TO PATIENTS LOCATED IN THIS STATE.

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

SECTION 1. Section 40‑63‑20 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding an item at the end to read:

“( ) ‘Telehealth’ means the practice of social work using electronic communications, information technology, or other means between a licensee in one location and a patient in another location with or without an intervening practitioner.”

SECTION 2. Section 40‑63‑290 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding an item at the end to read:

“( ) an Independent Social Worker‑AP or Independent Social Worker‑CP who is licensed in this State or who holds an active license to provide these services in another state or jurisdiction from providing services using telehealth to a patient located in this State if the individual:

(a) is registered with the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation; and

(b) provides the services within the applicable scope of practice established by this State.”

SECTION 3. Section 40‑75‑20 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 249 of 2018, is further amended by adding an item at the end to read:

“( ) ‘Telehealth’ means the practice of Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Licensed Psycho‑educational Specialists using electronic communications, information technology, or other means between a licensee in one location and a patient in another location with or without an intervening practitioner.”

SECTION 4. Section 40‑75‑290 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 249 of 2018, is further amended by adding an item at the end to read:

“( ) individuals who are licensed in this State or who hold an active license to provide these services in another state or jurisdiction and who provide services using telehealth to a patient located in this State if the individual:

(a) is registered with the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation; and

(b) provides the services within the applicable scope of practice established by this State.”

SECTION 5. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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