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Date: 4/11/2016 4:06:40 PM

Subject: FW: Legislative Update- Week Of 04/05/2016-04/07/2016

Please note his comments on the Farm Aid, Ethics, and SC State.

KV

From: Shane Massey [mailto:shanemassey=scsenate.gov@cmail20.com] On Behalf Of Shane Massey

Sent: Monday, April 11, 2016 2:35 PM

To: Veldran, Katherine

Subject: Legislative Update- Week Of 04/05/2016-04/07/2016

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## Legislative Update- Week Of 04/05/2016-04/07/2016

The Senate returned last week from a one-week Easter break. Here are the highlights –

**SENATE MAJORITY LEADER** – Last Tuesday, Senator Harvey Peeler, who had been Senate Majority Leader for 11 years, resigned from that position. Several senators asked me to run for the spot, so I jumped in. On Wednesday, the Senate Republican Caucus elected me as the new Senate Majority Leader. It's a pretty cool honor, and it's a big job. I'm going to do my best in the new position, but my first obligation is still to you – the folks who sent me to Columbia in the first place. I've received several hundred congratulatory messages, and I appreciate every one of them. I appreciate your support and your prayers. You can read stories from *The State* and *Aiken Standard* about my new role.

**ETHICS** – The Senate began debate on **H. 3184**, a bill that would require independent investigations of ethics complaints against legislators. Currently, ethics complaints against legislators are received, investigated, and judged by the ethics committees in the House and Senate. This bill would require an independent body to investigate those complaints and, if necessary, make the case for discipline. I expect the Senate will consider a separate bill, hopefully this week, to require legislators to disclose sources of their private income.

**PUBLIC PRAYER** – The Senate passed **S. 233**, a bill to update guidelines for public bodies to open in prayer. The legislation follows a 2014 US Supreme Court decision that the US Constitution permits public bodies to open in prayers. The House of Representatives will not consider the legislation.

**RELEASE OF POLICE DASH-CAM VIDEOS** – The Senate passed **S. 913**, a bill that would require law enforcement agencies to release dash camera videos in most cases. The bill now goes to the House of Representatives.

**CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION ACT** – The Senate amended and passed **H. 3204**, a bill that would allow DHEC to offer HPV vaccines for students in 7th grade or higher. Students are not required to have the vaccine, and parents or guardians must consent before students could receive the vaccine. The bill goes back to the House of Representatives to consider the Senate's changes.

**FARM DISASTER RELIEF** – The Senate began debate on **H. 4717**, a resolution that would set up a \$40 million relief fund for farmers who were devastated from the back-to-back drought and flood disasters last year. The bill provides for grants of up to \$100,000 for qualifying farms. I proposed an amendment that the relief be in the form of loans rather than grants, but that amendment has not yet received a vote. I expect the Senate will vote on the bill this week.

**A SHORTER LEGISLATIVE SESSION?** – The General Assembly's session runs from the second Tuesday in January through, practically, the end of June. Last week, the Senate gave preliminary approval to **S. 267**, a bill that would have the General Assembly adjourn each year by Memorial Day. I hope to see a final vote this week.

**SC STATE UNIVERSITY LOAN RELIEF** – I've given several updates over the past two years about deficits and problems at SC State University. Through action by the General Assembly and the old Budget and Control Board, SCSU received loans totaling over \$18 million. Last year, the General Assembly terminated the entire Board of Trustees and appointed a new board to right the ship. The new Board of Trustees has made significant improvement, balanced the budget, increased enrollment, and is on track to protect the university's accreditation. Last week, the Senate began discussion on **S. 1166**, a bill that would forgive about 85% of the loan if the university maintains a balanced budget. I expect the Senate to vote on the proposal this week.

**CONCEALED WEAPONS PERMITS** – The Senate Judiciary Committee had a very long agenda last week and did not get to **H. 3799**, a bill that would require SC to recognize concealed weapons permits issued by GA. I expect the Committee to take up the bill on Tuesday.

### **Last Week's Meetings**

On Tuesday, March 29, I attended Edgefield GOP's quarterly meeting.

On Tuesday, March 29, I attended Aiken Electric Cooperative's annual membership dinner.

On Friday, April 1, I attended Aiken Chamber of Commerce's monthly breakfast meeting.

On Friday, April 1, I spoke with two AP US History classes at North Augusta High School. I always enjoy speaking with students. These students were top notch... even though they were clearly ready for Spring Break!

Last Monday, I attended Lexington GOP's monthly. They had a huge turnout. I think every candidate in the Midlands was there!

On Friday, I attended Mid Carolina Electric Cooperative's annual meeting at Lexington High School. There were probably 3,000-4,000 in attendance.

### **Constituent Interests**

**VULCAN QUARRY IN LEESVILLE** – Lots of folks in the Leesville and Gilbert areas have talked with me about the possibility of Vulcan starting a quarry in that area. Rep. Ralph Kennedy, Sen. Katrina Shealy, and I filed bills to impose greater restrictions on mining operations. Rep. Kennedy's bill, **H. 4206**, is scheduled for a subcommittee hearing on Thursday, 4/14/2016, at 8:30 in Room 410 of the Blatt Office Building. I hope to have a hearing on the bill Sen. Shealy and I introduced, **S. 684**, next Thursday. I hope to give you more details on that next week.

**PALMETTO PIPELINE** – Kinder Morgan announced on March 30 that it was suspending work on the Palmetto Pipeline. The decision follows court rulings and legislative action in Georgia to prevent Kinder Morgan from using eminent domain to construct the pipeline in Georgia. The South Carolina Senate passed similar legislation in March.

**VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICERS** – Each county has a Veterans Affairs Officer whose purpose is to assist veterans and their families with filing, presenting, and prosecuting all claims which they have for money compensation, hospitalization, training, and insurance benefits under federal law. If you have questions about veterans' benefits or the services these officers provide, you can contact the officers at:

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**WANT TO SEE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ACTION?** - The Senate meets in statewide session on Tuesdays at 12:00, Wednesdays at 2:00, and Thursdays at 11:00. Committees

and subcommittees meet Tuesday afternoons, Wednesday mornings, and Thursday mornings. You can watch live coverage of the Senate, House of Representatives, and committees [here](#).

**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've voted on issues, 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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P.S. Please visit [www.senatormassey.com](http://www.senatormassey.com) for more posts, news, and video updates. Also, please "friend" me on [Facebook](#) and follow me on [Twitter \(@shanemassey\)](#).

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