

# ALERTS

## South Carolina Legislative Update - December 14, 2015

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Today's legislative update will be the last of 2015. We will begin our 2016 weekly updates on the Monday following the convening of the second regular session of the 121<sup>st</sup> South Carolina General Assembly on January 12, 2016. We are thankful for your continued interest in South Carolina legislative matters and we look forward to providing substantive updates on the activities in Columbia and throughout South Carolina in 2016. As always, we welcome your comments and please let us know if we can be of assistance to you in any way.

Happy Holidays and our best wishes for a healthy and prosperous New Year!

### *Prefiled Legislation Introduced*

The General Assembly finished their prefiles last week - in total the House prefiled over 250 bills and the Senate over 50. To review the bills prefiled, please [click here](#).

### *In The News*

#### **Busy week in Columbia**

Members of the General Assembly will be meeting over the next few days in what is likely the last busy week of December for them before the holidays. There's only a month left until the 2016 Legislative session starts, and those who want much of their work ready to go by the time the bell summons them back to their respective chambers are plugging away. This week's meetings will range from the expungement study committee on Wednesday — which is searching for ways to improve the laws that allow for the erasing of criminal records for minor crimes — to the Thursday meeting of the Ways and Means Higher Education and Technical Colleges Budget Subcommittee, which reviews budget requests from the state's colleges and universities. [Read more here](#).

#### **18 washed-out bridges to be replaced across SC**

Ruth Ashford and her neighbors in the Eastover area are going to get a new bridge to replace one that was washed away on Congress Road. The bridge is one of 18 statewide that is being fast-tracked for replacement in the aftermath of the historic flooding that hit South Carolina in October. The cost of replacing the bridges is included in the \$137 million for road repairs that the Transportation Department says it needs because of the flooding. [Read more here](#).

### An early look at some of the issues SC lawmakers plan to push

Lawmakers finished pre-filing bills last week ahead of the session that starts Jan. 12, including legislation aimed at addressing October's historic rainstorm and June's mass shooting at Charleston's Emanuel AME Church. Legislators also introduced a few bills that might raise eyebrows.

Here are 15 that caught The Buzz's eye, including their main sponsors:

- Establishing a committee to study erecting a monument near Charleston's Marion Square to honor the nine slain members of Emanuel AME church, introduced by state Rep. **Wendell Gilliard**, D-Charleston.
- Charging out-of-state groups a fee to use the State House grounds for rallies, introduced by state Sen. **Katrina Shealy**, R-Lexington. (During the summer's flag debate, out-of-state groups protested at the State House, including one clash that resulted in five arrests.)
- Creating a commission to raise private money to display the last Confederate battle flag flown at the S.C. State House, introduced by state Rep. **Mary Tinkler**, D-Charleston. (A commission charged with displaying the flag has proposed a \$5 million-plus display, which some legislators say taxpayers should not have to pay.)
- Requiring documentation from a state representative who says they are related to another person while addressing the House, state Rep. **Chris Corley**, R-Aiken. (During the flag debate, state Rep. Jenny Horne, R-Dorchester, delivered a fiery bring-it-down speech, buttressed by her statement that she was related to Confederate President Jefferson Davis, a claim that grated some flag advocates.)
- Ending laws that forbid: adultery; children under age 18 from playing pinball; seducing an unmarried women to have sex with the promise of marriage; challenging another person to an armed duel; opening dancing halls on Sunday; working on Sundays; opening stores on Sunday; and barring railroads from removing tracks in towns with more than 500 people, introduced by state Rep. **Stephen Goldfinch**, R-Georgetown.
- Requiring killers of police dogs and horses to pay for the cost of replacing them, introduced by state Sen. **Kevin Bryant**, R-Anderson.
- Making it a crime to make noise heard beyond your property that interferes with others' enjoyment of their home or business, introduced by state Sen. **Ronnie Cromer**, R-Newberry.
- Allowing concealed-weapon permit holders to carry guns into state courthouses, churches, hospitals and businesses that ban concealed weapons during a state emergency declared by the governor, introduced by state Rep. **Josh Putnam**, R-Anderson.
- Creating a "Do Not Call" list to prevent calls from telemarketers, introduced by House Speaker **Jay Lucas**, R-Darlington.
- Preventing a doctor from prescribing erectile dysfunction medication until several requirements are met, including a notarized affidavit from one of the patient's sexual partners and having the patient visit a therapist, introduced by state Rep. **Mia McLeod**, D-Richland.
- Changing the duties of the lieutenant governor, when the governor and lieutenant governor start running on the same ticket in 2018, and allowing the governor to pick a successor if the lieutenant governor leaves office rather than automatically promoting the state Senate leader, introduced by House Speaker Pro Tempore **Tommy Pope**, R-York. (South Carolina has had to replace its lieutenant governor twice in the last

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five years, once when Lt. Gov. Ken Ard, R-Pamplico, resigned as he faced ethics charges and, again, when Ard's Senate-elevated successor, former state Senate President Pro Tempore Glen McConnell, resigned to become president of the College of Charleston. In both instances, the moves created upheaval in the Senate.)

