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Under the Dome Legislative Update
March 7, 2025
08 – 2025

- ***House passes Liquor Liability bill***
- ***Senate Tort Reform bill stumbles***
- ***House budget debate begins Monday, March 10th at 1:00 pm***

Liquor Liability and Tort Reform dominate

In this eighth week of the 2025 legislative session, the House of Representatives passed its liquor liability bill while the Senate cut short tort reform debate after an amendment spearheaded by Senator Stephen Goldfinch (R, Georgetown) surprisingly survived a tabling motion by Senate Majority Leader Shane Massey (R, Edgefield).

Liquor Liability passes the House

After receiving a favorable as amended report by the full House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, the House of Representatives gave second reading to H.3497, a bill intended to help with skyrocketing liquor liability insurance policies in the state, by a vote of 109 – 0. As amended, H.3497 creates new regulations for alcohol server training, requires insurers to establish liquor liability mitigation measures combined with offering premium discounts for compliance, and requires businesses choosing to serve alcohol after 5:00 pm to carry at least $1M in liquor liability insurance unless they meet specified risk-reducing criteria. A new crime of felony DUI in the second degree, punishable by a mandatory fine and up to 10 years in prison, is also established in H.3497. The Liquor Liability Mitigation Program is designed to provide clear incentives for responsible alcohol service, lower premiums for businesses implementing key safety measures and ensure accountability. Summary:

1. Alcohol Server Training Program: Mandates all alcohol servers and managers complete state-approved training to serve responsibly and recognize intoxication. This training is aimed at promoting responsible alcohol service and reducing incidents related to overconsumption.
2. Insurance Requirements: Allows establishments to set up captive insurance companies to provide at least half of the required $1 million liquor liability coverage, thereby offering businesses an alternative to traditional insurance providers.
3. Joint and Several Liability: Aims to end joint and several liability so that responsible businesses are not sued for incidents beyond their control. Businesses would be responsible only for their proportional share of damages.
4. Strengthening Enforcement: The program strengthens enforcement to prevent businesses from knowingly selling alcohol to intoxicated patrons, with the goal of increasing public safety.

H.3497 received unanimous consent for third reading today and will be sent to the Senate next week where it will be referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. S.184, the dram shop Senate bill, resides on the Senate contested calendar.

Senate Tort Reform debate not done (yet)

After two days of late debate on S.244, the Senate tort reform bill led by Senator Massey, a motion to table an amendment offered by Senator Stephen Goldfinch (R, Georgetown) failed by a vote of 19 – 25, which led to Senator Massey calling for the Senate to adjourn for the day. Massey said the amendment was brought forth by the trial lawyers and guts S.244 in its entirety. Shaking his head while walking up to the podium, Senator Massey said, "We're done. We're done. It's over. Congratulations – it's done. There will be businesses closed now because of this."

At issue is how the legal system determines who is at fault and how much plaintiffs are due. There is an almost equal division supporters and opponents to tort reform, explaining why the issue has failed to gain momentum for years in the General Assembly despite attempts almost every two-year legislative session. While supporters say large verdicts against those with small percentages of fault are unfair, opponents argue that restricting a victim's access to justice and allowing those inflicting harm to escape accountability is unfair. Tort reform and liquor liability are closely related, as hundreds of restaurants and bars have been forced to shut down over the past several years due to lawsuit payouts.

Governor McMaster weighs in

On Wednesday, Governor McMaster was joined by Senator Massey, Senate President Tom Alexander (R, Oconee) and hundreds of representatives from business sectors across the state to call for the passage of S.244 and to fix the joint and several liability issue. Governor McMaster specifically asked for "common sense" tort reform and acknowledged the issue spans across every business, from small to large, from manufacturing to hospitals. Yesterday, Governor McMaster gave thanks to the House for passing their liquor liability bill "to deliver real relief for bars, restaurants and VFW posts across our state."

What's Next?

S.244 still resides in its Special Order slot on the Senate calendar in mast head status, meaning consideration of the Goldfinch amendment will be up once debate on S.244 resumes on Monday. It has been reported that dozens of amendments remain on the desk, and we expect Senator Massey and other members of leadership to work over the weekend on a path forward for Tuesday. The media campaign will likely remain underway with the trial lawyers vs. the Senate Republican Caucus.

