

ALERTS

South Carolina Legislative Update - March 23, 2015

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Several of the South Carolina Senate Finance Committee's budget subcommittees met last week to hear from various agencies on appropriations. The Senate sent the House several bills, including one bill extending the time in which a judicial candidate may seek a pledge from a member of the General Assembly and another bill relating to the deer quota program. The House of Representatives met to give third reading to the annual appropriations bill, approved a moped safety bill as well as the Cervical Cancer Prevention Act, and adopted a joint resolution to remove the Board of Trustees of South Carolina State University.

Introductions

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

In The News

SC House budget leader proposes tax cut to pair with roads plan

House Ways and Means chairman Brian White filed a bill Thursday to cut income taxes for the average S.C. taxpayer by \$48 a year. The move, designed to appeal to Gov. Nikki Haley, comes as S.C. House members plan next week to start debating competing road-repair plans, including one pushed by Haley. But the proposed tax cut may not be enough for Haley, who has said she wants to see a "massive" cut in exchange for raising gas taxes to pay for road repairs. House members defended White's smaller tax-cut proposal as affordable.

SC Gov. Haley opposes reopening Barnwell nuclear waste site to more states

Gov. Nikki Haley said Thursday she opposes reopening the Barnwell County low-level nuclear waste dump because burying radioactive garbage from across the country isn't the kind of legacy South Carolina wants to continue. While the landfill's operators say opening the dump to the nation would be good for the economy and create jobs, Haley said the 235-acre burial ground presents potential long-term problems for South Carolina. Pollution leaks were first detected beneath the dump in 1978, seven years after it opened.

Chemical regulation overhaul bill faces opposition in Senate

A bipartisan bill to update regulation of harmful chemicals for the first time in nearly 40 years is drawing opposition from some Democrats and environmental groups. They say it's a step backward in protecting health and the environment. Democratic Sen. Tom Udall of New Mexico and Republican Sen. David Vitter of Louisiana, who are proposing the bill, call it a common-sense update to a 1976 law widely seen as ineffective. The bill would set safety standards for thousands of chemicals that are now unregulated and offer protections for those vulnerable to their effects, such as pregnant women, children and workers. Chemical regulation took on new urgency after a crippling spill in West Virginia last year contaminated drinking water for 300,000 people. The chemical, crude MCHM, is unregulated under current law.

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SC considers allowing more concealed weapons

The S.C. House soon will decide whether it wants to recognize concealed-weapons permits from all other states in South Carolina. A bill, proposed by state Rep. **Alan Clemmons**, R-Horry, would allow an out-of-state visitor with a concealed-weapons permit issued in their home state to carry a concealed weapon in South Carolina. In return, the proposal would open a number of states up to South Carolinians who hold concealed-weapons permits and would be able to carry their weapons in those states, Clemmons said.

DSS: Lawsuit over SC kids' basic needs should be dismissed

Social services officials are seeking dismissal of a lawsuit accusing South Carolina's child welfare agency of endangering children in its care. "Plaintiffs' claims are nothing more than a veiled attempt at asking this Court to instruct the Governor and the Director how to manage the Department and to order the South Carolina General Assembly to allocate additional funds to the Department," attorneys for the Department of Social Services wrote in court papers filed this week. Attorneys for director Susan Alford also said federal courts have no jurisdiction over the issues. The children mentioned in the suit, they noted, all have active family court cases, and it's there that complaints should be handled. In a separate filing, Gov. Nikki Haley says she should be dismissed from the case because she doesn't oversee DSS and only appoints its director.

Public's right to know government meeting agendas the aim of stalled SC bill

Legislation requiring that public bodies provide advance notice of what they intend to discuss in meetings has stalled as lawmakers squabble over which chamber passed its legislation first. A second bill designed to shed light on deaths handled by coroners has passed the Senate but faces an uncertain fate in the House. The South Carolina Supreme Court ruled last year that city and county councils, boards, commissions and other public bodies are not required by the state Freedom of Information Act to tell taxpayers ahead of time what they plan to discuss at public meetings. A separate court ruling held that coroners are not required to release autopsy reports to the public.

