**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 50‑21‑200 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT A PERSON MAY PLACE ADDITIONAL LIGHTS ON HIS VESSEL SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS; AND TO AMEND SECTION 50‑21‑85, RELATING TO VESSELS DISPLAYING A BLUE LIGHT, SO AS TO SPECIFY THAT THE PROHIBITION ON A BLUE LIGHT APPLIES TO LIGHTS THAT APPEAR SUBSTANTIALLY SIMILAR TO THE BLUE LIGHT USED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT.

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

SECTION 1. Article 1, Chapter 21, Title 50 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 50‑21‑200. (A) A person may display additional lights on a vessel so long as the display is in accordance with the provisions of 33 C.F.R. Parts 83 and 84 including, but not limited to, the placement of a:

(1) white masthead light;

(2) white sternlight;

(3) red sidelight on the port side of the vessel; and

(4) green sidelight on the starboard side of the vessel.

(B) The provisions of this section may not be construed to:

(1) prohibit the use of permissible variations deemed in compliance with 33 C.F.R. Part 83; and

(2) limit a person from placing lights of colors not specified in 33 C.F.R. 84.13 on his vessel.”

SECTION 2. Section 50‑21‑85 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 50‑21‑85. A person shall not operate a vessel displaying or using a rotating, strobing, flashing, or intermittently reflecting blue light that is substantially similar to the blue light used by law enforcement unless a duly commissioned law enforcement officer is on board.

The operator of a vessel being approached by a vessel flashing a blue light shall stop or maneuver in a way as to permit boarding, so far as possible without endangering his vessel, and not begin normal movement again until directed by the law enforcement officer or until the vessel flashing a blue light has cleared the immediate area.

The operator of a vessel approaching an area where a vessel flashing a blue light is located or patrolling shall slow his vessel to a no wake speed and shall maintain the speed until clear of the area.

A person violating the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than twenty‑five dollars nor more than five hundred dollars, or imprisoned not more than thirty days for each violation.”

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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