State Budget --- House floor debate begins Monday; Senate Finance Budget hearings continue

The House of Representatives begins floor debate of the FY 2025-26 State Budget this coming Monday, March 10th at 1:00 pm. Summaries of the House Ways and Means version of the budget can be reviewed via the following links:

- **FY 2025-26 Proviso List**
- **FY 2025-26 Ways and Means Committee Proviso Summaries**
- **Summary Control Document** / **FY 2025-26 Budget Briefing**

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Senate Finance Budget Subcommittees

Senate Finance Budget Subcommittees will continue receiving agency budget requests next week. Click here to review the Senate Budget Schedule, with full Senate Finance deliberations scheduled for the week of April 8th and floor debate scheduled for the week of April 22nd. The state Board of Economic Advisors will meet on Thursday, April 10th to give an updated revenue forecast, which could potentially result in additional revenue.

DEI, Energy Reform and more

Continuing the "all politics is national" trend, the House Education and Public Works Committee chose to skip the subcommittee process and instead bring H.3927, the anti-DEI bill which would enact the "Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity Act," to full Committee to receive testimony on Tuesday. The Committee spent more than four hours receiving testimony, with every person testifying opposed to the bill and asking Committee members to consider their humanity over politics. H.3927 would ban diversity, equity and inclusion programs from all South Carolina government bodies and prohibit those entities from contracting with any company which has DEI programs. Click here to read an article by the *South Carolina Daily Gazette* with a summary of the Committee meeting.

Senate Energy Reform

The Senate Judiciary Subcommittee chaired by Senator Rankin held its first hearing on H.3309, the House Energy Reform, Wednesday morning and spent time receiving testimony from the Coastal Conservation League, energyRe/the Carolina Clean Energy Business Association, the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, and other entities along with concerned citizens. Chairman Rankin said the next meeting will involve stakeholders and utility providers to have an "open-source conversation."

S.51 supporting the Santee Cooper RFP for V.C. Summer was referred to the House Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee, and S.12, the bill giving authorizing Santee Cooper to partner with Dominion Energy to specifically build at the Canadys site in Colleton County, resides on the Senate contested calendar until the appropriate time to begin floor debate – perhaps upon completion tort reform debate.

Healthcare Initiatives move forward

On Wednesday, a Senate Medical Affairs Subcommittee chaired by Senator Shane Martin (R, Spartanburg), held its second subcommittee hearing on S.54, Senator Martin's bill which would enact the Medical Informed Consent Act addressing vaccines and states of emergency. S.54 was amended with language addressing concerns from pediatricians who thought the bill could impact the childhood immunization schedules set forth by the Department of Public Health (DPH). As such, the term "novel vaccine" was removed to clarify certain vaccines that can change every year (such as flu), and the DPH can retain its current vaccination schedule but must wait to assess risks and benefits for a new vaccine. Several additional amendments were adopted, and the bill as amended received a favorable report with Senator Ronnie Sabb (D, Williamsburg) opposed.

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On Thursday, the full Senate Medical Affairs Committee gave S.236, the Anesthesiologist's Assistant bill ("AA") increasing physician supervision minimums from two AAs to four, a favorable report along with S.170 requiring hospitals to have specific protocol and equipment in place to ensure surgical smoke in surgery rooms is at a minimum for the safety of healthcare professionals.

S.2, the bill which brings the state's behavioral health agencies under one cabinet agency, was referred to the House Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee after passage by the Senate last week.

New House 3M-LCI Pharmacy Benefit Managers Ad Hoc Committee

Members of the House Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs (3M) Committee and the Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee have come together to create a Pharmacy Benefit Managers Ad Hoc Committee to explore the industry through targeted sessions to find the issues and concerns with this sector of healthcare and determine if the General Assembly has a role to play.