- Requiring lobbyists to wear photo identification cards, introduced by state Rep. **Mike Burns**, R-Greenville. (Lobbyists regularly assemble in the crowded State House lobby, making it difficult to determine who is lobbying issues, some say.)
- Allowing pastors and churches to not officiate or hold weddings that violate "a sincerely held religious belief," introduced by state Rep. **Dan Hamilton**, R-Greenville, in response to the legalization of gay marriage.
- Requiring movie theaters, arenas and concert halls to use metal detectors, introduced by Gilliard in response to recent mass shootings in those venues in the United States and Europe.
- Mandating every school to display the words "In God We Trust" in their lobbies, introduced by state Rep. **Alan Clemmons**, R-Horry.
- Preventing bans by schools on wearing patriotic clothing or displaying of patriotic symbols on clothes, introduced by state Rep. **Chip Limehouse**, R-Charleston.
- Making state college investigations of fraternities, sororities and other social organizations available to the public, introduced by Putnam in response to recent allegations against Greek organizations.
- Allowing people who file bankruptcy to keep up to three firearms and 3,000 rounds of ammunition, introduced by Clemmons.

### **S.C. Republicans on discrimination, immigrants, medical marijuana**

Want to know the mood of S.C. Republicans? The word "oppressed" comes to mind. Just look at the responses to five questions posed in the Winthrop Poll of likely S.C. Republican primary voters released last week:

- Do Christians in America experience discrimination? Great deal — 46 percent; Some — 38 percent; Little or none — 17 percent
- Do white Americans face less, same amount or more discrimination as blacks? Less — 41 percent; Same — 36 percent; More — 17 percent
- Do you believe that immigrants take jobs away from U.S. citizens? Yes — 62 percent; No — 33 percent
- How do you feel about the federal government? Frustrated — 61 percent; Angry — 35 percent; Basically content — 3 percent
- Should doctors be allowed to prescribe marijuana for medical purposes? Yes — 70 percent; No — 22 percent

Read more here.

### **SC cancels secessionist group's State House rally**

State authorities said security concerns led them to revoke a permit this week for a group planning to hold a rally commemorating the anniversary of South Carolina seceding from the Union. The decision comes five

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months after police clashed with some protesters at simultaneous rallies by the Ku Klux Klan and Black Panther Party, held a week after the Confederate battle flag was removed from the State House grounds. Read more here.

### *Meeting Schedule*

#### Monday, December 14

- **10:00 am** -- Blatt Room 433 -- Higher Education Governance Ad Hoc Committee
- **1:00 pm** -- Blatt Room 403 -- Education Oversight Committee

#### Tuesday, December 15

- **10:00 am** -- Blatt Room 516 -- House Legislative Oversight Committee
  - I. Approval of minutes from November 9, 2015 meeting
  - II. Discussion of scheduled agency oversight studies, including, an update on status of studies
  - III. Discussion of Executive Subcommittee Study of the Office of the Comptroller General
  - IV. Discussion of recommendations to the Speaker for agencies to schedule for study in 2016
- **10:00 am** -- Gressette Room 105 -- Judiciary Subcommittee on S.911
  - I. S. 911 – Closing Fees on Motor Vehicle Sales Contracts

#### Wednesday, December 16

- **10:00 am** -- Blatt Room 433 -- Education Policy Review and Reform Task Force
  - I. Opening--Chairwoman Rita Allison
  - II. Review of amendments to the Task Force Report
  - III. Discussion and Adoption of Report
  - IV. Other Business
- **11:00 am** -- Gressette Room 308 -- Expungement Study Committee

#### Thursday, December 17

- **10:00 am** -- Blatt Room 511 -- Ways and Means Higher Education and Technical Colleges Budget Subcommittee

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I. South Carolina Education Lottery

II. Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission

- **2:00 pm** -- Blatt Room 516 -- Judicial Merit Selection Commission Public Hearing

### Friday, December 18

No Meetings Scheduled.