**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 57‑3‑145 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SHALL ISSUE PERMITS THAT ALLOW CERTAIN VEHICLES AND TRAILERS TO TRANSPORT UNPROCESSED FOREST PRODUCTS.

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

SECTION 1. Article 2, Chapter 3, Title 57 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 57‑3‑145. (A) Notwithstanding Article 33, Chapter, 5 Title 56 of this chapter, the Department of Transportation shall issue, under terms and conditions in the public interest for safety on the highways, a permit for 90,000 pounds of gross vehicle weight of a vehicle or trailer transporting unprocessed forest products for use on noninterstate routes of the public highways. A single‑axle weight must not exceed 26,000 pounds and a tandem axle weight must not exceed 44,000 pounds. The permit must be issued annually, and it allows movement on the highways at any time. To be valid, the permit must be carried on the vehicle, and it is unlawful for a person to violate a provision, term, or condition of the permit. The fee for the permit is two hundred dollars and authorizes the use of only one trailer or vehicle transporting unprocessed forest products. Fees collected pursuant to this section must be placed in the state highway fund and must be used for defraying the cost of issuing and administering the permits and for other highway purposes. A permit does not allow loaded vehicles or trailers transporting unprocessed forest products to be operated on interstate highways above the maximum gross vehicle weight established for the interstate system.

(B) For purposes of this section, the term ‘unprocessed forest products’ means forest products originating and transported from a farm or woodlands to market with delay interruption or delay for further packaging or processing after initiating transport, wood residuals, including wood chips, sawdust, mulch, or tree bark from any site, raw logs to marker, and trees grown as Christmas trees from field, farm, stand, or grove to a processing point.”

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

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