**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 53‑3‑240 SO AS TO DECLARE THE SEVENTH DAY OF NOVEMBER AS “VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM MEMORIAL DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, 2017 marked one hundred years since the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia resulting in the world’s first communist regime under Vladimir Lenin, leading to decades of oppression and violence under communist regimes throughout the world; and

Whereas, based on the philosophy of Karl Marx, communism has proven incompatible with the ideals of liberty, prosperity, and the dignity of human life and has given rise to such infamous totalitarian dictators as Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, Ho Chi Minh, Pol Pot, Nicolae Ceaușescu, the Castro brothers, and the Kim dynasty; and

Whereas, President Donald Trump declared November 7, 2017, a National Day for the Victims of Communism, condemning communism as a political philosophy incompatible with liberty, prosperity, and the dignity of human life; and

Whereas, the bipartisan U.S. Congressional Caucus for the Victims of Communism stated publicly in 2018 that “Marx’s defenders often say he cannot be held accountable for what communist regimes did long after his life and death; but Marxist dictators who massacred their own people were applying communist ideology to political practice”; and

Whereas, communist regimes worldwide have killed more than one hundred million people and subjected countless others to the worst and widest‑spread human rights abuses known to history, with victims representing many different ethnicities, creeds, and backgrounds; and

Whereas, through false promises of equality and liberation, communist regimes have robbed their own citizens of rights and freedoms of religion, speech, and association through coercion, brutality, and fear as a matter of governmental policy; and

Whereas, many victims of communism were persecuted as political prisoners for speaking out against these regimes, and others were killed in genocidal state‑sponsored purges; and

Whereas, in addition to violating basic human rights, communist regimes have suppressed freedom of conscience, cultural life, and self‑determination movements in more than forty nations; and

Whereas, the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation in Washington, D.C., is a nonprofit organization, authorized by a unanimous Act of the United States Congress responsible for maintaining the Victims of Communism Memorial and educating people about the ideology, history, and legacy of communism and honors the people who have suffered and died under communist regimes to ensure that their voices are never silenced. Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 3, Title 53 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 53‑3‑240. The seventh day of November is designated as ‘Victims of Communism Memorial Day’ in South Carolina.”

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

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