~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~

Indicates New Matter

COMMITTEE REPORT

March 22, 2017

**H. 3440**

Introduced by Reps. Henderson and W. Newton

S. Printed 3/22/17--H.

Read the first time January 12, 2017.

**THE COMMITTEE ON MEDICAL,**

**MILITARY, PUBLIC AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS**

To whom was referred a Bill (H. 3440) to amend Section 43‑25‑10, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, relating to the South Carolina Commission for the Blind, so as to, etc., respectfully

**REPORT:**

That they have duly and carefully considered the same and recommend that the same do pass with amendment:

Amend the bill, as and if amended, by striking SECTION 3 in its entirety and inserting:

/ SECTION 3. Section 43‑25‑60 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 43‑25‑60. The commission may employ qualified itinerant ~~teachers~~ counselors to assist teachers in public or private schools who are responsible for the teaching of visually handicapped students. The itinerant ~~teacher~~ counselor shall assist the public or private school teacher by providing methods and materials for teaching such student. The State Department of Education shall report to the commission the schools having visually handicapped students. All principals or heads of private schools shall report to the commission the names of visually handicapped students in attendance.” /

Renumber sections to conform.

Amend title to conform.

LEON HOWARD for Committee.

**STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT**

**Explanation of Fiscal Impact**

**Introduced on January 12, 2017**

**State Expenditure**

This bill requires that three commissioners serving on the commission meet the same definition of blindness as persons are required to meet to qualify for the commission’s services. Further, this bill provides that the commission may employ qualified itinerant counselors, instead of teachers, to assist teachers in schools who are responsible for teaching visually handicapped students.

**Commission for the Blind.** The department indicates this bill will have no expenditure impact on the general fund, other funds, or federal funds due to its revisions of board membership, which do not affect any compensation paid to board members. The provisions of the bill authorizing the commission to employ itinerant counselors, rather than itinerant teachers, will not have an expenditure impact on the general fund, other funds, or federal funds, as the agency will use the same salary methodology when hiring employees.

Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director

Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 43‑25‑10, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND, SO AS TO REQUIRE THREE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION TO MEET THE LEGAL DEFINITION OF BLINDNESS; TO AMEND SECTION 43‑25‑30, RELATING TO THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION, SO AS TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS; AND TO AMEND SECTION 43‑25‑60, RELATING TO TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH CERTAIN VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS, SO AS TO PROVIDE USE OF COUNSELORS TO ASSIST THOSE TEACHERS.

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

SECTION 1. Section 43‑25‑10 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 43‑25‑10. There is created the South Carolina Commission for the Blind. The commission shall consist of seven members, one from each of the seven Congressional Districts, of whom three shall ~~have a visual acuity not to exceed 20/200~~ meet the legal definition of blindness as defined in Section 43‑25‑20. The Governor shall, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint the members of the commission for terms of four years and until their successors are appointed and qualify. All vacancies must be filled in the manner of the original appointment for the unexpired portion of the term only. The members of the commission shall elect one of its members as chairman for a term of two years or until his successor has been elected. The chairman shall preside at the regular meetings of the commission to be held at least once each month. The chairman may call a meeting when he considers it necessary to be held at a time to be determined by the commission. The commission shall appoint a commissioner and other officers as the commission considers necessary, none of whom may be a member of the commission, and shall fix the compensation and prescribe the duties of these appointees. The members of the commission shall receive no salary but must be allowed the usual mileage, subsistence, and per diem as authorized by law for commissions, committees, and boards.”

SECTION 2. Section 43‑25‑30(12) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(12) Assist in the furtherance of the purposes of ~~Sections 44‑43‑110 to 44‑43‑160 and~~ Section 44‑7‑10.”

SECTION 3. Section 43‑25‑60 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 43‑25‑60. The commission may employ qualified itinerant ~~teachers~~ counselors to assist teachers in public or private schools who are responsible for the teaching of visually handicapped students. The itinerant teacher shall assist the public or private school ~~teacher~~ counselor by providing methods and materials for teaching such student. The State Department of Education shall report to the commission the schools having visually handicapped students. All principals or heads of private schools shall report to the commission the names of visually handicapped students in attendance.”

SECTION 4. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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