Representative Heath Sessions (R, York) was selected to serve as Chairman and noted that over the course of four meetings, the Ad Hoc Committee will hear from the Pharmacy Care Management Association and representatives from the pharmacy research and manufacturing associations, along with insurers. The first meeting is scheduled for March 25th at 9:00 am. House 3M Committee Chairlady Sylleste Davis (R, Berkeley) stated the purpose of the Ad-Hoc Committee is fact-finding and that specific legislation will not be debated.

House floor debate of the Budget begins Monday

The House Ways and Means version of the FY 2025-26 State Budget has been printed and placed on the desks of House members for review. Members have been encouraged to prepare amendments and prepare for floor debate the week of March 10th.

- H.4025 - General Appropriations bill
- H.4026 - Capital Reserve Fund bill
- House Ways and Means FY 2025-26 Summary Control Document (appropriations)
- Capital Reserve Fund (a recurring appropriation which equals 3% of the most recently completed fiscal year's General Fund Revenue – this bill appropriates the balance of the Capital Reserve Fund if it is not needed to cover a General Fund revenue shortfall)
- Adopted Proviso Packets

actionTRACK Bill Updates

HB3021 SMALL BUSINESS REGULATORY FREEDOM ACT (Bradley, J) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ENACTING THE "SMALL BUSINESS REGULATORY FREEDOM ACT" BY ADDING SECTION 1-23-285 SO AS TO PROVIDE THE SMALL BUSINESS REGULATORY REVIEW COMMITTEE SHALL CONDUCT AN INITIAL REVIEW OF REGULATIONS PENDING REAUTHORIZATION AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR RETAINING OR REMOVING REGULATIONS, TO PROVIDE IT IS THE DUTY OF THE COMMITTEE WHEN REVIEWING REGULATIONS TO REDUCE THE

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OVERALL REGULATORY BURDEN ON BUSINESSES BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS BY TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT, AND TO PROVIDE THE COMMITTEE MAY REQUEST ANY NECESSARY INFORMATION FROM STATE AGENCIES AND TO REQUIRE THE COMPLIANCE OF AGENCIES WITH THESE REQUESTS, AMONG OTHER THINGS; BY AMENDING SECTION 1-23-110, RELATING TO THE PROCESS FOR PROMULGATING REGULATIONS UNDER THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES ACT SO AS TO PROVIDE AGENCIES MAY NOT PROMULGATE REGULATIONS ABSENT EXPRESS STATUTORY AUTHORITY AND CITATION TO THE SPECIFIC STATUTORY AUTHORITY, TO PROVIDE FOR EVERY REGULATION AN AGENCY PROPOSES, IT MUST IDENTIFY AND PROPOSE TWO OF ITS REGULATIONS TO REMOVE, TO PROVIDE PERSONS AGGRIEVED BY A REGULATION MAY CHALLENGE THE VALIDITY OF THE REGULATION IN A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION, AND TO PROVIDE COURTS MAY DECLARE REGULATIONS INVALID UPON FINDING AN ABSENCE OF EXPRESS STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO PROMULGATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 1-23-115, RELATING TO ASSESSMENT REPORTS FOR REGULATIONS SUBMITTED FOR PROMULGATION, SO AS TO PROVIDE ALL REGULATIONS SUBMITTED FOR PROMULGATION MUST INCLUDE ASSESSMENT REPORTS, TO ALLOW LONGER REVIEW PERIODS IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, TO PROVIDE DISCOUNT RATES MUST BE JUSTIFIED IF APPLIED IN AN ANALYSIS REPORT, TO PROVIDE PROMULGATING AGENCIES MUST CONDUCT RETROSPECTIVE ASSESSMENT REPORTS IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, TO PROVIDE ASSESSMENT CONTENTS MUST BE MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE IN A CERTAIN MANNER, TO PROVIDE CERTAIN STANDARDIZED ANALYTIC METHODS AND METRICS MUST BE APPLIED TO ALL REGULATIONS, TO REQUIRE RETROSPECTIVE ASSESSMENT REPORTS BE CONDUCTED WHEN REGULATIONS ARE REVIEWED FOR RENEWAL, AMONG OTHER THINGS; BY AMENDING SECTION 1-23-120, RELATING TO DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED TO INITIATE THE REVIEW PROCESS FOR A REGULATION, SO AS TO REQUIRE THE DOCUMENTS INCLUDE AN AUTOMATIC EXPIRATION DATE, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE AUTOMATIC EXPIRATION AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF REGULATIONS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 1-23-380, RELATING TO JUDICIAL REVIEW UPON EXHAUSTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES, SO AS TO PROVIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW OF AGENCY INTERPRETATIONS OF REGULATIONS.

