

ALERTS

South Carolina Legislative Update - April 20, 2015

April 20, 2015

The House and Senate returned last week from Easter recess with vigor. The House considered and adopted, among other pieces of legislation, a comprehensive infrastructure/road plan and revisions to domestic violence penalties. The Senate Finance Committee began deliberations on the annual appropriations bill and the full Senate considered and adopted clarifications to the ignition interlock device provisions for driving under the influence offenses.

Introductions

To view this week's introductions in the Senate, please [click here](#), and [here](#) for the House.

In The News

Senators scrap plan to insure 194,000 working poor in SC

Senate budget writers scuttled a proposal Thursday to create a program that would have used federal and state dollars to pay for private health insurance for almost 200,000 South Carolinians. But the proposal will re-emerge within two weeks as standalone legislation, said state Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Richland. "These are our neighbors," said Lourie. "These are our friends. These are hardworking, taxpaying South Carolinians." Lourie withdrew his amendment to create the program after it became clear senators did not support debating the proposal as part of the state budget. Roughly 194,000 South Carolinians, most members of the working poor, could have been insured by the program. Most earn too much to be eligible for Medicaid but make too little to qualify for federal subsidies for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act. They do not make enough to afford their own coverage. [Read more here.](#)

Senate Finance Committee to debate SC budget

A panel of SC senators will decide a number of spending issues, including whether to give more money to K-12 schools, give state workers a pay increase and hire more Social Services child-care workers. They could also decide to cut spending in certain areas. The Senate Finance Committee will meet after the Senate adjourns. [Read more here.](#)

House passes roads bill

The South Carolina House passed a bill Wednesday to pay to repair the state's crumbling roads by increasing the state's gas tax by 10 cents a gallon. The proposal, which would raise roughly \$427 million a year, passed 87-20, a large enough margin in the GOP-dominated House to survive a veto threat by Republican Gov. Nikki Haley. State Rep. Gary Simrill, R-York, said the "strong vote" shows House members are serious about fixing S.C. roads. The House proposal would:

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- Increase the state's gas tax by the equivalent of 10 cents a gallon to 26.75 cents
- Increase the maximum state sales tax on vehicles to \$500 from \$300
- Cut the average S.C. taxpayer's income taxes by \$48 a year. Once phased-in after two years, that tax cut would reduce the state's \$6.9-billion-a-year general fund by roughly \$50 million.

Haley took to Facebook on Wednesday evening saying she was stunned the House voted to "raise your taxes by \$365 million" next year. She posted to her social media followers how House members voted. She has said she would veto a tax increase to repair roads that did not include a "massive" tax cut. [Read more here.](#)

SC birthing center regulations spark debate about competition, safety

A compromise between birthing centers and hospitals on state regulations in South Carolina has failed to settle their disagreements. Discussion of the legislative compromise drew a standing room-only crowd Thursday to the House Health and Environmental Affairs Subcommittee, where some backers of birthing centers said hospitals are using regulations to try to put them out of business. [Read more here.](#)

Bill ordering body cameras for SC officers advances

A bill that would require body cameras for all South Carolina police officers was passed unanimously out of an S.C. senate subcommittee Wednesday morning. The bill is now headed to the full judiciary committee for another hearing next Tuesday. Police body cameras typically capture both audio and video. "It will be the first on the agenda on Tuesday," said Sen. Larry Martin, R-Pickens, Judiciary Committee chair, who attended Wednesday's subcommittee hearing. Supporters of the bill also hope to get a proviso written into a finance bill that will pay for the estimated \$21 million for the first year's financing of the new technology. [Read more here.](#)

SC to roll out new license tags for vehicles

South Carolina's license plates featuring a sunrise will begin to sunset as early as 2018, The State has learned. "It's out of here," S.C. Department of Motor Vehicles director Kevin Shwedo said of the state's 7-year-old tag, which some drivers dislike because it appears to have Clemson University's school colors. The state agency will roll out new plates over the next six years with a standard template used for all 4.2 million state tags — even plates that, for an extra fee, promote colleges, professions and social causes. The new plates will have a white background with black numbers and letters, and "South Carolina" written across the bottom in black lettering. Distinctive accent coloring now used in special plates, such as garnet for the University of South Carolina or yellow for fans of musician Jimmy Buffett, will no longer be included. Those plates can cost up to an extra \$75 every two years in addition to the standard \$24 fee. [Read more here.](#)

