

From: Shane Massey <shanemassey=scsenate.gov@cmail1.com>

To: Veldran, KatherineKatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov

Date: 5/27/2014 12:15:07 PM

Subject: Legislative Update for the Week of 5/20/14-5/22/14

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Legislative Update for Week of 5/20/14-5/22/14

The 120th session of the General Assembly is winding down. We have 2 weeks (6 legislative days) before the legislature adjourns on June 5, 2014.

Here are the highlights from the last week's action in the Senate—

ADJUTANT GENERAL APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR? - South Carolina is the only state that elects its top military leader. Since the constitution provides that the Governor shall be the "Commander-in-Chief of the organized and unorganized militia," there is the potential for conflict if the separately elected Governor and Adjutant General disagree on a course of action. Last week, the Senate passed two pieces of legislation that could lead to the Adjutant General being appointed by the Governor. First, **H.3541**, is a proposed constitutional amendment that would allow the Governor to make the appointment. Second, **H.3542**, is the legislation setting out the specifics of the relationship between the Governor and Adjutant General.

If the House of Representatives agrees with the Senate language, the constitutional amendment will be on the ballot this November.

COMMON CORE – The House of Representatives agreed with the Senate version of **H. 3893**, a bill that will likely remove South Carolina from Common Core State Standards. The bill requires the State Department of Education to develop new, state-based K-12 standards and have those standards implemented statewide for the 2015-2016 school year. The bill prevents the adoption of any educational standards created outside South Carolina unless the General Assembly signs off on those standards. Additionally, the bill will require significant investments in technology in rural school districts across the state. The bill now goes to Governor Haley.

TEXTING WHILE DRIVING – In early April the Senate passed **S. 459**, a bill that would prohibit novice drivers – those with a learner's permit or a restricted license – from using a cell phone at all while driving. Last week the House amended that bill with a statewide ban on texting while driving. I support that prohibition and hope we can get a vote on it in the Senate before the session ends. I'll keep you updated.

ETHICS REFORM – Earlier this year, the Senate passed **H. 3945**, a bill that would require public officials to disclose the source of their incomes, force private campaign groups to be more transparent, and provide for stronger criminal penalties for public corruption.

As I mentioned in a previous update, the bill did not go nearly as far as I would have liked. I think ethics complaints against legislators should be investigated and prosecuted by an independent entity. Now, each house has an ethics committee that receives or initiates complaints against legislators. Those same committees act as investigators and judges. I do not believe the Senate has been covering up bad behavior, but I concede that the perception is bad. Unfortunately, we did not have the votes to change this process.

Last week the House amended the bill with its version. I hope there are areas where we can agree and make some much-needed changes in our ethics laws, but I do not think we will see any significant changes in the investigation and prosecution of ethics complaints against legislators.

JANET OAKLEY NEW DOT SECRETARY - Last week the Senate voted to confirm Janet Oakley as Governor Haley's nominee to be the new Secretary of the Department of Transportation. Ms. Oakley has worked in various transportation positions across the country for many years.

ROAD AND BRIDGE FUNDING - The Senate may debate this week **H. 3412**, a bill designed to move more funding into road and bridge work. The current version of the bill simply shifts existing funds from the General Fund into a pot specifically for infrastructure. However, I expect we will have several amendments to increase fees and/or taxes in order to provide additional revenue for roads and bridges. Stay tuned.

REDISTRICTING OF SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICTS - Following the census every ten years, electoral districts that are based upon population are supposed to be updated based on population changes. We have already updated Congressional, legislative, and most county and municipal districts. School districts tend to be at the end of the line, and many of those districts are just now being updated. Last week, legislation was introduced to redraw the districts in Aiken County. I expect to introduce legislation today to update the districts in Edgefield County.

Last Week's Meetings

Last Monday night, I attended the 100th anniversary celebration of the Clemson Extension program in Lexington. The extension program is a great benefit to our agriculture community.

On Tuesday morning, I met with a group of 3rd grade students from Rocky Creek Elementary School.

On Tuesday night, I attended Strom Thurmond High School's annual FFA awards banquet. The FFA program had a very successful year!

On Friday night, I attended the graduation ceremony at Wardlaw Academy. King Academy also graduated on Friday night. Congratulations to the class of 2014!

On Monday, I attended Memorial Day programs in Edgefield and Saluda. I really enjoyed both ceremonies and the recognition of the brave men and women who have given their lives to preserve the American way of life.

Constituent Interests

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATIONS - Here is a list of graduation ceremonies for the high schools in our district.

McCormick High School
Friday, 5/30/2014
7:00 p.m.

Lexington High School
Saturday, 5/31/2014
8:00 a.m.

Gilbert High School
Sunday, 6/1/2014
5:00 p.m.

North Augusta High School
Thursday, 6/5/2014
2:00 p.m.

Fox Creek High School
Thursday, 6/5/2014

7:00 p.m.

Midland Valley High School
Friday, 6/6/2014
12:00 p.m.

Ridge Spring Monetta High School
Friday, 6/6/2014
6:00 p.m.

Saluda High School
Friday, 6/6/2014
7:00 p.m.

Strom Thurmond High School
Friday, 6/6/2014
7:00 p.m.

TOP 40 UNDER 40? - Last week *The Washington Post* released its list of the "**top 40 political rising stars who are under 40 years old**," focusing on elected officials outside Washington, D.C. The Post named me to that list. It's a pretty cool recognition, and I thank all of you for giving me the opportunity to serve (and keeping me straight!).

CREDIT MONITORING –The State has contracted with CSIdentify Corporation (CSID) for the purpose of continuing credit monitoring/ID protection services to South Carolinians and businesses affected by the October 2012 security breach at the Department of Revenue. CSID's services provided under the contract are available to eligible individual taxpayers (including minors and adult dependents) and eligible business taxpayers through October 31, 2014 (although it will almost certainly be extended).

You can sign up with CSID for the offered service by doing one of the following:

1. Go to www.scidprotection.com and follow the steps to enroll

or

2. Call (855)-880-2743 to enroll.

The State will pay \$8.5 Million for the first year of the CSID contract with the option to renew for four additional one year periods at the state's sole discretion. You do not have to pay anything to sign up.

The Experian contract for the past year was a \$12 Million contract.

If you choose to purchase your own protection service, you can deduct a portion of that cost from your state income taxes. Talk with your accountant/tax preparer for more information.

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,

Shane Massey

P.O. Box 551

Edgefield, SC 29824

Email – shanemassey@scsenate.gov

Cell Phone – (803) 480-0419

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