**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, BY ADDING SECTION 2‑3‑21 SO AS TO ESTABLISH THE COMMISSION ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMPENSATION.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 3, Title 2 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 2‑3‑21. (A) There is established the Commission on General Assembly Compensation. The commission must be constituted biennially as provided in this section and its existence ends after the commission files its report. The commission consists of:

(1) three members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one of which must be on the recommendation of the majority leader of the House of Representatives and one on the recommendation of the minority leader of the House of Representatives;

(2) three members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, one of which must be on the recommendation of the majority leader of the Senate and one on the recommendation of the minority leader of the Senate;

(3) the Clerk of the House of Representatives or the Clerk of the Senate, ex officio, alternately serving in the biennial formation of the commission with the Clerk of the House of Representatives serving initially.

(B) Commission members appointed may not be members of the General Assembly or other officers or employees of this State and must be appointed with special reference to their knowledge of compensation practices and financial matters generally. Commission members shall serve for the duration of the commission and any vacancy must be filled in the same manner as the original selection. Members shall serve without compensation, but may receive the mileage, subsistence, and per diem allowed by law for members of state boards, committees, and commissions, to be provided equally from approved accounts of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

(C) Appointments to the commission must be made before the first day of September of odd numbered years, beginning in 2015, and the commission must be convened by the Clerk of the House of Representatives, or Senate, as applicable, in September of odd numbered years. On convening, the commission shall elect a chairman and other officers as necessary from among the appointed members. The commission shall proceed to review current pay and allowances, including applicable fringe benefits, provided for members of the General Assembly and by which members of the General Assembly are compensated and reimbursed, survey current compensation plans for state legislators in other states, and solicit the views of current and former members of the South Carolina General Assembly and interested members of the public with regard to legislators’ pay and allowances.

(D) Based on the commission’s review, survey, and considering the input of current and former members of the General Assembly and the public, it shall determine the level of compensation, allowances, and reimbursements for expenses that are appropriate for members of the General Assembly. The commission shall produce a report of its findings, including appropriate adjustments in the amounts or manner of payment, or both, of pay and allowances.

(E) The clerks of the House and Senate shall provide necessary research and administrative services to assist the commission in its work.

(F) The commission shall make a report of its findings by February fifteenth of the year after the year in which it was convened. Adjustments in pay and allowances for members of the General Assembly included in the report must be based on the assumption that the adjustments are for implementation after the next general election. The report must be filed with the Speaker of the House, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the respective chairmen of the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee. After the report is filed, the existence of the commission for the respective years ends.”

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

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