**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 27‑39‑370 SO AS TO PROVIDE RESTRICTIONS ON RAISING RESIDENTIAL RENT.

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

SECTION 1. This act must be known and may be cited as the “South Carolina Rent Control Act”.

SECTION 2. Article 3, Chapter 39, Title 27 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 27‑39‑370. (A) If a tenancy is week to week, the landlord may not increase the rent without giving the tenant written notice at least seven days prior to the effective date of the rent increase.

(B) During any tenancy other than week to week, the landlord may not increase the rent:

(1) during the first year after the tenancy begins;

(2) at any time after the first year of tenancy without giving the tenant written notice at least ninety days prior to the effective date of the rent increase; or

(3) during any twelve‑month period, in an amount greater than seven percent plus the consumer price index above the existing rent except as permitted by subsection (E).

(C) The notice required under this section must specify:

(1) the amount of the rent increase;

(2) the amount of the new rent; and

(3) facts supporting the exemption authorized by subsection (E) if the increase is above the amount allowed in subsection (B)(3); and

(4) the effective date of the increased rent.

(D) A landlord terminating a tenancy with a thirty‑day notice during the first year of a tenancy may not reset rent for the next tenancy in an amount greater than seven percent plus the consumer price index above the previous rent.

(E) A landlord is not subject to subsection (B)(3) or (D) of this section if:

(1) the first certificate of occupancy for the dwelling unit was issued less than fifteen years from the date of the notice of the rent increase; or

(2) the landlord is providing reduced rent to the tenant as a part of a federal, state, or local program or subsidy.

(F) A landlord that increases rent in violation of subsection (B)(3) or (D) is liable to the tenant in an amount equal to three months’ rent plus actual damages suffered by the tenant.

(G) For purposes of this section, ‘consumer price index’ means the annual twelve month average change in the Consumer Price Index, Southeast Region, as published by the United States Department of Labor in September of the prior calendar year.”

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

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