

From: Rep. Bill Taylor <bill@taylorschouse.com>
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Subject: FINALLY !!!!!

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FINALLY !!!!

Dear Friends:

Led by Republicans, the SC House ushered through sweeping government reforms this week intended to balance the power between the Governor and the legislature making our Governor a 'Chief Executive Officer' and bringing more accountability to state government. This is the fifth time in six years that the House has approved similar legislation. Last year, it died in the final hour of a Senate filibuster.

DOA: At issue is the proposed Department of Administration (DOA). Currently, SC is the only state that operates with a "Budget & Control Board" - a strange hybrid of the legislative and executive branches that essentially controls most major functions of our state government.

This year, the House worked with the Senate to approve substantively similar versions of the legislation that moves human resources, information technology, and administration of the state's physical plant and vehicles under the control of the governor. This plan moves nearly 90 percent of the old Budget & Control Board's functions to the governor's cabinet - where these basic administrative functions belong. This move will make state government more accountable and make our Governor a true chief executive. Above all, no matter who lives at the governor's mansion, it is the right thing to do.

[Click Here to view illustration of DOA organization](#)

One small vestige of the old Budget & Control Board will live on. The new State Contracts and Accountability Authority will continue to oversee the state auditor, bonding authority, insurance services, and annual retirement assumptions. We had to keep this separate because of concerns about how putting all of that under the control of the governor might threaten our state's AAA credit rating.

Our state government can be a cumbersome and unwieldy entity at times, with our Governor overseeing a few things, the General Assembly overseeing others, and the Budget & Control Board overseeing even more. As a Conservative, I fundamentally favor smaller, more streamlined government. That desire is at the heart of this legislation.

Congress OKs Funds for SRS: It's thrilling to learn that the uncertainty of funding has been removed from the operations of the Savannah River Site. Four Congressional committees approved the moving of monies within the Department of Energy budget to restore \$79 million in funding to SRS. This relieves the anxiety level of thousands of dedicated SRS employees who were facing permanent

furloughs.
ONWARD with the Mission!

Budget Week(s) in the Senate: The SC Senate has spent the week debating the 2013-14 state budget the House sent them in March. Much discussion has focused on funding highway improvements; there are nearly as many ways to pay for roads as there are factions in the Senate. Their budget debate will stretch into next week.

Fixing Our Roads Could Save You \$\$\$:

According to the SC Alliance to Fix Our Roads, SC drivers pay less than \$10 a month in fees to use our highways. According to the Federal Highway Administration, each dollar spent on road improvements results in an average benefit of \$5.20 in reduced vehicle maintenance costs, reduced delays, reduced fuel consumption, improved safety, reduced road and bridge maintenance costs and reduced emissions.

The UNaffordable Care Act: State Senators will also be debating the potential expansion of Medicaid under ObamaCare. The House has already voted not to expand Medicaid. In the partisan argument to take advantage of what some believe is 'easy money' from the feds, it's vital to consider the facts. The Palmetto Policy Forum has issued a report. [See the top 10 reasons why Medicaid expansion is bad medicine for SC.](#) Got more time? [Read the full report.](#)

Potential Medicaid Solution: Health policy in South Carolina, and in most other states, is highly controversial and difficult to navigate. One group demands the state extend free medical coverage to hundreds of thousands of people via a very expensive expansion of Medicaid. Opponents recognize that the expansion proposed under ObamaCare is unaffordable. I have long advocated for block granting of Medicaid. That would mean getting a waiver from the Feds so SC could design a more efficient and cost effective approach.

That's the goal of the recently-filed bill, [H.4095](#). Like any legislation, it will be hotly debated and come under tough scrutiny. That's good because the legislative process sorts out critical issues. Activists have already lashed out against the initiative. However, saying "NO" to everything is not an answer. We must be pro-active to manage, improve, yet contain Medicaid costs.

I'm not an health care expert, but I am willing to hear from experts; both supporters and opponents of this bill. The ultimate goal is to craft legislation that best serves the people of SC that is affordable in both the short term and long term. That's the legislative process. [H.4095](#) is not perfect and it is expected to morph into something beneficial and cost effective while improving our Medicaid system. If it doesn't, I'll oppose it. We are only at the starting gate; this discussion will continue into 2014.

Medical Help for Students : 'Epi' pens will soon be common place in SC public schools. The injectors deliver a dose of epinephrine (also known as adrenaline) to be administered when students have a severe allergic reaction. The House approved the bill with Senate amendments. It goes to the Governor for her signature.

S.C. Lottery Revenue is Up: The state lottery is expected to generate \$27 million more in profits than expected this year. That allows the legislature to designate more money to school buses, libraries and scholarships.

Great Grade! Small Biz survey gives S.C. an [\(Map and specific grades\)](#)

Voting Award: I was honored this week to stand with a small group of legislators who received recognition from the Palmetto Family organization for our 100% voting record in support of family values during the last session. If you wish to keep track of all my votes, [CLICK HERE](#).

An AIKEN Icon: We said "so long" to an 103 yr old Aiken Icon this week. "Miss Ola" was an awesome example of service to her church and community, and especially to Disabled Vets. There's a special place in Heaven for "Miss Ola".

Thank you for the privilege of serving you in Columbia. If I can ever be of assistance to you, or if you have ideas on issues you want me to share with the rest of the General Assembly, please don't hesitate to contact me.

In your Service,

Photo of the Week

Bill Taylor

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I was humbled to be presented an American Flag that flew over Camp Leatherneck in Afghanistan in my honor this past President's Day. The presentation was made by Aiken's own Maj. Dwight Bradham Jr. of the SC National Guard. His Guard unit recently returned from a lengthy tour in Helmand Province as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. The flag will be displayed in a place of honor in my State House office.

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