

ALERTS

South Carolina Legislative Report - February 1, 2013

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On the Floor

Judicial Elections

On January 30, 2013 the General Assembly met in joint session to elect judges. The following judges were elected:

Circuit Court

- At-Large, Seat 14 - R. Keith Kelly, Woodruff
- At-Large, Seat 15 - The Honorable Maité Murphy, North Charleston
- At-Large, Seat 16 - The Honorable Donald Bruce Hocker, Laurens

Family Court

- 5th Circuit, Seat 2 - Michelle Manigault Hurley, Columbia
- 8th Circuit, Seat 3 - The Honorable Joseph Collins Smithdeal, Greenwood
- At-Large, Seat 1 - Kelly Pope, Lyman
- At-Large, Seat 2 - Tony Miller Jones, Rock Hill
- At-Large, Seat 3 - James G. McGee, III, Florence
- At-Large, Seat 4 - Monét S. Pincus, Columbia
- At-Large, Seat 5 - Randall Edward McGee, St. Matthews
- At-Large, Seat 6 - David Earl Phillips, Easley

Business Freedom to Choose Act

H. 3290, known as "flow control" was given third reading this week in the House of Representatives and sent to the Senate where it was referred to the Medical Affairs Committee. The legislation deals with solid waste programs and county authority. The bill provides that ordinances that restrict solid waste disposal at a permitted facility or impedes the development of recycling programs are inconsistent with current state statute.

Department of Administration

S. 22, a bill that would effectively eliminate the Budget & Control Board in favor of the new Department of Administration was referred to the Senate Finance Committee after it had previously received a favorable report from the Senate Judiciary Committee and was placed on the calendar. At issue is the inclusion of the Office of Procurement under the new Department of Administration and the financial impact the legislation would have if enacted.

House and Senate Ethics Committees

H. 3429, a bill to amend current law dealing with the House and Senate Ethics Committees, was passed by the House of Representatives this week. During organizational session, both committees increased their membership to 10 members, but that move was challenged as the statute allows for only six members on each committee.

Senate Session Changes

The Senate will convene on Tuesday, February 5 at noon for perfunctory session only. The move was debated this week as Senators look for ways to give more time to committees to take up bills for consideration and debate. Both the Senate Finance and Judiciary committees will meet on Tuesday. Every Senator sits on one of the two committees so all members will be in Columbia on Tuesday.

Introduction of Notable Legislation

H. 3437 - Establishing a Joint Committee on Economic Development

H. 3473 - To prohibit the State or other entities from establishing, participating or purchasing insurance from the American Health Benefit Exchange.

In Committee**Department of Insurance**

The Senate Banking and Insurance Committee continued to hear testimony regarding the appointment of Ray Farmer; Governor Haley's pick to lead the Department of Insurance. Farmer is a former Vice President of the South East Region of the American Insurance Association. The Department has been without a director for 10 months. Some Senators have raised questions regarding Farmer's expertise as a representative of the insurance industry as well as what some see as skyrocketing insurance premiums across the state. The committee will continue to meet next week.

Early Voting

A Senate Judiciary Subcommittee passed S. 4 this week. The bill establishes an early voting period that includes two Saturdays prior to the election with one to-three early voting centers per county. The bill will next be taken up in the full Judiciary Committee.

In The News

Hospitals could pay to expand Medicaid in SC

South Carolina Republicans say they do not support Obamacare because its cost to the state would be more than \$1 billion, cumulatively, by 2020. But what if Palmetto State hospitals agreed to cover that tab?

That is just one of the proposals put forward by S.C. supporters of the Affordable Care Act, commonly referred to as Obamacare.

SC Supreme Court to hear Nikki Haley ethics case

The S.C. Supreme Court will hear arguments March 20 about whether Republican activist John Rainey's ethics allegations against Gov. Nikki Haley should be heard in state court.

Rainey sued Haley over accusations she used her office for personal gain while she was a GOP state representative from Lexington County.

Ethics Reform to be Rolled Out in Stages

Ethics reform is coming for South Carolina's public officials, but it likely will come in pieces and stages.

The South Carolina Commission on Ethics Reform released its final report and 23 recommendations for changes to the state's ethics laws on Monday, joining three legislative committees that have or will be issuing suggestions on changes to ethics laws.

Meetings

Tuesday, February 5th

- 1:30pm - Room 207, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Subcommittee
- Immediately upon adjournment of the House - Room 501, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Subcommittee
- 1 hour after the House adjourns - Room 523, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Economic Development and Natural Resources Subcommittee

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- 1 hour after the House adjourns - Room 321, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Higher Education, Technical, and Cultural Budget Subcommittee
- 1 hours after the House adjourns - Room 521, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Public Education and Special Schools Subcommittee
- 2:30pm or upon adjournment of the House (whichever is later) - Room 403, **Blatt** - House Labor, Commerce and Industry Business and Commerce Subcommittee
- 2:30pm or 1 hours after the House adjourns (whichever is later) - Room 427, **Blatt** - House Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Subcommittee II, Medical Occupational Regulation and Licensing Boards
- 1 hours after the House adjourns - Room 101, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Healthcare Subcommittee
- 3:00pm - Room 105, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Committee

Wednesday, February 6th

- 9:00am - Room 521, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Local Government Funding Ad Hoc Study Committee
- 9:00am - Room 433, **Blatt** - House Education and Public Works K-12 Subcommittee
- 9:00am - Room 427, **Blatt** - House Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Subcommittee VI, Other Occupational Regulation and Licensing Boards
- 9:00am - Room 105, **Gressette** - Senate Banking and Insurance Committee
- 9:30am - Room 207, **Gressette** - Senate Labor, Commerce and Industry Regulatory Subcommittee
- 10:00am - Room 308, **Gressette** - Senate Fish, Game and Forestry Committee
- 10:00am - Room 108, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Healthcare Subcommittee
- 10:30am - Room 209, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Subcommittee
- 11:00am - Room 308, **Gressette** - Senate Labor, Commerce and Industry labor and Employment Subcommittee
- 11:00am - Room 110, **Blatt** - House Judiciary Constitutional Laws Subcommittee
- 1:00pm - Room 516, **Blatt** - House Judiciary Family and Probate Laws Subcommittee
- 1:00pm - Room 523, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Economic Development and Natural Resources Subcommittee
- 1:00pm - Room 105, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Subcommittee

Thursday, February 7th

- 9:00am - Room 516, **Blatt** - House Judiciary Special Laws Subcommittee
- 9:00am - Room 427, **Blatt** - House Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Subcommittee IV, Military and Public Affairs Subcommittee
- 9:00am - Room 209, **Gressette** - Senate K-12 Education Subcommittee

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- 9:00am - Room 105, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Subcommittee
- 9:00am - Room 308, **Gressette** - Senate Medical Affairs Subcommittee
- 9:30am - Room 207, **Gressette** - Senate Labor, Commerce and Industry Profession and Occupations Subcommittee
- 10:00am - Room 209, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Subcommittee