**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 59‑66‑25 SO AS TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS SHALL ENSURE THE CONTINUOUS PRESENCE OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS DURING REGULAR OPERATING HOURS, TO PROVIDE ONE SUCH OFFICER MUST BE PROVIDED FOR EVERY FIVE HUNDRED STUDENTS ENROLLED AT THE SCHOOL, TO PROVIDE VARIOUS MEANS BY WHICH DISTRICTS MAY SATISFY THIS REQUIREMENT, AND TO MAKE THESE PROVISIONS APPLICABLE JULY 1, 2019.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 66, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑66‑25. (A)(1) A school district shall ensure the continuous presence of at least one school resource officer in each public school in the district during regular operating hours, with at least one school resource officer for every five hundred students enrolled at the school, by requesting a school resource officer be assigned to each school in the district pursuant to Section 5‑7‑12. If a municipality or county in which a school is located declines to designate an officer to be assigned to the school to serve as a resource officer as provided in Section 5‑7‑12, the district shall either:

(a) enter an agreement with the municipality or county to share the cost of having the municipality or county designate an officer to be assigned as a resource office to a school; or

(b) hire an officer or employee to serve as a resource officer in a school, provided the employee must meet the minimum requirements of being a sworn law enforcement officer as provided in Chapter 23, Title 23.

(2) In determining the number of school resources officers a district must ensure will be present at a particular school for a school year to comply with the requirement that one such officer be present for every five hundred students enrolled at the school, the district may base its determination on the number of students enrolled at the school at the end of the preceding school year. The district may make adjustments to estimate changes expected from rezoning, when applicable, and may make estimates based on capacity for new schools.

(B) A district is not required to use subsection (A)(1)(a) or (b) districtwide, but may vary which item is used for each school as circumstances warrant in the discretion of the district.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect July 1, 2019.

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