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## Legislative Updates for the week of 5/7/2013- 5/9/2013

Here are the highlights from last week's Senate action –

**ETHICS REFORM** – Last week the Senate Judiciary Committee spent a considerable amount of time on **H. 3945**, a bill to overhaul and update South Carolina's ethics laws. We had several subcommittee meetings on the bill, but our final meeting on Tuesday lasted for about 3 hours. The full committee then took up the bill on Thursday, debating the bill for about 8 ½ hours.

Among other things, the bill would create a new State Ethics Committee, made up of executive and legislative appointees, to investigate ethics complaints against legislators, executive branch members, and local government officials; provide for stronger criminal penalties for public corruption; and revise many outdated ethics provisions.

The bill will now go to the full Senate. I expect we'll take it up after finishing the budget.

**STATE BUDGET** – The Senate will begin debate on the state budget on Monday. There is roughly \$683 million in "new" money this year: \$328 million in recurring funds (expected to be available each year) and \$355 million in nonrecurring, or one-time, funds. The "new" money came from a surplus in the current budget, funds from the multi-state tobacco settlement, and revenue set aside by the constitution for capital projects.

While debating the budget, the Senate will also consider whether to expand the Medicaid program pursuant to the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare). South Carolina already provides Medicaid coverage to children, the elderly, and the disabled at the required income level. This expansion would provide Medicaid to nondisabled, able-bodied adults. For many reasons, I think that is a terrible idea with long-lasting consequences, so I plan to oppose the attempt to expand Medicaid.

I will keep you updated.

### Last Week's Meetings

- On Monday, I visited several schools in our district for Teacher Appreciation Week. Our teachers do a great job, and I'm grateful for their hard work.
- On Tuesday night, I attended Lexington County Soil and Water Conservation District's annual awards banquet.
- On Wednesday and Thursday, I was in Columbia late for legislative meetings and missed a few meetings in our district. That tends to happen as the budget approaches. This week will have some late nights, too.

- On Friday, I visited several more area schools to thank teachers for their dedication to our students.
- On Saturday morning, I attended the South Carolina Poultry Festival in Batesburg-Leesville. We had great weather, and there was a huge crowd!
- On Saturday night, my family and I attended “Caught in the Act” at Strom Thurmond High School. Steve McKinney and the drama students put on another great performance!

## Constituent Interests

**STHS MOCK TRIAL** – Strom Thurmond High School's mock trial team competed in the national mock trial tournament in Indianapolis this past weekend. Kaitlyn Pugh, a senior at STHS, was named one of the top 10 attorneys at the competition. The teams at the national competition are the best of the best; being named one of the top 10 attorneys places Kaitlyn in a very small club of elite students. That's a huge honor! Congratulations, Kaitlyn!

**TOWN HALL MEETINGS** – Thanks to everyone who came and participated in my town hall meetings this Spring. I held 9 meetings across our 5-county district. In the past 6 years, I've held 85 town hall meetings throughout our district, and I really appreciate the hundreds of folks who have participated. These town hall meetings give me a chance to keep you updated about what's going on in Columbia and, more importantly, allow me to hear what's on your mind. I will do another round of meetings in the Fall.

**OUR SENATE DISTRICT** – Senate district 25 consists of all of Edgefield County and parts of Aiken, Lexington, McCormick, and Saluda Counties. If you'd like to see the district map, [go here](#).

**VOTING RECORD** – If you'd like to see how I voted last week, [go here](#). You can always check to see how I vote by going to my website, [www.senatormassey.com](http://www.senatormassey.com), and clicking on the “Voting Record” tab.

**SPEAKING WITH GROUPS** – Several groups, clubs, and classes around our Senate district have invited me to attend their meetings and provide legislative updates. If you would like for me to come speak with your group, please let me know.

**EMAIL UPDATES** – If you know of people in or around District 25 who do not receive my updates but would like to get them, please email their names and email addresses to me. You can also forward this email to them and encourage them to sign up for the updates at [www.senatormassey.com](http://www.senatormassey.com).

Sincerely,

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