

INTERNAL STAFF UPDATE*

Thursday, February 25, 2016

One SC:

- Total Giving Since Press Conference: 1,184,401
- Grants Awarded as of December 15, 2015: \$500,000
- Grants Awarded as of January 15, 2016: \$500,000
- Projected number of homes to be assisted with from the first two rounds of grants: 626 homes in 15 counties

They are reviewing three grants next week for the anticipated surge in volunteers over spring break. The third official round of grants will open next week and be awarded in April.

Ratification:

Today, the General Assembly ratified and delivered the following bills for signature:

1. R140, H. 4507 – Membership on the SC Law Enforcement Officers Hall of Fame Advisory Committee
2. R141, H. 4660 – Surplus Lines Insurance Sales
3. R142, H. 4857 – Coal Ash Dumping in Class 3 Landfills

These bills must be delivered no later than midnight Wednesday, March 2, 2016. If you have any information for me to include in the ratification log, please send to me as soon as possible.

DSS Senate Oversight:

Today, Director Alford testified before the DSS Oversight Committee, which was a follow-up from a previous meeting with senior staff.

- The first focus was hiring and retaining enough caseworkers to get caseloads down as set by the agency. They are currently working to make sure cases are evenly distributed in counties with higher caseloads, and they are transitioning regional team leaders to be regional managers with a supervisory role over the counties to add accountability. Director Alford said they have come a long way, and she sees the light, but there is still a long way to go regarding caseloads.
- The second focus was DSS' budget request, and a full DSS budget subcommittee hearing will be held next week with Senator Alexander. Senator Young asked questions about senior staff hires and salaries in the Director's executive office, and she explained each position and their duties, which seemed to satisfy the panel.
- The last focus was on group homes and the ways DSS can ensure quality of care and improve outcomes for foster kids.

The committee did not get a chance to hear testimony about Child Support Enforcement and also wanted to hear more about the transition of SNAP Employment and Training from DSS to DEW. The committee will hold another meeting in the upcoming weeks to conclude its review of these

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subjects. At the request of General Committee Chairman Bryant, DSS will hold a public hearing in Powdersville on March 29th.

Bill Movement Updates

- S.0238—Allen—Inmates attending funeral services—Corrections: Senate Judiciary passed favorably with amendment. The amendment does not appear to address our concerns.
- H.4548—Sandifer—Closing fees on motor vehicle—Crossed Over, Judiciary: House gave 3rd reading to an amended version of this bill today.
- H.4717—White—SC Farm Aid Fund—Ways and Means: House gave 2nd reading to an amended version of this bill today (95-6).

Ethics Reform – FOIA Bill:

Today, we received a copy of Lt. Governor McMaster's draft letter to give to the Senate if/when the FOIA bill gets to the Senate floor – reminding them of the McMaster-Medlock Report and the importance of removing the legislative exemption for FOIA. The letter speaks to good government ideals, accountability of elected officials, and legislators not being above the law.

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