~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~

Indicates New Matter

AMENDED

February 24, 2021

**H. 3262**

Introduced by Reps. Fry, Huggins, Davis, B. Newton, G.R. Smith, Morgan, Burns, Erickson, Bennett, Thayer, Taylor, Bryant, Elliott, Willis, Felder, McGarry, V.S. Moss, Haddon, Long, Pope, Forrest, Hixon, Hewitt, Bailey, Caskey, M.M. Smith, J.E. Johnson, Bradley, Brittain and Crawford

S. Printed 2/24/21--H.

Read the first time January 12, 2021.

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 7‑11‑15, AS AMENDED, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO QUALIFICATIONS TO RUN AS A CANDIDATE IN GENERAL ELECTIONS, SO AS TO REQUIRE ALL CANDIDATES FROM EACH POLITICAL PARTY IN THIS STATE TO PAY A FILING FEE, INCLUDING CANDIDATES FROM PARTIES THAT ARE NOT REQUIRED TO CONDUCT A PRIMARY ELECTION, AND TO AUTHORIZE POLITICAL PARTIES TO CHARGE A CERTIFICATION FEE TO ALL CANDIDATES SEEKING NOMINATION BY POLITICAL PARTY PRIMARY OR POLITICAL PARTY CONVENTION; AND TO AMEND SECTION 7‑11‑210, RELATING TO THE NOTICE OF CANDIDACY AND PLEDGE, SO AS TO REQUIRE CANDIDATES TO AFFIRM THEIR PARTICIPATION IN AT LEAST THREE OF THE LAST FOUR STATEWIDE PARTY PRIMARIES, OR, IN THE ALTERNATIVE, IF PRECLUDED FROM PARTICIPATION DUE TO AGE, PERSONAL HEALTH, RESIDENCY, OR ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE, CANDIDATES MAY PLEDGE THAT THEY ARE BONA FIDE MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL PARTY WHOSE NOMINATION THEY ARE SEEKING, AND TO PROVIDE THAT THE STATE PARTY CHAIRMAN, IF PERMITTED BY PARTY RULE, MAY REQUIRE ADDITIONAL VERIFICATION WHEN A CANDIDATE’S AFFIRMATION OF BONA FIDE PARTY MEMBERSHIP IS DISPUTED, AND THAT THE STATE CHAIRMAN IS THE FINAL AUTHORITY TO RESOLVE QUESTIONS REGARDING BONA FIDE PARTY MEMBERSHIP.

Amend Title To Conform

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

SECTION 1. The first paragraph of Section 7‑11‑15(A) of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 142 of 2018, is further amended to read:

“(A) In order to qualify as a candidate to run in the general election, all candidates seeking nomination by political party primary or political party convention must file a statement of intention of candidacy and party pledge and submit any filing fees between noon on March sixteenth and noon on March thirtieth as provided in this section. If March thirtieth is on a Saturday or Sunday, the time for filing extends to the next regular business day. For purposes of this section and Section 7‑13‑45, ‘next regular business day’ means a day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday. Notwithstanding another provision of law, beginning July 1, 2021, all candidates from each political party in this State shall pay a filing fee, including candidates from parties that are not required to conduct a primary election. In addition to the filing fee required pursuant to this subsection, political parties also may charge a certification fee not to exceed the sum of one hundred dollars to all candidates seeking nomination by political party primary or political party convention.”

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

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