SC senators weigh abortion ban after 19 weeks of pregnancy

A panel of state senators will consider adding an exception for fetal abnormalities before acting on a proposed ban on S.C. abortions after 19 weeks. State Sen. Ray Cleary, the Georgetown Republican who is chairman of the Senate panel, asked doctors Wednesday to submit guidelines the senators could consider when drafting that language. The proposal, sponsored by state Rep. Wendy Nanney, R-Greenville, would ban abortions after 19 weeks of pregnancy unless a doctor said the procedure was necessary to protect the life of the mother. The S.C. House already has approved the ban.

Carolinas congressmen have varied views on Atlantic drilling

The five congressmen representing coastal districts in the Carolinas reflect the opposing views in states where both governors are strong advocates of offshore drilling and almost 20 coastal communities oppose the idea. The federal Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management is now taking comment on what should be included in environmental studies to decide whether areas in the Atlantic are opened to oil and gas development later this decade. Gov. Nikki Haley is a member of the Outer Continental Shelf Governors Coalition, which North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory chairs. The group's mission statement says it works to "influence a sensible path forward for the development of America's offshore energy resources." Drilling proponents say it can help reduce dependence on foreign energy and create jobs and revenue.

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Coastal state regulators pan EPA climate plan

Florida and North Carolina regulators went to Congress on Tuesday for an assault on the Environmental Protection Agency's plan to slash the emissions of planet-warming gases from power plants. The proposal isn't fair to Florida and could mean higher electric bills, argued the chairman of the Florida Public Service Commission, Art Graham, to the House energy and power subcommittee. Donald van der Vaart, secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said states shouldn't have to create a plan to meet the federal standards until after the courts settle lawsuits seeking to derail the EPA's climate effort. Climate change has been a tough topic for politicians in both states, which have some of the longest coastlines on the Eastern Seaboard. Officials in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection say they were ordered not to use the term "climate change" or "global warming." Republican Gov. Rick Scott denies those reports but has declared himself unconvinced by the scientific consensus that humans are causing the planet to warm. North Carolina's Republican-controlled General Assembly passed a law in 2012 to stop any new rules based on a state science panel prediction that the sea would rise 39 inches in the state by the end of this century. North Carolina environmental regulator van Der Vaart told lawmakers Tuesday that he "will not address the scientific uncertainty of the impact human activity and greenhouse gases have on climate."

SC Army Guard's 1st female general: women going far

he first woman to become a general officer in the South Carolina Army National Guard says she has experienced "a period of great change" during her 37 years in uniform, including vast changes for women. Brig. Gen. Darlene Goff said in a recent interview that women in the armed forces are proving they can move as far as they chose, even into combat roles, because they believe in themselves and their ability to do those jobs. Now, she said, she thinks the time is right for her to step aside as one of the top leaders of the 11,000-member organization. Goff is one of only 21 female general officers in the National Guard as a whole.

John Rainey remembered as uniting force for South Carolina

Camden attorney John Rainey was remembered Tuesday at a memorial service in Columbia as "the conscience of South Carolina." Known for his philanthropy, political fundraising, sense of integrity and dogged determination, Rainey often was critical of other wealthy South Carolinians for "sitting on their wallets" rather than using their money to advance the state, Charles T. "Bud" Ferillo Jr. told a packed sanctuary at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Columbia. Rainey died of an undisclosed illness Saturday at Palmetto Health Baptist in Columbia. He was 73. A Vietnam combat veteran, Rainey was buried with full military honors Sunday on Pawley's Island.