Manufacturing still powering South Carolina's recovery

Manufacturing has powered the recovery in South Carolina since the end of the Great Recession in 2009, and is continuing to post strong numbers in investment and job growth even as other industries begin to flex their muscle. Manufacturing job growth in South Carolina rose 13.5 percent from January 2011 - the beginning of Gov. Nikki Haley's administration - to December 2014. That is nearly double the 7 percent average of all other Southeastern states. However, economists warn that the rate of growth could level off as companies slow their post-recession expansion and skilled workers become harder to find. Also, a stronger dollar and rising interest rates would have a negative effect on the state's export-heavy industries, as they will cause the prices of cars, planes and tires to rise overseas. [Read more here.](#)

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SC senators to introduce plan to insure nearly 200,000 working poor

A bipartisan group of South Carolina senators will introduce a proposal Tuesday to allow about 194,000 uninsured state residents to use federal and state dollars to buy private health insurance. "It's an opportunity to provide health care to close to 200,000 South Carolinians who have no health insurance and whose primary source of provider services (otherwise) is going to the ER (emergency room) when they get sick," said state Sen. Joel Lourie, D-Richland, one of four sponsors of the proposal. Previous attempts to expand the federal-state insurance program for the poor in South Carolina, as part of the federal Affordable Care Act, have failed. And Republican Gov. Nikki Haley repeated Monday that she would fight the latest Senate attempt as well. The senators' proposal would cover the working poor, those who make too much to be eligible now for Medicaid insurance for the poor but cannot afford to buy health insurance. Read more here.

South Carolina's pristine Prince George tract bought, will be preserved, PR firm says

A limited liability corporation has bought and will preserve 1,200 acres of prime coastal real estate near Pawleys Island that had been marketed by a University of South Carolina foundation for possible development, according to a news release Saturday. The corporation, PG Preservation LLC, closed a deal to acquire the Prince George Tract property Friday, said Cheryl Smithem, a Charleston public relations executive working with the purchaser. The land is one of the last remaining large parcels of undeveloped real estate on the east side of U.S. 17 near Pawleys Island and Litchfield Beach, an increasingly popular resort area between Georgetown and Myrtle Beach. Smithem would not disclose the name or names of those associated with PG Preservation, saying the buyers are modest and want "to stay out of the public spotlight." She did not disclose the price. Read more here.

Coble required emergency bypass surgery

Former Columbia Mayor Bob Coble remained hospitalized Thursday after undergoing quadruple bypass surgery. No updates on his condition were provided beyond a mid-morning statement from son Daniel that the family was grateful for doctors at Providence Hospital who had worked to save Coble's life. Read more here.

Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, April 21

- 9:00 am -- Blatt Room 110 -- South Carolina Teaching Fellows
 - 10:00 am -- Blatt Room 516 -- Executive Subcommittee of the Legislative Oversight Committee
 - 10:00 am -- Blatt Room 511 -- Legislative Ethics Committee
 - 10:00 am -- Blatt Room 108 -- Legislative Group (Rep. Donna Wood)
 - 10:00 am -- Blatt Room 427 -- SC Legislative Black Caucus
 - 10:00 am -- Gressette Room 207 -- State Regulation of Public Utilities Review Committee
- I. Santee Cooper Screening Subcommittee Report
- 10:00 am -- Gressette Room 308 -- Banking and Insurance Subcommittee on Regulations and on S.135 and S.666

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I. S. 135 - Ryan's Law

II. S. 666 - Insurance Premium Service Agreement

- **11:00 am** -- Blatt Room 112 -- Majority Caucus
- **11:00 am** -- Blatt Room 305 -- Minority Caucus
- **12:00 pm** -- State House, House Chamber -- House of Representatives
- **12:00 pm** -- State House, Senate Chamber -- Senate
- **Upon adjournment of the House** -- Blatt Room 112 -- Majority Caucus
- **Upon adjournment of the House** -- Blatt Room 305 -- Minority Caucus
- **1:30 pm or 30 minutes after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 511 -- Judiciary Constitutional Laws Subcommittee

I. H. 3997 - Body Cameras

II. H. 4012 - Hospital Public Service District

- **2:00 pm or 1 hour after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 515-A -- Judiciary Special Laws Subcommittee

I. H. 3430 - Tires

II. H. 3248 - Homeowners Associations

- **2:00 pm** -- Gressette Room 207 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.178 and S.524

I. S. 178 - Video Recording of a Field Sobriety Test

II. S. 524 - Indecent Exposure

- **1 hour after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 317 -- Ways and Means Licenses, Fees, Insurance Tax and Other Charges Subcommittee

I. H. 3948 - Commercial Motor Vehicle Equity and Infrastructure Improvement Act

- **2:30 pm or 1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 516 -- Judiciary Committee

I. H. 3084 - Absentee Ballot Oath

II. H. 3154 - SC Uniform Military and Overseas Voter Act

III. H. 3997 - Body-worn Cameras

IV. H. 3682 - Bad Faith Assertion of Patent Infringement

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V. S. 11 – Notice of Meetings for Public Bodies

