

From: Tom Young <tom@tomyoungforsenate.com>
To: Veldran, KatherineKatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov
Date: 8/7/2013 6:46:19 PM
Subject: Kids Count, Career Center, and MOX Project -- Weekly Update from Sen. Tom Young – July 16, 2013 to August 7, 2013

The State Senate is out of session until January 2014. I hope that you and your family are enjoying summer and that you find this update helpful and informative. If I can help you with an issue, please let me know.

SRS – Update

MOX Project Update: Yesterday, Shaw/Areva Mox Services announced that as part of a plan to address a budget shortfall for fiscal year 2014, a staffing reduction is underway at the MOX project. The notification to impacted employees occurred in June and July and they will begin leaving the project later in August. All impacted employees have received a 60-day notice to allow them time to make transition plans. To assist these employees in their search for employment, the MOX project organized a job fair in July with 22 companies participating. Shaw/Areva estimates that 500 employees will be impacted by the staffing reductions by October 1.

Additionally, Shaw/Areva is working with the Secretary of Energy and one of his senior advisors on funding for the project. Currently, a study of the best way forward for plutonium disposition is underway at DOE. This study should be completed by October 1. If Congress passes a continuing resolution funding the federal government at current FY13 levels, that funding is more than the President's funding request for FY14. Our local state legislative delegation continues to monitor this issue and how we can assist.

Liquid Waste Budget Request : The President's budget request for high level waste cleanup and closure of aging waste tanks at SRS has significant implications as to our community, its workforce, and the cleanup of Savannah River Site. Several hundred local jobs are contingent on the funding related to the government's regulatory commitments to clean up the waste. Recently, the Governor's Nuclear Advisory Commission wrote our state's Congressional delegation and members of Georgia's delegation requesting attention to this issue. To see those letters, [go here](#). Our local state legislative delegation is also assisting SRR in

addressing this issue.

Kids Count Report and Recent Education News

Report on Children in South Carolina : Last week, the 2013 KIDS COUNT report was released showing that South Carolina is ranked 45th in the nation as to the overall well-being of our state's children. To see the numbers specific to South Carolina, go [here](#). Since the rankings began, South Carolina has never been better than number 42. States that consistently rank high in the annual report have an educated workforce, more students graduating from high school on time, and higher paying jobs than our state. Many of these problems are the direct result of generational poverty in our state. Improving the overall educational attainment of our state's citizens is critical to decreasing generational poverty in South Carolina. I will write more about this and seek input in email updates later this year.

High School Dropout Rate Improves : Last Wednesday, the State Department of Education reported a 35 percent reduction in the state's high school dropout rate over the five year period from the 2007/2008 school year to 2011/2012 school year. The Aiken County School District reported a 26 percent reduction over the four year period from 2008/2009 school year to 2011/2012 school year.

Aiken County Career Center : Located across from Aiken Tech, this facility assists local high school students who may not have an interest in the traditional college prep courses in high school. Of the students participating from Aiken County high schools, 98.2% graduate on time within 4 years (2012 report). Currently, there are about 670 students enrolled in the program. This is a successful program which is doing great work to keep students in school and help them learn a skill. To learn more, go [here](#).

State Government News

BEA Estimate on State Revenue : For the year (12-13), general fund revenues are up \$519.9 million or 8.5% over last year. Total revenue for June 2013 is up \$60.3 million compared to June 2012. To date the General Fund is \$109.4 million above the forecast for FY 12-13.

Roads & SCDOT Recommendations : With some of the funding provided by the General Assembly in the current budget, the SCDOT plans to improve 90 miles of interstate highways in South Carolina. Using a combination of the \$500 million bonding capacity and federal and state funds, the projects recommended for funding include:

I-85/I-385 interchange in Greenville County; I-26 widening in Lexington/Richland counties (4.89 miles); I-85 widening in Greenville/Spartanburg counties (24.7 miles); I-526 widening in Charleston County (19.44 miles) (this does not involve the proposed extension of I-526); I-20 widening in Lexington County (10.31 miles); I-77 widening in Richland County (2.58 miles); I-85 widening in Spartanburg/Cherokee counties (28.36 miles).

The I-20 portion of the above is significant to those of us in Aiken County as it means

that I-20 will expand from four to six lanes near exit 51 headed toward Columbia.

Regulations – Comments Encouraged : On July 22, I attended the local meeting of the Governor’s task force to review regulations and to recommend ways to reduce, improve, and simplify regulatory burdens. The group’s report is due November 15, 2013. Public comments are encouraged. To provide comments to the Governor’s Task Force on any regulation, email the task force at GovRegTaskForce@sccommerce.com.

Upcoming Meetings

Aiken County Legislative Delegation Meeting: The delegation will meet next Monday, August 12 at 5:00 pm at the Aiken County Council Building on Richland Avenue in Aiken. To learn more, call the delegation office at 642-1694.

End of Session Town Meetings : Like the past four years, I plan to hold end of session town meetings around the district. Based on constituent requests, I will hold those after the summer vacation season ends. The dates, times, and locations will be provided in future email updates.

Hitchcock Parkway Update : Last Thursday, I attended the ARTS meeting where an update was provided on this project. SCDOT plans a presentation for Aiken City Council next Monday, August 12 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall. The SCDOT also plans another public input meeting in either October or November of this year.

North Augusta Business and Community Expo : The North Augusta Chamber of Commerce will host a business and community expo at the N.A. Community Center on Thursday, September 12 from 1:00 to 7:00 pm. To learn more, go [here](#).

Other Local Topics of Interest

SCE&G Rate Hike Request Update : SCE&G requested permission for an increase in utility rates earlier this year of \$4.32 per 1,000 KWHs used by residential customers. The State Public Service Commission (PSC) has to approve the request. The State Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) issued a report at the end of July indicating the results of its review and audit and proposing any changes to the revised rates or the information supporting the revised rates that ORS determines necessary. ORS recommended a reduction in the requested to \$4.17 per 1,000 KWHs in the average monthly bill. To see the report, [go here](#). Public comments are very important and should be emailed to Dukes Scott at cdscott@regstaff.sc.gov no later than August 30.

Email Updates : While I send these email updates every week during the legislative session, I will not send them as often between now and January since the legislature is out of session. I plan to send at least two a month between now and January.

Grass Cutting in the SCDOT Right of Way : Grass is growing in right of ways around our district. DOT has staff cutting the grass. If you are aware of an area where high grass is obstructing vision for drivers as they enter or exit certain roads in our County, please call the SCDOT at 641-7665 or let me know and I will pass on

the information.

Greater Aiken Senior Extravaganza 2013 : The City of Aiken will have its annual Aiken Senior Extravaganza again on Wednesday, September 18 at the H. Odell Weeks Center from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. The event offers seniors, and those interested in issues facing seniors, an opportunity to spend a day in educational seminars and to browse the display fair. The educational seminars will be limited to the first 325 people to register. The Health Fair and displays will be open to the public and pre-registration is not required. Age: 50 and over: Cost: FREE : Wednesday, September 19, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. For more information, please call 642-7631.

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@taylorschouse.com

• Rep. Don Wells (Dist. 81): dwells29801@gmail.com

Congressman Joe Wilson Contact Information: Congressman Wilson now 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.

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.

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 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/sc-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 www.FutureScholar.com/parents.

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 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
