

Session 126 - (2025-2026)

H 3530 General Bill, By W. Newton, Pope, Spann-Wilder, Bernstein and Cobb-Hunter

Summary: Magistrates' Reform Act

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 2-19-115 SO AS TO REQUIRE CANDIDATES FOR MAGISTRATE POSITIONS TO BE REVIEWED BY THE JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION IN THE SAME MANNER AS OTHER JUDICIAL CANDIDATES UPON VACANCIES, AND TO DEFINE WHEN VACANCIES OCCUR; BY AMENDING SECTION 22-1-10, RELATING TO APPOINTMENT, TERM AND TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION, TRAINING, CERTIFICATION, OR RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS OF MAGISTRATES, SO AS TO PROVIDE PROCEDURES AND LIMITATIONS ON MAGISTRATES' HOLDOVER STATUS AND TO REQUIRE MAGISTRATES GOING FORWARD TO HOLD A JURIS DOCTOR DEGREE AND BE A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA BAR; BY AMENDING SECTION 22-1-15, RELATING TO MAGISTRATES PRESENTLY SERVING, SO AS TO GRANDFATHER MAGISTRATES SERVING IN OFFICE ON JUNE 30, 2025; BY AMENDING SECTION 22-3-10, RELATING TO CIVIL JURISDICTION IN MAGISTRATES COURT, SO AS TO INCREASE THE CIVIL JURISDICTION OF MAGISTRATES COURT; BY AMENDING SECTION 22-3-550, RELATING TO CRIMINAL JURISDICTION IN MAGISTRATES COURT, SO AS TO INCREASE THE CRIMINAL JURISDICTION OF MAGISTRATES COURT; AND BY REPEALING SECTIONS 22-2-10 AND 22-2-15 RELATING TO A SCREENING COMMITTEE TO ASSIST IN THE SELECTION OF MAGISTRATES AND THE SPECIAL ELECTION FOR NONPARTISAN SELECTION OF MAGISTRATES, RESPECTIVELY.

- 12/05/24 House Prefiled**
- 12/05/24 House Referred to Committee on Judiciary**
- 01/14/25 House Introduced and read first time (House Journal-page 235)**
- 01/14/25 House Referred to Committee on Judiciary (House Journal-page 235)**
- 01/28/25 House Member(s) request name removed as sponsor: Pedalino**
- 01/29/25 House Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Bernstein**