3/6/2025 - Read third time and sent to Senate (House Journal-page 38)

3/6/2025 - Roll call Yeas-108 Nays-0 (House Journal-page 39)

3/6/2025 - Scrivener's error corrected

HB3497 LIQUOR LIABILITY (Newton, W) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 38-90-20, RELATING TO INSURANCE LICENSURE, SO AS TO ALLOW AN INSURANCE COMPANY TO PROVIDE LIQUOR LIABILITY INSURANCE; BY AMENDING SECTION 61-2-60, RELATING TO THE PROMULGATION OF ALCOHOL REGULATIONS, SO AS TO AUTHORIZE REGULATIONS REGARDING ALCOHOL SERVER TRAINING POSITIONS; BY AMENDING SECTION 61-2-145, RELATING TO REQUIRED LIQUOR LIABILITY INSURANCE COVERAGE, SO AS TO ESTABLISH A LIQUOR LIABILITY MITIGATION PROGRAM; BY ADDING CHAPTER 3 TO TITLE 61 SO AS TO ESTABLISH AN ALCOHOL SERVER TRAINING PROGRAM; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 61-6-2220, RELATING TO ALCOHOL SALES, SO AS TO PROHIBIT A PERSON FROM KNOWINGLY SELLING ALCOHOL TO AN INTOXICATED PERSON.

3/6/2025 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Sanders, Willis, Brewer, Hiott, Hixon, Caskey, Henderson-Myers, Wickensimer, Yow, Mitchell, Bamberg, Hart, Garvin

3/6/2025 - Amended (House Journal-page 22)

3/6/2025 - Read second time (House Journal-page 22)

3/6/2025 - Roll call Yeas-109 Nays-0 (House Journal-page 36)

3/6/2025 - Unanimous consent for third reading on next legislative day (House Journal-page 37)

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HB3650 DISCHARGING FIREARMS INTO DWELLINGS AND OTHER STRUCTURES (Smith, Jr., G) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 16-1-60, RELATING TO OFFENSES DEFINED AS VIOLENT CRIMES, SO AS TO INCLUDE THE OFFENSE OF DISCHARGING FIREARMS AT OR INTO A DWELLING HOUSE, OTHER BUILDING, STRUCTURE, ENCLOSURE, VEHICLE, AIRCRAFT, WATERCRAFT, OR OTHER CONVEYANCE, DEVICE, OR EQUIPMENT; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 16-23-440, RELATING TO DISCHARGING FIREARMS INTO A DWELLING HOUSE, OTHER BUILDING, STRUCTURE, ENCLOSURE, VEHICLE, AIRCRAFT, WATERCRAFT, OR OTHER CONVEYANCE, DEVICE, OR EQUIPMENT, SO AS TO CREATE A TIERED PENALTY STRUCTURE.

3/6/2025 - Introduced and read first time

3/6/2025 - Referred to Committee Senate Judiciary

HB3756 STORM DAMAGE RECOVERY (Herbkersman, W) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 58-27-1105, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS, SO AS TO DEFINE "QUALIFIED INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY" AND TO ALLOW AN ELECTRIC UTILITY TO INCLUDE STORM RECOVERY COSTS FOR HURRICANE HELENE AND ITS COST OF CAPITAL FROM THE DATE OF THE STORM THROUGH THE ISSUANCE OF STORM RECOVERY BONDS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 58-27-1110, RELATING TO THE PETITION FOR FINANCING ORDER AND REQUIREMENTS, SO AS TO ALLOW AN ELECTRIC UTILITY TO DEFER THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF A FINANCING ORDER.

