

From: Veldran, Katherine
To: Soura, ChristianChristianSoura@gov.sc.gov
Pitts, TedTedPitts@gov.sc.gov
Baker, JoshJoshBaker@gov.sc.gov
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From: Greg Foster [mailto:GregFoster@schouse.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2012 04:05 PM
To: Greg Foster <GregFoster@schouse.gov>
Subject: Release - Budget Progress: 1 Step Forward, 2 Steps Back

Office of the Speaker
SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 27, 2012

Contact: Greg Foster

(803) 734-3125

gregfoster@schouse.gov

Budget Progress: 1 Step Forward, 2 Steps Back

(Columbia, SC) - Late last night, the Joint House/Senate Budget Conference Committee came to an agreement on a finalized budget that includes the House's plan to cut small business taxes 40% by reducing their income tax rate from 5% to 3%. Both Legislative Chambers were scheduled to meet in session today to formally adopt this budget plan into law. However, after the conferees reached their agreement and left for the night, the Senate announced that it was canceling session for today.

House Speaker Bobby Harrell said, "The budget conferees, both House and Senate, should be commended for working late into the night to approve a balanced budget plan that includes small business tax relief. We just hope that all that progress is not undone by the Senate's decision to cancel session today. By doing so, the Senate is drawing us yet another day closer to the July 1st government shutdown deadline with no budget being passed and no Continuing Resolution in place."

With the new fiscal year beginning July 1st, a Continuing Resolution would allow government to continue operating at the previous year's funding level. But even if the budget were to be passed today, a Continuing Resolution is still necessary to prevent a government shutdown. A Continuing Resolution passed the House last week, but is still in the Senate.

Speaker Harrell said, "I'm shocked the Senate decided not to work today. With just 3 days left until a government shutdown, the bill that would prevent that shutdown is still sitting on the Senate Desk just one roll call vote away from being passed. The House is in session today and stands ready to get this finished."

"The fact is, to ensure we prevent a government shutdown, we should be passing a Continuing Resolution into law today," Harrell added. "The House is here and we're ready to work. Every teacher, law enforcement officer, state employee, every citizen who relies on the services the state provides are all waiting to see if this budget stalemate created by the Senate's stonewalling will be resolved - Basically, with the eyes of all South Carolinians looking for their Legislature to act, the Senate is simply not here."

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Greg Foster
Deputy Chief of Staff
& Director of Communications
Office of the Speaker
South Carolina House of Representatives
(803) 734-3125
gregfoster@schouse.gov
twitter.com/gregfoster_sc