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## Flurry in the Statehouse

Dear Friends:

There was a flurry of activity in the South Carolina House of Representatives this week as we cleared the way for 'Budget Week' starting Monday.

### Spotlight on Article V Convention of States

A SC House subcommittee heard passionate testimony from a host of citizens supporting passage of the Article V Convention of States legislation ([H.3177](#)). As the primary sponsor of the House bill, I led testimony by telling my colleagues that only they have the constitutional authority to stop what's going on in Washington...

"The federal government will never put controls on itself, but you can. It matters what you do here today. In Washington, power is the currency of the realm. We, as state legislators, are not seeking power; we are seeking to control power and limit the federal government. Only you have the Constitutional and lawful authority to stop what's going on in Washington. Nobody else can! Acting together, state legislators have more power than the federal government. That was our Founders intent in crafting the Constitution. It is your responsibility to assert your rightful authority. You are empowered by the Constitutional grant of authority under Article V to save this nation from an out-of-control federal government." - Rep. Bill Taylor

Time ran out on the hearing; the committee adjourned without taking a vote. Testimony will resume in two weeks after we approve the state budget. A Senate subcommittee considering the Article V legislation met simultaneous with the House hearing. It, too, ran out of time. Votes are expected at both of the next committee meetings.

### CWP Legislation

Aiken County legislators frequently hear complaints from concealed weapon permit holders regarding the difficulties of legally carrying firearms when traveling between SC and Georgia. Legislation was introduced this week aimed at fixing that. The bill ([H.3799](#)) calls for SC to automatically recognize CWP permits issued by Georgia and NC. Rep. Bill Hixon, of North Augusta, is the primary sponsor along with the entire Aiken County Legislative Delegation. In total there are 62 sponsors on the bill.

A similar, but more wide ranging bill ([H.3025](#)), calls for SC to automatically recognize any valid CWP permit issued by another state. It was passed out of a House sub-committee this week, but will likely

have difficulty because it is opposed by law enforcement officials.

### Budget Debate Next Week

The annual budget debate takes place next week in the House after months of public hearings. Unlike Washington, we balance our state budget each year. The proposed General Fund budget is \$7.5 billion. I take a conservative approach to allocating state funds and I value your input. [Here's a link to the online summary of this year's General Fund Budget.](#)

### Funding Local Government

After much debate, we approved a measure updating an antiquated formula instituted 24 years ago used to establish funding to local governments around the state. The outdated structure no longer met many budgetary demands. A compromise plan was reached this week to revise the formula and insure local governments a consistent, stable and predictable revenue stream. [\(For more read this Aiken Standard story.\)](#)

### Ethics Bill Goes to Senate

Last week I mentioned that an omnibus ethics package [\(H.3722\)](#) was introduced in the House with over 100 cosponsors. This legislation combines into one comprehensive bill twelve smaller pieces of laser-focused ethics reform legislation already passed by the House. We have worked diligently toward passing robust ethics reforms this year and I'm happy to report we approved the omnibus package 108-1. It now heads to the Senate.

### Toward Great Efficiency

Is the 10th time the charm? For the 10th time in the past 20 years we passed legislation [\(H.3014\)](#) in the House that would shorten the legislative work session. SC has one of the longest legislative sessions in the country. Shortening the session by nearly two months each year would save SC taxpayers approximately \$400,000 annually. Each attempt by House Republicans to shorten the legislative session has been blocked by the Senate.

### Moped

During every session there are numerous bills filed focusing on mopeds; this year is no exception. The House passed two bills dealing with moped safety. The first [\(H.3142\)](#) calls for moped riders to wear reflective vests and to install a flashing red taillight on the moped. The second [\(H.3165\)](#) defines mopeds as a motor vehicle. This technicality is intended to close the loophole that has allowed moped riders to escape prosecution for DUI.

### Big Job News for SC!

Mercedes-Benz Vans, a division of Daimler, has announced plans to invest approximately half a billion dollars to establish a new, full van manufacturing plant in Charleston County.

The new production plant in North Charleston, will supply the North American market with the next-generation Sprinter. This new facility will create 1,300 new jobs over the next several years.

### Statehouse Visitors

Clients of Aiken's Tri-Development Center visited the Statehouse as part of SC Disability Day. Tri-Development Director Ralph Courtney shared the joy his clients feel as citizens being able to work daily and be productive contributors. This, thanks to the Tri-Development programs.

At the Statehouse, too, were the 3rd graders from South Aiken Baptist Christian School. They were joined by teachers and parents to learn how their state government operates and to soak in state history.

### **I'm Available**

It is an honor and a privilege to serve you in Columbia. If you need help navigating state government, or have any thoughts or concerns about what we are doing, please do not hesitate to contact me.

- Want to check my voting record? ([Click here](#))
- More information on my positions can be found on [my website](#).

In your Service,

Photo of the Week !

**Bill Taylor**

803-270-2012

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Just before the doors swung open on the annual AAUW book fair here in Aiken Friday, I honored members of this hard working charitable group with recognition from the SC House of Representatives. Book buyers started lining up at 6am for the 9am sale; the doors opened and the crowd rushed in for the best selection.

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