3/6/2025 - Read third time and sent to Senate (House Journal-page 19)

HB3845 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (Gatch, G) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 57-5-880, RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS, SO AS TO PROVIDE AN ENTITY UNDERTAKING A FEDERAL HIGHWAY PROJECT SHALL BEAR THE COSTS RELATED TO RELOCATING BROADBAND SERVICE LINES AND TO PROVIDE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR BROADBAND SERVICE PROVIDERS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR RELOCATION PAYMENTS; AND BY REPEALING SECTION 2 OF ACT 36 OF 2019 RELATED TO A SUNSET PROVISION.

3/6/2025 - House LCI: Public Utilities Subcommittee, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

HB4002 GREATER GREENVILLE SANITATION DISTRICT (Burns, M) A BILL TO DEVOLVE ALL OF THE POWERS, DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES, ASSETS, AND LIABILITIES OF THE GREATER GREENVILLE SANITATION DISTRICT TO THE GOVERNING BODY OF GREENVILLE COUNTY; AND TO REPEAL ACT 1543 OF 1968, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE CREATION OF THE GREATER GREENVILLE SANITATION DISTRICT.

3/6/2025 - Amended (House Journal-page 16)

3/6/2025 - Read second time (House Journal-page 16)

3/6/2025 - Roll call Yeas-97 Nays-7 (House Journal-page 18)

3/6/2025 - Unanimous consent for third reading on next legislative day (House Journal-page 19)

HB4025 FY2025-2026 APPROPRIATIONS (Bannister, B) A BILL TO MAKE APPROPRIATIONS AND TO PROVIDE REVENUES TO MEET THE ORDINARY EXPENSES OF STATE GOVERNMENT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025, TO REGULATE THE EXPENDITURE OF SUCH FUNDS, AND TO FURTHER PROVIDE FOR THE OPERATION OF STATE GOVERNMENT DURING THIS FISCAL YEAR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

3/6/2025 - House Ways and Means, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

3/6/2025 - Special order, set for Monday 3-10-25

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HJR4026 CAPITAL RESERVE FUND (Bannister, B) A JOINT RESOLUTION TO APPROPRIATE MONIES FROM THE CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025, AND TO ALLOW UNEXPENDED FUNDS APPROPRIATED TO BE CARRIED FORWARD TO SUCCEEDING FISCAL YEARS AND EXPENDED FOR THE SAME PURPOSES.

3/6/2025 - House Ways and Means, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

3/6/2025 - Special order, set for immediately following second reading of H. 4025

SB157 STORM DAMAGE RECOVERY (Alexander, T) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 58-27-1105, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS, SO AS TO DEFINE QUALIFIED INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY AND TO ALLOW AN ELECTRIC UTILITY TO INCLUDE STORM RECOVERY COSTS FOR HURRICANE HELENE IN ITS COST OF CAPITAL FROM THE DATE OF THE STORM THROUGH THE ISSUANCE OF STORM RECOVERY BONDS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 58-27-1110, RELATING TO THE PETITION FOR FINANCING ORDER AND REQUIREMENTS, SO AS TO ALLOW AN ELECTRICAL UTILITY TO DEFER THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF A FINANCING ORDER.

3/6/2025 - Introduced , placed on calendar without reference (House Journal-page 11)

SB161 NON-OPIOID PAIN MANAGEMENT (Verdin III, D) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING ARTICLE 20 TO TITLE 44, CHAPTER 53, SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE ADOPTION OF A STATE PREFERRED DRUG LIST; PROHIBIT PREFERENCING COVERAGE OF AN OPIOID PRESCRIPTION TREATMENT OVER NON-OPIOID TREATMENT; PROVIDE FOR THE CREATION OF AN EDUCATIONAL PAMPHLET BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH REGARDING NON-OPIOID ALTERNATIVES FOR THE TREATMENT OF PAIN; PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR PRACTITIONERS OFFERING NON-OPIOID TREATMENT; AND TO PROVIDE DEFINITIONS.