VI. H. 3952 – Emergency Admission of a Person

VII. H. 3784 – Retirement System for Judges

VIII. H. 3083 – SC Overdose Prevention Act

IX. H. 3979 – Judicial Merit Selection Commission

X. H. 4012 – Hospital Public Service District

XI. H. 3766 – Uniform Interstate Family Support Act

XII. H. 3521 – Court or Other Enforcement Authority

XIII. H. 3799 – Concealed Weapons Permits

XIV. H. 3156 – Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation

XV. H. 3548 – Child Abuse and Neglect

XVI. H. 3215 – Alimony

XVII. H. 3685 – Electric Tickets and Citations

XVIII. H. 3325 – Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act

XIX. H. 3430 – Tires

XX. H. 3248 – Homeowners Associations

- **2:30 pm or 1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 427 -- Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee

I. H. 3851 – Birthing Centers

II. H. 3451 – Anesthesiologists Assistants

- **2:30 pm or 1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 403 -- L.C.I. Business and Commerce Subcommittee on H.3788 and H.4013

I. H. 3788 – Motor Vehicle Express Warranties Enforcement

II. H. 4013 – Guaranteed Asset Protection Act

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- **Upon adjournment of the LCI Business and Commerce Subcommittee** -- Blatt Room 403 -- LCI Public Utilities Subcommittee on H.3026
 - I. H. 3026 - Offshore Wind Research and Development Activities
- **3:00 pm** -- Blatt Room 410 -- Agriculture Subcommittee on H.3343 and H.3917
 - I. H. 3343 - Euthanasia of Shelter Animals
 - II. H. 3917 - Animal Cruelty
- **3:00 pm** -- Gressette Room 105 -- Finance Committee
 - I. H. 3701 - Appropriation Bill
 - II. H. 3702 - Capital Reserve Bill
 - III. S. 657 - Bond Bill
- **3:00 pm** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Judiciary Committee
 - I. S. 47 - Body-worn Cameras
 - II. S. 16 - Workers Compensation Exemptions
 - III. S. 31 - Amendment to US Constitution
 - IV. S. 165 - Administrative Law Clerk
 - V. S. 18 - SC Homeowners Protection Act
 - VI. S. 281 - Transparency in Private Attorney Contracts
 - VII. S. 282 - Noneconomic Damages Limit
 - VIII. S. 586 - Fiscal Accountability Authority
 - IX. H. 3168 - SC Emergency Management Law Enforcement Act
 - X. S. 226 - Traffic Offenses
 - XI. S. 55 - Reapportionment
 - XII. S. 215 - Conduct of Elections

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Wednesday, April 22

- **8:00 am** -- Blatt Room 305 -- Leadership Pendleton
- **8:00 am - 10:00 am** -- Blatt Room 112 -- Legislative Breakfast--Piedmont Natural Gas
- **8:00 am** -- Blatt Room 321 -- South Carolina LARCUM

- **8:30 am** -- Blatt Room 410 -- Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee on H.3343, H.3880, H.3910 and H.3917
 - I. H. 3343 - Euthanasia of Shelter Animals
 - II. H. 3880 - Migratory Waterfowl Committee
 - III. H. 3910 - Coastal Tidelands and Wetlands
 - IV. H. 3917 - Animal Cruelty

- **9:00 am** -- Blatt Room 433 -- Higher Education Subcommittee
 - I. S. 391 - In-state Tuition for Military Personnel
 - II. H. 3170 - State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education

- **9:00 am** -- Gressette Room 105 -- Joint Bond Review Committee

- **9:00 am** -- Blatt Room 403 -- L.C.I. Real Estate Subcommittee on H.3710 and H.3968
 - I. H. 3710 - Multiple Lot Discount
 - II. H. 3968 - Beneficiary Rights in a Trust Based Timeshare

- **9:00 am** -- Gressette Room 209 -- Medical Affairs Subcommittee on H.3575, H.3646 and H.3847
 - I. H. 3575 - Solid Waste Policy and Management
 - II. H. 3646 - Soil Based On-site Disposal Systems
 - III. H. 3847 - Speech and Language Pathology Assistant

- **10:00 am** -- Gressette Room 209 -- Agricultural Subcommittee on S.559
 - I. S. 559 - Industrial Hemp

- **10:00 am** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Education Committee

