**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 59‑1‑60 SO AS TO PROVIDE NO STUDENT‑TEACHER CLASSROOM RATIO CREATED BY STATUTE, RESOLUTION, OR REGULATION MAY BE WAIVED OR OTHERWISE CHANGED TEMPORARILY OR PERMANENTLY BY ANY LEGISLATIVE MEASURE ABSENT A TWO‑THIRDS VOTE OF APPROVAL BY THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND A TWO‑THIRDS VOTE OF APPROVAL BY THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SENATE.

Whereas, the General Assembly finds that reductions in classroom size have proven long‑term benefits, including significant achievement gains and higher graduation rates; and

Whereas, the General Assembly finds that in recognition of these benefits and additional benefits of improved working conditions for teachers by promoting manageable workloads, the General Assembly, through statute, and the State Department of Education, through regulation, have provided for specific maximum allowable student‑teacher ratios for classrooms; and

Whereas, the General Assembly finds that these noble initiatives have been frustrated and undermined by waivers and underfunding; and

Whereas, the General Assembly finds that in an effort to redouble its commitment to providing public school students with the enormous benefits of being in classrooms with low student‑teacher ratios, it must raise the bar required to waive the student‑teacher ratios by imposing a requirement than any such waiver must be made by a two‑thirds vote of the General Assembly, similar to the high threshold set for removing certain monuments and memorials from public property imposed by Section 10‑1‑165. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. Article 1, Chapter 1, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑1‑60. No student‑teacher classroom ratio created by statute, resolution, or regulation may be waived or otherwise changed temporarily or permanently by any legislative measure absent a two‑thirds vote of approval by the membership of the House of Representatives and a two‑thirds vote of approval by the membership of the Senate.”

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

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