Meeting Schedule**Tuesday, March 24**

- 10:00 am -- Blatt Room 511 -- Legislative Ethics Committee
- 10:00 am -- Gressette Room 207 -- Legislative Black Caucus
- 11:00 am -- Blatt Room 112 -- Majority Caucus
- 11:00 am -- Blatt Room 305 -- Minority Caucus
- 11:00 am -- Blatt Room 321 -- North Greenville University

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- **12:00 pm** -- State House, House Chamber -- House of Representatives
- **12:00 pm** -- State House, Senate Chamber -- Senate
- **12:30 pm - 2:00 pm** -- State House Grounds -- **FYI**--Legislative Luncheon - South Carolina Realtors Association (*Members Only*)
- **2:00 pm** -- Blatt Room 108 -- UpState Chamber Coalition
- **1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 433 -- E.P.W. K-12 Subcommittee
 - I. H. 3775 - Snow Days
 - II. H. 3390 - Sign Language Interpreters Act
 - III. H. 3539 - James B. Edwards Civics Education Initiative Act
- **2:30 pm or 1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 516 -- Judiciary Committee
 - I. H. 3685 - Electronic Tickets and Citations
 - II. H. 3433 - Domestic Violence Reform Act
 - III. H. 3766 - Uniform Interstate Family Support Act
 - IV. H. 3521 - Court or Other Enforcement Authority
- **1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 521 -- Ways and Means Revenue Policy Subcommittee
 - I. H. 3579 - Transportation Infrastructure Bank
- **2:30 pm or 1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 427 -- Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee
 - I. H. 3443 - Optometrists
 - II. H. 3348 - Prescription Drugs
 - III. H. 3349 - Pharmacy Practice Act
 - IV. H. 3547 - Reemployment Rights of the National Guard
 - V. H. 3683 - Adjutant General
- **1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 523 -- Ways and Means Sales and Income Tax Subcommittee

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I. H. 3878 - Income Tax Relief

- **3:00 pm** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Judiciary Committee

I. S. 255 - Destruction of Booking and Arrest Records

II. S. 156 - Election Commission

III. S. 250 - Release of Child's Medical Records

IV. S. 16 - Workers Compensation Exemptions

V. S. 31 - Amendment to the US Constitution

VI. S. 500 - Uniform Interstate Family Support Act

VII. S. 84 - Reckless Vehicular Homicide

VIII. S. 512 - Willful Damage to a Water System

- **3:00 pm** -- Gressette Room 105 -- Finance Committee

I. S. 526 - Taxpayer Amnesty Program

II. S. 427 - Agricultural Tax Incentives

III. S. 523 - SC Collective Roads Act

- **3:00 pm or upon adjournment of the Senate Finance Committee** -- Gressette Room 407 -- Finance Higher Education Subcommittee Budget Hearings

I. South Carolina State University

- **Upon adjournment of the Finance Committee** -- Gressette Room 105 -- Finance Special Subcommittee on Transportation Funding

I. Discussion of Possible Floor Amendments Pending Passage of S. 523

Wednesday, March 25

- **8:00 am - 10:00 am** -- Blatt Room 112 -- Legislative Breakfast - Piedmont Municipal Power Agency (PMPA)
- **8:00 am** -- Blatt Room 321 -- South Carolina Chapter of LINKS, Inc.
- **9:00 am** -- Blatt Room 433 -- Higher Education Subcommittee

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I. H. 3151 - Study of US Constitution

- **9:00 am** -- Blatt Room 305 -- Leadership Orangeburg County & Junior Leadership Orangeburg
- **9:00 am** -- Gressette Room 407 -- Medical Affairs Subcommittee on S.176, S.257, S.341, S.371 and S.474

I. S. 176 - Cremation

II. S. 257 - Electronic Monitoring

III. S. 341 - Renal Medullary Carcinoma

IV. S. 371 - Nurses

V. S. 474 - Patient's Rights

- **9:00 am** -- Gressette Room 209 -- Finance Criminal Justice Subcommittee Budget Hearing

I. Review of Provisos

- **9:00 am** -- Blatt Room 516 -- Judiciary Constitutional Laws Subcommittee

I. H. 3682 - Bad Faith Assertion of Patent Infringement Act

II. H. 3083 - S.C. Overdose Prevention Act

III. S. 11 - Agendas and the Freedom of Information Act

- **9:00 am** -- Blatt Room 403 -- L.C.I. Administration and Regulations Subcommittee
- **9:30 am** -- Blatt Room 108 -- Procurement Review Panel Appeal Hearings
- **9:30 am** -- Gressette Room 207 -- Finance Health and Human Services Subcommittee Budget Hearings

