**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 7‑13‑40, AS AMENDED, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE DATE OF PARTY PRIMARIES, CERTIFICATION OF NAMES FOR PRIMARY BALLOTS, AND FILING FEES, SO AS TO CHANGE THE PRIMARY DATE FROM THE SECOND TUESDAY IN JUNE TO THE FIRST TUESDAY IN MAY.

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

SECTION 1. Section 7‑13‑40 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 61 of 2013, is further amended to read:

“Section 7‑13‑40. ~~In the event that~~ If a party nominates candidates by party primary, a party primary must be held by the party and conducted by the State Election Commission and the respective county boards of voter registration and elections on the ~~second~~ first Tuesday in ~~June~~ May of each general election year, and a second and third primary each two weeks successively ~~thereafter~~ after that, if necessary. Written certification of the names of all candidates to be placed on primary ballots must be made by the political party chairman, vice chairman, or secretary to the State Election Commission or the county board of voter registration and elections whichever is responsible under law for preparing the ballot, not later than twelve o’clock noon on ~~April fifth~~ February twenty-sixth, or if ~~April fifth~~ February twenty-sixth falls on a Saturday or Sunday, not later than twelve o’clock noon on the following Monday. Political parties nominating candidates by party primary ~~must~~ shall verify the qualifications of those candidates ~~prior to~~ before certification to the appropriate election commission of the names of candidates to be placed on primary ballots. The written verification required by this section must contain a statement that each candidate certified meets, or will meet by the time of the general election, or as otherwise required by law, the qualifications for office for which he has filed. A political party ~~must~~ may not certify ~~any~~ a candidate who does not or will not by the time of the general election, or as otherwise required by law, meet the qualifications for the office for which the candidate has filed, and ~~such~~ the candidate’s name ~~shall~~ may not be placed on a primary ballot. The filing fees for all candidates filing to run in all primaries, except municipal primaries, must be transmitted by the respective political parties to the State Election Commission and placed by the executive director of the commission in a special account designated for use in conducting primary elections and must be used for that purpose. The filing fee for each office is one percent of the total salary for the term of that office or one hundred dollars, whichever amount is greater.”

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

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