**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND TITLE 7, CHAPTER 13 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT IN ANY GENERAL OR SPECIAL ELECTION IF THE NAME OF ONLY ONE CANDIDATE APPEARS ON THE BALLOT FOR AN ELECTIVE OFFICE THAT BALLOT MUST ALSO INCLUDE AS AN ALTERNATE CANDIDATE THE WORDS “NO CANDIDATE”, AND THAT IF “NO CANDIDATE” RECEIVES A MAJORITY OF THE VOTES CAST THE OFFICE SHALL BE DECLARED VACANT AND A SPECIAL ELECTION CALLED TO FILL THE VACANCY, IN WHICH SPECIAL ELECTION THE PREVIOUS CANDIDATE SHALL BE BARRED FROM APPEARING AS A CANDIDATE.

Whereas, in many instances persons run unopposed for elective office in this state; and

Whereas, the lack of opposition deprives the electorate of any meaningful opportunity to express displeasure with the candidate offered; and

Whereas, it is the desire of the General Assembly to provide a mechanism by which the electorate can reject the candidate offered, and require a new election with different candidates;

Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 13, Title 7 of the 1976 Code is amended to read by inserting the following Section 332:

SECTION 7-13-332. Inclusion of “No Candidate” on the Ballot.

In any general or special election in which there appears on the ballot the name of only one candidate, the ballot shall also include as an alternative candidate the words “No Candidate”. In the event “No Candidate” shall receive a majority of the votes cast, the office shall be declared vacant, and a special election shall be held in accordance with the provisions of this Title to fill that vacancy. In any such special election the person whose name appeared on the original ballot shall not be permitted to appear as a candidate.

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