**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING ARTICLE 8 TO CHAPTER 25, TITLE 57 SO AS TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO CREATE AND SUPERVISE A STATEWIDE PROGRAM RELATED TO PROVIDING DIRECTIONAL SIGNS ALONG THE STATE’S MAJOR HIGHWAYS AND INTERCHANGES LEADING TO TOURISM ORIENTED FACILITIES ENGAGED IN EDUCATIONAL OR TOURISM ACTIVITIES.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 25, Title 57 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Article 8

Tourism‑Oriented Signage Program

Section 57‑25‑810. In an effort to promote and assist South Carolina tourism‑oriented facilities that have an interest in educating, sharing, and selling their programs and products to the general public, the Department of Transportation is hereby authorized to create and supervise a coordinated, statewide program related to providing directional signs along the state’s major highways and interchanges leading to tourism‑oriented facilities engaged in educational activities or tourism activities, or both.

Section 57‑25‑820. (A) The department shall be responsible for the erection and maintenance of the official signs giving specific information to the traveling public regarding the direction of tourism‑oriented facilities. All signs must conform to department rules and regulations regarding the size and placement of the signs, and be in compliance with all federal and state regulations.

(B) The department shall coordinate with the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism to promote tourism oriented facilities participating in this directional signage program.

(C) All signs used as part of the program must bear the South Carolina tourism logo.

(D) Criteria of the program and selection of tourism oriented facilities and locations must be determined by an oversight committee. The oversight committee shall consist of the:

(1) Director of the Department of Transportation, or his designee;

(2) Director of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, or his designee;

(3) Director of the Arts Commission, or his designee;

(4) Director of the Department of Archives and History, or his designee;

(5) Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, or his designee;

(6) President of the South Carolina Association of Tourism Regions (SCATR), or his designee, and a member of SCATR appointed by its president;

(7) President of the South Carolina Convention and Visitors Bureau Association (CVB), or his designee, and a member of the CVB appointed by its president.

Section 57‑25‑830. (A) Qualified facilities which elect to participate in the directional signage program must submit an application to the department on a form to be supplied by the department. Eligibility and approval to participate in the signage program must be determined by written criteria to be set forth by the department.

(B) Participating facilities are responsible for the cost of the signs and their installation.”

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

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