

ALERTS

South Carolina Legislative Report - January 25, 2013

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On the Floor

State Health Care Freedom Act

This week the House passed H. 3096, the "State Health Care Freedom Act." The legislation would direct the state to not establish a state health benefit exchange nor participate in a regional health benefit exchange as established in the Affordable Care Act. Opponents of the measure have dubbed the bill an attempt at nullification of federal law.

Department of Administration

S. 22, a bill that would effectively eliminate the Budget & Control Board in favor of the new Department of Administration was placed on the calendar this week after passing the Senate Judiciary Committee. However, the bill was carried over by Senator Shane Massey (R-Edgefield) in an attempt to stop critics of the measure from recommitting it to the Senate Finance Committee. At issue is the inclusion of the Office of Procurement under the new Department of Administration.

Introduction of Notable Legislation

H. 3432 - Dept. of Education Pilot Project to study use of alternative fuels for state's public buses

H. 3428 - First Steps to School Readiness Reform Initiative (see also, S. 291)

H. 3413 - Expanding Medicaid coverage

S. 274 - Utility Theft Bill (see also, H. 3408)

In Committee

Business Freedom to Choose Act

H. 3290, known as “flow control” was taken up in the Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee this week. The bill was given a favorable report as amended and placed on the House Calendar. 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 Insurance

The Senate Banking and Insurance Committee took up the nomination 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. The committee will continue to consider the appointment next week.

Secretary of State to Oversee Elections

This week a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee gave a favorable report to H. 3197 a bill that would place election responsibilities under the Secretary of State. Currently, the South Carolina Elections Commission performs those duties. Critics of the measure noted that since the Secretary of State is still an elected position, the move could place control over elections into a partisan position.

Taxpayer Fairness Act

S. 15, Taxpayer Fairness Act, received approval by a Senate Finance Subcommittee and will head the full Senate Finance Committee. The bill requires the Department of Revenue to interpret the tax statutes by their plain meaning and not by a broader meaning.

In The News

Senate Minority Leader’s agenda for South Carolina

Senate Minority Leader Nikki Setzler (D-Lexington) issued the Senate Democratic Caucuses agenda this week. Senator Setzler highlighted the need to work collaboratively to enhance the quality of life in all regions of South Carolina.

SC lawmakers: Roads need work, but funding unknown

Legislators agree South Carolina's roads and bridges are in dire need of work - How to pay for it is another matter.

The Department of Transportation estimates needing to nearly double the amount currently spent on roads by \$1.5 billion yearly over the next 20 years just to bring them to "good" condition.

The idea of raising the state's 16-cents-per-gallon fuel tax has been tossed around. But in a state controlled by Republicans who like to boast yearly of cutting taxes, some legislators say that's not even a possibility.

SC Supreme Court mulling state health premium suit

The South Carolina Budget and Control Board violated the constitution when it voted to split the cost of increases in public workers' health insurance premiums between employers and employees, an attorney argued before the state Supreme Court on Wednesday.

"The General Assembly alone has the power to tax and spend," Allen Nickles told justices, saying the panel infringed on the separation of powers when it raised rates on both by 4.6 percent.

Meetings**Monday, January 28**

- 10:00am - Room 201, **Blatt** - Education Oversight Committee Public Awareness Subcommittee

Tuesday, January 29

- 11:00am - Room 105, **Gressette** - Family Court Study Committee

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

1 hours after the House adjourns - Room 108, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Healthcare Subcommittee

- 2:00pm - Room 511, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Legislative, Executive and Local Government 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
- 2:30pm - Room 403, **Blatt** - House Labor, Commerce and Industry Subcommittee

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- 3:00pm - Room 433, **Blatt** - House Education and Public Works K-12 Education Subcommittee
- 4:30pm - Room 430, **Blatt** - House Education and Public Works Motor Vehicles Subcommittee

Wednesday, January 30

- 9:00am - Room 209, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Subcommittee
- 9:00am - Room 207, **Gressette** - Review and Oversight Commission on the SC State Ports Authority
- 9:00am - Room 305, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Subcommittee
- 9:00am - Room 403, **Blatt** - House Labor, Commerce and Industry Regulations Subcommittee
- 9:30am - Room 308, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Agency Oversight Subcommittee
- 9:30am - Room 521, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Public Education and Special Schools Subcommittee
- 10:00am - Room 105, **Gressette** - Senate Banking and Insurance Committee
- 10:00am - Room 209, **Gressette** - Senate Medical Affairs Subcommittee
- 10:00am - Room 108, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Healthcare Subcommittee
- 10:00am - Room 511, **Blatt** - House Judiciary Criminal Laws Subcommittee
- 10:30am - Room 207, **Gressette** - Senate Transportation Subcommittee
- 11:00am - Room 308, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Subcommittee
- 1:00pm - Room 516, **Blatt** - House Judiciary Constitutional Laws Subcommittee

1 hour after the House adjourns - Room 321, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Higher Education, Technical, and Cultural Budget Subcommittee

- 2:00pm - Room 511, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Legislative, Executive and Local Government Subcommittee

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

1 hours after the House adjourns - Room 305, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Economic Development and Natural Resources Subcommittee

- 3:00pm - Room 410, **Blatt** - House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Wildlife Subcommittee

Thursday, January 31

- 9:00am - Room 209, **Gressette** - Corrections and Penology Subcommittee
- 9:00am - Room 321, **Blatt** - House Ways and Means Higher Education, Technical, and Cultural Budget Subcommittee
- 9:30am - Room 308, **Gressette** - Senate Medical Affairs Subcommittee

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- 10:00am - Room 105, **Gressette** - Senate Judiciary Subcommittee
- 11:30am - Room 521, **Blatt** - Ways and Means Local Government Funding Ad Hoc Study Committee