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INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE VOICE OF THE PALMETTO STATE

Personhood Act Passes Senate Judiciary Committee By 12Y-9N



PHOTO BY STEVE LEFEMINE

By Steve Lefemine

S.217 SC Personhood Bill REPORT: S.217 favorably passed by SC Senate Judiciary Committee as Amended without "exceptions" on Tuesday, February 20. The vote was 12 Y - 9 N and one abstention and one absence without proxy (total of 23 members on Senate Judiciary Committee - 14 R, 9 D). Senator Richard Cash was the chief spokesman for the bill as Senator Cash responded to the points of attack on the Personhood Bill by several Democrats and one Republican. S.217 SC Personhood Bill primary sponsor Senator Rex Rice also stepped up and made important parliamentary moves at the end of the meeting when the actual voting took place.

Eleven Republican Senators raised their hands on this Third of three repeated votes in favor of Motion for a Favorable Report as Amended of S.217 Personhood Act of SC out of SC Senate Judiciary Committee, Tuesday, February 20, 2018. L to R, beginning with back row: Senators Young, Shealy, Rankin (raised hand obscured in photo above), Massey, Turner [back row] Senators Cash, Gambrell, Climer, Goldfinch, Rice, Talley [front row][Plus, Senator Cash announced he had proxy vote for Senator Timmons]. TOTAL: 12 Yes votes, for Favorable Passage [as Amended].

Even through the confusion of repeated votes and repeated vote counts at the end of the meeting, the committee brought this favorable result, and placed the bill, as amended with a principled amendment, on the Senate calendar.

There were three matters voted upon first:

1) On the friendly Amendment: Adopted 12 - 10 (Senn joining 11 Republicans, Rankin joining 9 Democrats)

2) On (Rice) Motion to Table the (Senn) Motion to Recommit (Bury / Kill) the Bill to Subcommittee:

Failed on 11 to 11 tie vote (Rankin and Senn joining 9 Democrats)

3) On (Senn) Motion to Recommit (Bury / Kill) the Bill to Subcommittee:

Failed on 11 to 11 tie vote (Rankin and Senn joining 9 Democrats)

Chairman Rankin first voted against the friendly Amendment proposed by supporters

► S.217

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of S.217; then he voted against the Motion to Table the Motion to Recommit; and then he voted for the Motion to Recommit. So in other words, Rankin voted with the nine pro-“abortion” Democrats against the friendly Amendment offered by five Republican Senators (including the primary sponsor of S.217, Rex Rice, and the chief spokesman, Richard Cash) supporting the Personhood Act; and then Rankin voted twice with the nine pro-“abortion” Democrats and with one of Charleston’s Republican S.217 Personhood opponents Sandy Senn, to send (bury / kill) S.217 back into the Subcommittee.

The (Rice) Motion to Table the (Senn) Motion to Recommit had failed 11-11, and the Motion to Recommit had failed 11-11, and so things did not look good for the final Motion on Favorable Passage to succeed. Pro-“abortion” Senator Malloy (D) then made a Motion for Favorable Passage so the vote would be taken at that time. If that Motion failed 11-11 also, that meant the S217 Personhood Bill would fail to be passed favorably out of Committee.

However, on the voting on the Motion for Favorable Passage of S.217, as amended, Charleston Republican, S.217 Personhood opponent, Sandy Senn, was abstaining. This vote on the Motion for Favorable Passage of S.217, as amended, was taken by Chairman Rankin three times. On the first two votes conducted on the Motion for a Favorable Report, Judiciary Committee Chairman Luke Rankin vote *against* Favorable Passage.

Senator Luke Rankin (*after* the first two of three votes on the Motion for Favorable Passage, As Amended): “Did anybody abstain from voting on the last vote?”

Senator Sandy Senn:

“I did. Mr Chairman, I did because if we’re moving the entire bill forward, I cannot go with it as is, because it’s, in my view, unconstitutional.

So without my further amendments, and other amendments, I’m gonna have to abstain ... I don’t wanna vote, I don’t wanna vote against a pro-life measure, and I’ve already said that, but as is, this one, is totally, in my view, unconstitutional. So, rather than vote against a pro-life measure, I will abstain.”

Senator Luke Rankin

“Alright ... appreciate that Senator. We gonna do this vote again (Note: Third time). All those in favor of the Motion for a Favorable report, let’s see a show of hands.”

Therefore, it appears by exercising his authority and power as Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman, Senator Rankin was able to conduct multiple re-votes on the same Motion, and changed his vote after he learned Senator Senn was abstaining (which meant there would *not* be sufficient votes to *defeat* the Motion for Favorable Passage, as Amended).

With Charleston Republican Sandy Senn abstaining, and with the other Charleston Republican S.217 Personhood opponent, Chip Campsen, absent without proxy, even if Rankin continued to vote against Favorable Passage, his negative vote would not have been able to stop the bill from being reported favorably out of the Judiciary Committee. So instead, obstructionist Luke Rankin now, on the Third vote of three repeated votes in favor of Motion for a Favorable Report; as Amended, changed his negative vote in opposition and voted in favor of the Motion for Favorable Passage of S.217, as amended with the other 11 Republicans voting in favor of S.217 Personhood, resulting in an official final vote on Favorable Passage of 12 Yes to 9 No.

The official Senate Judiciary Committee Minutes read “the bill was reported out favorable with amendment 12 – 9.”

Summary analysis of four votes taken, the last vote was actually taken three different times:

There was a block of 11 Republican supporters who *always*

voted favorably for the bill; and there was another block of 9 Democrat opponents who *always* voted in opposition to the bill.

Senator Sandy Senn (R - Charleston), voted *for* the friendly Amendment; but then voted twice in favor of Recommitting (burying / killing) the Bill to Subcommittee; and then, on the last vote for Favorable Passage, chose to Abstain, rather than vote *against* a pro-life bill.

Finally, there was the obstructive Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Luke Rankin (Horry), who voted *against* the friendly Amendment *with* the 9 Democrat pro-“abortion” Senators; and then, like Sandy Senn, voted twice (again with the 9 Democrat pro-“abortion” Senators), in favor of Recommitting (burying / killing) the Bill to Subcommittee.

It appears after Senator Sandy Senn abstained, and the votes were not there to prevent the Motion for Favorable Passage, as Amended, from succeeding, Senator Rankin chose not to be the only Republican on the Judiciary Committee to vote against the SC Personhood Act S .217 in a failed effort to prevent Favorable Passage.

(Conway, Myrtle Beach, Horry County voters, please remember this in June 2020, in the next Republican SC Senate Primary!)

Now a Special Order status for S.217 is needed so that it will actually be debated on the floor of the Senate.

Please contact the Republican Senators in the SC Senate (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov>) and urge them to advocate among their Republican Senate colleagues for Special Order status for S.217.

South Carolina Legislative Video Archives: <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/video/archives.php>. Select year 2018. Tuesday, February 20, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. Senate Judiciary Committee – Full Judiciary.