**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 58‑37‑60 SO AS TO REQUIRE THE SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION TO ADOPT REGULATIONS THAT ENABLE AND ENCOURAGE ELECTRICAL UTILITIES SUBJECT TO THE COMMISSION’S JURISDICTION TO NEGOTIATE WITH OFFSHORE WIND ENERGY DEVELOPERS, FOR THE PURCHASE OF POWER AT FAIR RATES COMPARABLE AND SIMILAR TO CURRENT NEW CONSTRUCTION POWER PRODUCTION COST CONDITIONS, AND THESE NEGOTIATIONS TO RESULT IN PROVISIONAL AND CONDITIONAL POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENTS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A PATH FORWARD TO CREATING A WIND ENERGY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH CAROLINA; AND TO REQUIRE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION TO SCHEDULE BIANNUAL OPEN PROGRESS REPORT MEETINGS FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.

Whereas, South Carolina is well suited to meet the workforce and infrastructure needs related to offshore wind energy development along the East Coast and such development would create long‑term, well‑paying jobs for the community; and

Whereas, the thirty‑three wind energy manufacturing facilities currently operating in South Carolina employ over 1,100 people, generate $530 million of output annually in the State, and support 1,797 indirect and induced jobs statewide; and

Whereas, the Clemson University Restoration Institute’s “Wind Energy Supply Chain Survey and Offshore Wind Economic Impact Study” determined that the installation of a 1,000 megawatt wind farm will have a vast economic impact on the State, particularly in the ten‑year construction phase; and

Whereas, Clemson University’s Wind Turbine Drivetrain Testing Facility in North Charleston is one of a kind and the largest in the world and is well positioned to serve a central role in the further development of a wind energy industry hub for South Carolina, attracting manufacturers; and

Whereas, General Electric operates one of the largest wind turbine manufacturing facilities in the United States in the Upstate; and

Whereas, South Carolina’s shallow‑water offshore wind resource is the second largest of the East Coast states and represents a long‑term economic investment opportunity, as well as a long‑term opportunity for in‑state energy production; and

Whereas, offshore wind energy is a domestic source of energy shielded from hostile foreign interests. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 37, Title 58 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 58‑37‑60. (A) The South Carolina Public Service Commission shall adopt regulations that enable and encourage:

(1) electrical utilities subject to the commission’s jurisdiction to negotiate with interested offshore wind energy developers for the purchase of power at fair rates comparable and similar to current new construction power production cost conditions; and

(2) these negotiations to result in provisional and conditional power purchase agreements in order to provide a viable path forward for the creation of a wind energy industry in South Carolina.

(B) For a period of two years following the effective date of this act, the Public Service Commission shall schedule biannual open progress report meetings addressing offshore wind energy development in South Carolina.

(C) Nothing in this section is meant to require an electrical utility subject to the jurisdiction of the commission to invest in offshore wind research and development activities.”

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

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