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Subject: State Budget Debate Begins -- Update from Sen. Tom Young -- April 29 to May 5, 2014

State Budget Debate Begins -- Update from Sen. Tom Young -- April 29 to May 5, 2014

The State Senate is in regular session with session ending on Thursday, June 5. One of my goals as your state senator is that you find this update helpful and informative. Your feedback is meaningful and appreciated. If I can help you with an issue, please let me know. Thank you for reading and for allowing me to serve our District!

State Budget

State Budget : The budget will be debated in the Senate beginning today and continuing daily until the Senate passes a budget to send back to the House. The summary of the budget in its current form as passed by the Senate Finance Committee can be accessed [here](#).

Pay Raise for Lawmakers? : Last week, a majority of the Senate Finance Committee (I am on Judiciary and not the Finance Committee) voted to raise the monthly in district expense compensation for lawmakers from \$1,000.00 to \$2,000.00. I expect this will be voted on during the budget debate at some point. I will not support raising this and will vote against this on the Senate floor.

Additional Budget Thoughts : Remember that the budget process will continue after this week into June as the budget goes back to the House; to a conference committee from the two chambers; then to the Governor where she may veto certain items; and then to the House and Senate where her vetoes will be considered. Thus, there are a number of uncertainties between now and mid June as to what the final budget will look like. If you would like to provide input to me on a particular budget item, please do so as soon as possible by emailing me at tom@senatortomyoung.com.

MOX Update

MOX Project - Cold Stand By Delayed : Last Tuesday, local residents and officials learned that the Department of Energy (DOE) has decided to delay any decision on placing the MOX project into a "cold stand by" until after September 1 which is the start of the next fiscal year for the federal government.

State Dismisses Lawsuit : As a result of the DOE decision last week, the State dismissed the pending lawsuit filed against the federal government over DOE's decision to shut down the MOX project.

MOX Options Report Released : Also, last week, DOE released the MOX options report comparing the projected life cycle costs of the various options to complete the plutonium disposition mission. To learn more, go [here](#).

State Senate News

Roads and Bridges : Last year, the General Assembly approved moving half of the revenue from the sales tax on vehicles from the General Fund to the Highway Fund, holding harmless the portion that currently goes to education in the General Fund.

Last week, the Senate set for special order debate status a bill that will move the remaining half of the vehicle sales tax revenue to the Highway Fund. If approved, this legislation will increase the recurring revenue source for state road and bridge infrastructure by an additional \$41 Million per year.

Common Core : Last week, the Senate agreed on legislation that will remove South Carolina from Common Core State Standards with the math and english/language arts standards remaining in place for one more academic year. During that time, the State Department of Education will be required to develop new, state-based K-12 standards and to have those standards implemented statewide for the 2015-2016 school year. The bill will also prevent the adoption of any educational standards created outside South Carolina unless the General Assembly approves those standards. Further, the bill removes South Carolina from the Smarter Balance assessment consortium. Additionally, the legislation strengthens student privacy laws and requires significant investments in technology in rural school districts across the state. The bill now goes back to the House of Representatives.

Solar Power : On Thursday, the Senate passed legislation that will utilize solar power as a way to diversify the state's energy base. The bill requires private utilities to acquire a certain percentage of solar power by 2021; lessens current restrictions so that big box retail stores, universities, and other large building occupants can add more solar; and allow solar companies to lease sun panels to homeowners and businesses at more competitive rates through adjustments to net metering rates. The bill now heads to the House of Representatives.

DEW Unemployment Trust Fund Update : The S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) announced last week that it made an early loan repayment of \$60 million to the Federal Government. To pay unemployment benefits, the state borrowed almost \$1 Billion from the federal government between December 2008 and April 2011. To date, more than \$580 Million has been paid back of the \$977 Million borrowed between December 2008 and April 2011. Making the early payment saves the state \$1.4 Million in interest. The state is scheduled to repay the

entire amount by the end of 2015. South Carolina is one of 16 remaining states with outstanding loan balances owed to the federal government for money borrowed to pay unemployment benefits in the recent past.

Other News of Local Interest

Mayor Frank Mizell Honored : Long time Windsor Mayor Frank Mizell was honored last week by both chambers of the General Assembly for his 34 years of service to the Town of Windsor as Mayor. "Mayor Frank" retires on June 1. We wish him all the best and thank him for his service.