I. Department of Social Services

- **9:30 am** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Education Committee
- **10:00 am** -- Gressette Room 307 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.133

I. S. 133 - Automatic Expungement of Juvenile Records

- **10:30 am** -- Gressette Room 407 -- Santee Cooper Screening Subcommittee of the State Regulation of Public Utilities Review Committee
- **11:00 am** -- Gressette Room 209 -- Labor, Commerce and Industry Professions and Occupations Subcommittee

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I. S. 480 - Athletics Commission

II. H. 3464 - Barbers and Barbering

- **11:00 am** -- Gressette Room 408 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.165

I. S. 165 - Administrative Law Court

- **11:00 am** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Banking and Insurance Committee on Appointments, on S.389 and S.441

I. S. 389 - Business Development Corporations

II. S.441 - Guaranteed Asset Protection Act

- **12:00 noon** -- Blatt Room 110 -- Greenville County Legislative Delegation
- **12:00 noon - 2:30 pm** -- State House Grounds -- Legislative Luncheon - South Carolina State Firefighters' Association
- **1:00 pm** -- Gressette Room 207 -- Conference Committee on H.3118

I. H. 3118 - Department of Natural Resources

- **1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 433 -- Education and Public Works Committee

I. H. 3534 - Higher Education Excellence Enhancement Program

II. H. 3353 - General Educational Development Camps

III. H. 3151 - Study of US Constitution

IV. H. 3073 - Equal Access to Interscholastic Activities Act

- **1 hours after the House adjourns** -- Blatt Room 501 -- Operations and Management Facilities Management Subcommittee

Thursday, March 26

- **8:00 am - 10:00 am** -- Blatt Room 112 -- Legislative Breakfast - South Carolina Broadcasters Association
- **8:30 am** -- Gressette Room 209 -- Corrections and Penology Committee
- **9:00 am** -- Gressette Room 207 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.47

I. S. 47 - Body-worn Cameras Worn by Law Enforcement Officers

- **9:00 am** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee

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I. S. 480 - Athletics Commission

II. H. 3464 - Barbers and Barbering

- 9:00 am -- Blatt Room 403 -- L.C.I. Banking and Consumer Affairs Subcommittee on H.3785

I. H. 3785 - Business Development Corporations

- 9:00 am -- Gressette Room 408 -- Education K-12 Subcommittee

I. H. 3787 - Snow Days

II. S. 508 - Comprehensive Health Education Program

- 9:00 am -- Gressette Room 307 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.13 and S.18

I. S. 13 - S.C. Common Interest Community Association Act

II. S. 18 - S.C. Homeowners Protection Act

- 9:00 am -- Blatt Room 427 -- 3-M Subcommittee I, Health and Environmental Affairs

- 9:00 am -- Blatt Room 501 -- Operations and Management Personnel Subcommittee

- 9:30 am -- Gressette Room 105 -- Finance K-12 Education Subcommittee Budget Hearing

I. Proviso Review

- 9:30 am -- Gressette Room 209 -- Agriculture and Natural Resources Agricultural Subcommittee

I. S. 559 - Industrial Hemp

- 10:00 am -- Gressette Room 408 -- Education Legislative Oversight Subcommittee

I. South Carolina Museum Commission

II. South Carolina Confederate Relic Room & Military Museum

- 10:00 am -- Blatt Room 108 -- South Carolina Broadcasters Association Executive Committee

- 11:00 am -- Blatt Room 112 -- Legislative Group - (Rep. David Hiott)

- 11:00 am -- Blatt Room 318 -- Liberty Day Kids

- 1:00 pm -- Blatt Room 110 -- First Steps Study Committee

Friday, March 27

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No Meetings Scheduled.