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Subject: Legislative Update for the Week of 4/8/14-4/10/14

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Legislative Update for Week of 3/25/14-3/27/14

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

TEXTING WHILE DRIVING – 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. There were a few attempts to amend the bill so as to prohibit all drivers from texting while driving; those attempts failed. However, I am hopeful the House of Representatives will amend the bill to provide for a texting ban and allow us to have that fight again in the Senate. I'll keep you updated.

IGNITION INTERLOCKS FOR DUI CONVICTIONS – The House and Senate agreed on “Emma’s Law,” a bill that will require the installation of ignition interlock devices for drivers who have been convicted of 1st-offense DUI with a blood-alcohol concentration of 0.15% or greater. The driver would have to blow into the device before cranking the car, allowing the device to determine whether the driver had been drinking alcohol. If the device detects alcohol, the vehicle will not start. The bill now goes to Governor Haley to be signed into law.

South Carolina law already requires ignition interlock devices for drivers who have multiple DUI convictions.

READ TO SUCCEED – Studies show that students who do not read on grade level by 3rd grade are unlikely ever to catch up. Those students are also unlikely to graduate from high school. To combat those sobering statistics, the Senate passed **S. 516**, a bill that would require additional literacy training for teachers, add reading coaches at elementary schools, provide for intensive reading intervention for K-3rd graders who struggle with reading, and require that students read on grade level upon the completion of 3rd grade or be retained for another year in 3rd grade. This program, which will cost around \$30 million annually, is also part of Governor Haley’s education proposal for this year.

4-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN – As part of S. 516, the Senate also agreed to a proposal to expand 4-year-old kindergarten to students across the state. The 4K program would not be mandatory for students, and it is dependent on funds being available and appropriated in the budget each year.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY WORK SCHEDULE – The Senate will be in session Tuesday and Wednesday this week. The Senate will take off Thursday, as is the custom for the Thursday before Easter. Also the Senate will not be in session the week of April 21-25. The House of Representatives will not be in session this week or next week.

STATE BUDGET – The Senate Finance Committee expects to finish its work on the state budget this week. Therefore, the full Senate should begin debate on the budget the week of May 5.

Last Week’s Meetings

On Wednesday night, I attended Lexington County Night in Columbia. This annual event sponsored by Lexington County and many of the leading private businesses in the county allow legislators and staff to learn about the great things going on in Lexington.

On Thursday night, I attended Lexington One's Teacher of the Year celebration. We have our challenges in education across the state, but there really are some great things happening in South Carolina's public schools. I encourage you to attend your local school district's teacher of the year banquet. You will be impressed with the creativity and passion of some very talented teachers.

Constituent Interests

REPAIRS TO I-20 IN AIKEN COUNTY – I have received several emails about the poor condition of the westbound section of I-20 in Aiken County. SCDOT has approved a contract to resurface the westbound lanes from mile marker 22.7 to mile marker 13. Satterfield Construction from Greenwood will perform the work beginning on April 21. The work should be completed in late July.

AIKEN, EDGEFIELD, SALUDA ELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL EMERGENCY AID – Last week President Obama designated 21 SC Counties as National Disaster areas following the recent ice and snow storms. That designation makes those counties eligible for federal emergency assistance. Aiken, Edgefield, and Saluda counties are included in the list of eligible counties. You can learn more about the declaration [here](#).

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,

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