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Subject: Legislative Update for the week of 3/12/13 - 3/14/13

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF 3/12/13 - 3/14/13

Here are the highlights from week 10 in the Senate –

SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION - ELECTED OR APPOINTED? – The Senate debated and voted on **S. 53**, a resolution that would allow for the Governor to appoint the state Superintendent of Education rather than having the Superintendent elected every 4 years. Since this proposal would require an amendment to the state Constitution, 2/3 of Senators and Representatives must support it. In the Senate, that requires 31 votes. Unfortunately, the Senate vote was 27-16; I voted for it. We will probably take another shot at it in a few weeks, but it will be tough to switch a few votes. The status quo puts up a good fight, folks.

EARLY VOTING – The Senate debated **S. 4**, a bill that would allow up to 8 days of no excuse, early voting for statewide primaries and general elections. I expect the Senate will vote on the bill this week. I plan to support the bill.

MCCORMICK COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD – Because of resignations, there are currently 2 vacancies on the McCormick County School Board. The law, which is unique to McCormick, says the McCormick County Council should recommend replacements to the Governor. Since the School Board manages a budget of over \$10 million annually, I think voters should decide the replacements. Therefore, Sen. Floyd Nicholson and I introduced **S. 517** last week to require a special election to fill the vacancies. I'll keep you updated.

CONSTITUTIONAL CARRY OF FIREARMS – **S. 115**, the “Constitutional Carry Act,” would allow individuals to carry handguns – concealed or unconcealed – without first having to obtain a Concealed Weapons Permit. It would also allow individuals to carry weapons in all public buildings. Public hearings have been held in Charleston and Rock Hill, and additional meetings are planned for Greenville, Myrtle Beach, and Columbia. The bill is a long way from having a vote, but I'd love to hear your thoughts on it.

2013-2014 BUDGET – The House of Representatives debated and passed the budget last week. The budget will now go through the committee process in the Senate and should be up for debate by the full Senate in late April. Stay tuned.

SENATE FURLOUGH – The Senate will furlough during the weeks of March 25-29 and April 1-5. Therefore, when the Senate adjourns on Thursday, March 21, we will not meet again until Tuesday, April 9.

Last Week's Meetings

On Monday night, I held a town hall meeting at the Circle Fire Department in Saluda County.

On Tuesday morning, I attended the Lexington Chamber of Commerce's monthly breakfast. The meeting focused on whether SC should expand Medicaid pursuant to the Affordable Care Act.

On Tuesday morning, I met with Leadership Aiken County. We're facing tough challenges, and now is the time for leaders to step forward. I really appreciate the talent Aiken County has to offer!

On Thursday afternoon, I spoke to the SC Chamber of Commerce's legislative committee. The legislative committee consists of some of the top business leadership in the state, and I really enjoyed the conversation.

On Thursday night, I held a town hall meeting in Savannah Lakes Village in McCormick. We had a nice crowd of around 25-30 people and a good discussion of issues facing South Carolina.

On Friday afternoon, I spoke with 4th graders at Lake Murray Elementary School and then a class at Lexington High School about state government. The students were very well-informed, and they asked tough questions. It was a lot of fun!

Constituent Interests

TOWN ALL MEETINGS – I have held over 75 town hall meetings throughout our district over the past 5 years, 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.

HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL - The statewide regional high school mock trial competitions were held this past weekend. Several schools from our Senate district competed. Lexington High School and Strom Thurmond High School were among the top 12 teams advancing to the state competition to be held on March 8 and 9 in Lexington.

I've held 3 meetings so far this year. Here's the schedule for the remaining meetings -

Monday, 3/18/13

Lexington High School cafeteria
Lexington, SC
6:00-7:30

Tuesday, 3/19/13

Ward Community Center
Ward, SC
6:30-8:00

Monday, 3/25/13

Midland Valley High School auditorium
Graniteville, SC
6:00-7:30

Tuesday, 3/26/13

Gilbert High School Theatre
Gilbert, SC
6:00-7:30

Thursday, 3/28/13

Merriwether Middle School cafeteria
North Augusta, SC
6:00-7:30

Tuesday, 4/2/13

Jefferson Elementary School cafeteria
Bath, SC
6:00-7:30

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, 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.

Sincerely,

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