**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 22‑3‑10 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO THE CIVIL JURISDICTION OF THE MAGISTRATES COURT, TO INCREASE THE CIVIL JURISDICTION FROM SEVEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS TO TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS AND TO REQUIRE THAT, EXCEPT FOR LANDLORD AND TENANT CASES, ANY CASE WITH AN AMOUNT IN CONTROVERSY EQUALING OR EXCEEDING FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS MUST BE ORDERED FOR MANDATORY MEDIATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA SUPREME COURT.

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

SECTION 1. Section 22‑3‑10 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 22‑3‑10. (A) Magistrates have concurrent civil jurisdiction in the following cases:

(1) in actions arising on contracts for the recovery of money only, if the sum claimed does not exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars;

(2) in actions for damages for injury to rights pertaining to the person or personal or real property, if the damages claimed do not exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars;

(3) in actions for a penalty, fine, or forfeiture, when the amount claimed or forfeited does not exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars;

(4) in actions commenced by attachment of property, as provided by statute, if the debt or damages claimed do not exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars;

(5) in actions upon a bond conditioned for the payment of money, not exceeding ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars, though the penalty exceeds that sum, the judgment to be given for the sum actually due, and when the payments are to be made by installments an action may be brought for each installment as it becomes due;

(6) in any action upon a surety bond taken by them, when the penalty or amount claimed does not exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars;

(7) in any action upon a judgment rendered in a court of a magistrate or an inferior court when it is not prohibited by the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure;

(8) to take and enter judgment on the confession of a defendant in the manner prescribed by law when the amount confessed does not exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars;

(9) in any action for damages or for fraud in the sale, purchase, or exchange of personal property, if the damages claimed do not exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars;

(10) in all matters between landlord and tenant and the possession of land as provided in Chapters 33 through 41 ~~of~~, Title 27;

(11) in any action to recover the possession of personal property claimed, the value of which, as stated in the affidavit of the plaintiff, his agent, or attorney, does not exceed the sum of ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars;

(12) in all actions provided for in this section when a filed counterclaim involves a sum not to exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars, except that this limitation does not apply to counterclaims filed in matters between landlord and tenant and the possession of land;

(13) in interpleader actions arising from real estate contracts for the recovery of earnest money, only if the sum claimed does not exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars; and

(14) in actions for damages arising from a person’s failure to return leased or rented personal property within seventy‑two hours after the expiration of the lease or rental agreement, such damages to be based on the loss of revenue or replacement value of the property, whichever is less, if the damages claimed do not exceed ~~seven~~ ten thousand ~~five hundred~~ dollars; however, the lease or rental agreement must set forth the manner in which the amount of the loss of revenue or replacement value of the item leased or rented is calculated.

(B) Except for cases described in subsection (A)(10), any case with an amount in controversy equaling or exceeding five thousand dollars must be ordered for mandatory mediation in accordance with procedures established by the South Carolina Supreme Court.”

SECTION 2. The repeal or amendment by this act of any law, whether temporary or permanent or civil or criminal, does not affect pending actions, rights, duties, or liabilities founded thereon, or alter, discharge, release or extinguish any penalty, forfeiture, or liability incurred under the repealed or amended law, unless the repealed or amended provision shall so expressly provide. After the effective date of this act, all laws repealed or amended by this act must be taken and treated as remaining in full force and effect for the purpose of sustaining any pending or vested right, civil action, special proceeding, criminal prosecution, or appeal existing as of the effective date of this act, and for the enforcement of rights, duties, penalties, forfeitures, and liabilities as they stood under the repealed or amended laws.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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