**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND TITLE 31 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT, BY ADDING CHAPTER 24, TO PROVIDE THAT MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES SHALL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR NUISANCE SUITS.

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

SECTION 1. The General Assembly finds that:

Manufacturing and industrial operations are a vital part of the economy of South Carolina and that it is in the best interests of the State to encourage the retention, location, expansion, and improvement of manufacturing, processing, distribution, warehousing, and technology intensive projects within the State.

The General Assembly recognizes that, when nonindustrial land uses extend into industrial areas, manufacturing or industrial facilities may become the subject of nuisance suits, despite locating in the area prior to the complaining party. As a result, such facilities may be forced to cease operations or may be discouraged from making investments or improvements to their facilities.

It is the intent of the General Assembly to reduce the loss to the State of its manufacturing and industrial resources by limiting the circumstances under which a manufacturing or industrial facility may be deemed to be a nuisance when plaintiffs came to the nuisance, and it is the General Assembly’s intent to generally codify the common law defense of “coming to the nuisance” to promote economic development.

SECTION 2. Title 31 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Chapter 24

Nuisance Suits Related to Manufacturing and Industrial Uses of Real Property

Section 31-24-10. For purposes of this chapter, ‘manufacturing or industrial facility’ includes, but is not limited to, any land, building, structure, pond, impoundment, appurtenance, machinery, or equipment that is used for manufacturing, processing, distribution, warehousing, and technology intensive operations.

Section 31-24-20. (A) A manufacturing or industrial facility, or its expansion, shall not be found to be a public or private nuisance by reason of the operation of the facility if the manufacturing or industrial facility:

(1) is operating pursuant to the issuance of requisite licenses, permits, certifications, or authorizations under applicable federal and state environmental laws; and

(2) commenced operations before a change in the land use in the vicinity of the manufacturing or industrial facility.

(B) Any manufacturing or industrial facility protected pursuant to the provisions of this section may reasonably expand its operation or facilities without losing its protected status if all county, municipal, state, and federal environmental codes, laws, or regulations are met by the manufacturing or industrial operation. The protected status of a manufacturing or industrial facility, once acquired, is assignable, alienable, and inheritable. The protected status of a manufacturing or industrial facility, once acquired, may not be waived by the temporary cessation of operation or by diminishing the size of the operation.

Section 31-24-30. No city, county, taxing district, or other political subdivision of this State shall adopt any ordinance or resolution that declares any manufacturing or industrial facility, or its expansion, that is operated in accordance with this article to be a nuisance, nor shall any zoning ordinances that require abatement or force the closure of any manufacturing or industrial facility be adopted. Any such ordinances shall be void and shall have no force or effect.

Section 31-24-40. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to modify any provision of existing statutory eminent domain or environmental law.

Section 31-24-50. This act does not apply to nuisance actions commenced within one year of the effective date of this act. No actions shall be commenced subsequent to that date.”

SECTION 3. If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this act is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this act, the General Assembly hereby declaring that it would have passed this act and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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