Tanner Lewis Tribute : Last Wednesday, the Senate recognized the family of Tanner Lewis with a resolution presented in memory of Tanner. Tanner unexpectedly passed away last year. As a student at Midland Valley High School, Tanner was a role model for his peers excelling in all areas including earning the the prestigious Eagle Scout distinction. With scholarship offers from many colleges, Tanner was the first student in the history of Midland Valley High School to be accepted for admission to Duke University.

Students at State House : Chukker Creek Elementary third grade students were at the State House on Thursday. I enjoyed visiting with them!

Women Build : On Saturday, I attended a gathering of Aiken County Women Build and Habitat for Humanity volunteers in Warrentonville. The home being finished is Women Build's eighth and Habitat's 95th in Aiken County. Many thanks to all of the hardworking volunteers for their efforts.

Constituent Information

Legislative Email Updates : Locally, three members of the House of Representatives, who represent portions of Aiken County within Senate District 24, send regular email updates. Their respective contact information to get on their email lists to receive their email updates are as follows:

- Rep. Bill Hixon (Dist. 83): bill@billhixon.com
- Rep. Bill Taylor (Dist. 86): bill@taylorscheuse.com
- Rep. Don Wells (Dist. 81): dwells29801@gmail.com

Congressman Joe Wilson Contact Information : Congressman Wilson represents all of Aiken County. He has staff in Aiken County with office hours in Aiken and in North Augusta. His office number is [608-9747](tel:608-9747).

Speaking with Groups Around the District : If you are involved with a local group that would like for me to attend a meeting to provide a legislative update, please let me know.

Report Waste, Fraud and Abuse in State Government : To report waste, fraud and abuse in state government, you can call: [1-855-SC-FRAUD](tel:1-855-SC-FRAUD).

Facebook : I have a Facebook page for Senator Tom Young. Please “like” the page to receive updates during the week from me on Facebook.

Tom Young’s Website : My website can be reached at <http://www.senatortomyoung.com>. There are links to a variety of constituent services; the status of sponsored bills; and roll call votes. Please add my web site as a bookmark on your computer.

Small Business Help – SC Dept. of Commerce : The South Carolina Department of Commerce has helpful information for small business owners and employees. To learn more, go to <http://sccommerce.com/south-carolina-business-network>.

Save for College - Future Scholar 529 College Savings Plan : South Carolina’s 529 College Savings Plan Future Scholar offers special tax benefits for South Carolina residents. To learn more or to enroll, go to <http://www.FutureScholar.com/parents>.

Donate Life : You can register as an organ, eye, and tissue donor through the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles or at DonateLifeSC.org.

Child Passenger Safety : To learn more about ways to keep your children or grandchildren safe in your car, go to <http://www.bucklebuddiessc.org/>. The information at this link is provided in part by the South Carolina Department of Public Safety.

Request a Flag : If you would like to request a state or U.S. flag flown over the State Capitol in Columbia, please let me know at tom@senatortomyoung.com. Flags vary in cost according to their size and their material from which they are made.

State House Tours : Tours are available for the S.C. State House by calling (803) 734-2430. If you set a tour between January and June and it is on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, please let me know so I can do my best to see you.

Thoroughbred Country-- South Carolina Regional Tourism Organization : To learn more about tourism in the four county region of Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, and Barnwell, visit <http://www.tbredcountry.org>.

Email Updates : If you know of people in or around District 24 who do not receive my updates but they would like to get them, please email their names and email addresses to me.

Road Issues : If you see a road problem such as a pothole needing repair, call the SCDOT at 641-7665 or Aiken County at 642-1532 to report the problem. If you do not get a prompt response, please let me know at tom@senatortomyoung.com or call me. Generally, most paved roads in the County are maintained by SCDOT and are identified on the road sign poles by a small black and white sign listing the road number, such as S-2-1669. Most unpaved roads in the County are maintained by the

County.

Thank you for the opportunity and the honor to represent you. Please let me know if I can help you in any way or if you have questions about these or other issues. Your feedback is meaningful and appreciated.

Sincerely,

Tom Young
649-0000 (o)
215-3631 (cell)

Paid for by Tom Young for Senate

This message was sent to katherineveldran@gov.sc.gov from:

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