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- I. [H. 3849](#) - Public School Educators and Student Teachers
- II. [S. 508](#) - Comprehensive Health Education Program
- III. [S. 629](#) - Missed School Days
- **10:00 am** -- Gressette Room 207 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.490
- I. [S. 490](#) - Small Business Regulatory Review Committee
- **11:00 am** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Banking and Insurance Committee on Regulations and on S.135 and S.666
- I. [S. 135](#) - Ryan's Law
- II. [S. 666](#) - Premium Service Agreements
- **11:00 am** -- Gressette Room 209 -- General Committee on S.290, H.3324, H.3547 and H.3683
- I. [S. 290](#) - Vulnerable Adult and Senior Citizen Protection Act
- II. [H. 3324](#) - State and Local Veterans Issues
- III. [H. 3547](#) - Reemployment Rights of National Guard
- IV. [H. 3683](#) - Adjutant General
- **11:00 am** -- Gressette Room 407 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.194
- I. [S. 194](#) - Dilapidated Buildings Act
- **11:00 am** -- Gressette Room 207 -- Labor, Commerce and Industry Labor and Employment Subcommittee on H.3305
- I. [H. 3305](#) - Unemployment Benefits
- **12:00 noon - 2:00 pm** -- State House Grounds -- Legislative Luncheon - Jasper County
- **1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 521 -- Ways and Means Committee
- I. [H. 3250](#) - Certificate of Need (CON)
- II. [H. 3010](#) - SC Marketplace and Infrastructure Improvement Act
- III. [H. 3062](#) - Needy Children's Clothing Sales Tax Exemption

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- IV. [H. 3088](#) - SC Small Business Tax Incentives Act
- V. [H. 3147](#) - SC Giving Back to Our Veterans Act
- VI. [H. 3002](#) - Capitol Police Force
- VII. [H. 3322](#) - Electronic Tax Lien Oversight Committee
- VIII. [H. 3568](#) - Construction Materials Sales Tax Exemption on Homes for Individuals
- IX. [H. 3725](#) - State Owned Abandoned Building Tax Credits
- X. [H. 3874](#) - Renewable Energy Income Tax Credit
- XI. [H. 3146](#) - Real Property Tax Notice Deadlines
- XII. [H. 3149](#) - Property Tax Grace Period for Deployed Military Service Members
- XIII. [H. 3313](#) - Reclassification of Real Property
- XIV. [H. 3562](#) - Local Option School Operating Millage Property Tax Credit Act
- XV. [H. 3152](#) - General Fund Appropriations Spending Limitations
- XVI. [H. 3027](#) - Federal Receipt Reports
- XVII. [H. 3768](#) - SC ABLE Savings Program
- XVIII. [H. 3113](#) - Redevelopment Project Costs
- XIX. [H. 3868](#) - Wetlands Conservation Act
- XX. [H. 3259](#) - Retail Facilities Revitalization Act
- **3:00 pm** -- Blatt Room 433 -- Education and Public Works Committee
 - I. H. 3151 - Study of US Constitution
 - II. H. 3560 - SC Voluntary Infrastructure Funding Act
 - III. H. 3512 - School Districts
 - IV. S. 154 - Interscholastic Activities

Thursday, April 23

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- **8:00 am - 10:00 am** -- Blatt Room 112 -- Legislative Breakfast--South Carolina Association of Convenience Stores
- **9:00 am** -- Blatt Room 403 -- Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee on H.3026, H.3431, H.3710, H.3785, H.3788, H.3891, H.3968 and H.4013
 - I. H. 3026 - Offshore Wind Research and Development Activities
 - II. H. 3431 - SC Minimum Wage Act
 - III. H. 3710 - Multiple Lot Discount
 - IV. H. 3785 - Business Development Corporations
 - V. H. 3788 - Motor Vehicle Express Warranties Enforcement
 - VI. H. 3891 - Surcharge on Passenger Motor Vehicles
 - VII. H. 3968 - Beneficiary Rights in a Trust Based Timeshare
 - VIII. H. 4013 - Guaranteed Asset Protection Act
- **9:00 am** -- Gressette Room 209 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.429
 - I. S. 429 - Workers Compensation
- **9:00 am** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee
 - I. H. 3305 - Unemployment Benefits
- **9:00 am** -- Gressette Room 307 -- Leadership Pickens County
- **9:30 am** -- Gressette Room 207 -- Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
 - I. S. 139 - Coastal Zone Critical Areas
 - II. S. 522 - Coastal Tidelands and Wetlands
 - III. S. 578 - Coastal Tidelands and Wetlands
- **10:00 am** -- Gressette Room 209 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.220, S.221 and H.3545
 - I. S. 220 - Arson
 - II. S. 221 - Sentencing Reform Oversight Committee

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III. H. 3545 - Arson

- **Immediately upon adjournment of the House** -- Blatt Room 511 -- Education and Cultural Subcommittee of the Legislative Oversight Committee

I. South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind

- **1:00 pm or upon adjournment of the Senate** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Senate Special Subcommittee In Response to the Abbeville Lawsuit

Friday, April 24

No Meetings Scheduled.