3/6/2025 - Senate Medical Affairs, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

3/6/2025 - Senate Committee recommends passage, as amended Medical Affairs Committee

SB170 SURGICAL SMOKE EVACUATION SYSTEM (Hembree, G) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 44-7-387 SO AS TO REQUIRE A LICENSED FACILITY TO ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES TO PREVENT EXPOSURE TO SURGICAL SMOKE BY REQURING THE USE OF A SMOKE EVACUATION SYSTEM.

3/6/2025 - Senate Medical Affairs, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

3/6/2025 - Senate Committee recommends passage, as amended Medical Affairs Committee

SB221 SOUTH CAROLINA KRATOM CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT (Ott, R) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ENACTING THE "SOUTH CAROLINA KRATOM CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT" BY ADDING ARTICLE 20 TO CHAPTER 53, TITLE 44 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGULATION OF THE SALE OF KRATOM PRODUCTS BY RETAILERS AND PROCESSORS AND TO CREATE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE ARTICLE.

3/6/2025 - Senate Medical Affairs, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

SB236 ANESTHESIOLOGIST ASSISTANTS (Kimbrell, J) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 40-47-1250, RELATING TO SUPERVISION OF ANESTHESIOLOGIST'S ASSISTANTS, SO AS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ANESTHESIOLOGIST'S ASSISTANTS THAT AN ANESTHESIOLOGIST MAY SUPERVISE; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 40-47-1240, RELATING TO LICENSURE OF ANESTHESIOLOGIST'S ASSISTANTS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE

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REQUIREMENT THAT LICENSURE APPLICANTS MUST APPEAR BEFORE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS AND PRESENT EVIDENCE OF CERTAIN RELEVANT ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS AND KNOWLEDGE.

3/6/2025 - Senate Medical Affairs, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

3/6/2025 - Senate Committee recommends passage Medical Affairs Committee

3/6/2025 - Committee report Senate Medical Affairs: Favorable

SB244 TORT REFORM (Massey, A) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 15-38-15, RELATING TO THE APPORTIONMENT OF PERCENTAGES OF FAULT AND ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE OR DRUG EXCEPTIONS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT A JURY OR THE COURT SHALL DETERMINE THE PERCENTAGE OF FAULT OF THE CLAIMANT, THE DEFENDANT, AND OF ANY NONPARTY WHOSE ACT OR OMISSION WAS A PROXIMATE CAUSE OF THE CLAIMANT'S ALLEGED DAMAGES; BY REPEALING SECTION 15-38-20 RELATING TO RIGHT OF CONTRIBUTION; BY REPEALING SECTION 15-38-30 RELATING TO FACTORS DETERMINING PRO RATA LIABILITY OF TORTFEASORS; BY REPEALING SECTION 15-38-40 RELATING TO ACTIONS FOR CONTRIBUTION; BY ADDING SECTION 15-3-710 SO AS TO DEFINE NECESSARY TERMS; BY ADDING SECTION 15-3-720 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT AN INDIVIDUAL IS PROHIBITED FROM RECOVERING DAMAGES IF THE INDIVIDUAL KNOWINGLY RIDES AS A PASSENGER IN A VEHICLE OPERATED BY A DRIVER WHO IS VISIBLY INTOXICATED OR WHOM THE INDIVIDUAL KNEW OR SHOULD HAVE KNOWN WOULD BECOME INTOXICATED; BY ADDING SECTION 15-3-730 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE CLERK OF COURT SHALL FORWARD A COPY OF THE COMPLAINT AND JUDGEMENT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE UPON ENTERING JUDGMENT AGAINST A LICENSEE; BY AMENDING SECTION 61-4-580, RELATING TO PROHIBITED ACTS, SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR CIVIL LIABILITY; BY AMENDING SECTION 61-4-590, RELATING TO REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF PERMITS AND DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATION AND DETERMINATION, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT MAY REVOKE OR SUSPEND A PERMIT ON ITS OWN INITIATIVE UPON RECEIPT OF A COMPLAINT AND JUDGMENT; BY ADDING SECTION 61-3-100 SO AS TO DEFINE NECESSARY TERMS; BY ADDING SECTION 61-3-110 SO AS TO PROVIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAINING SERVER AND MANAGER TRAINING; BY ADDING SECTION 61-3-120 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE CREATION OF AND APPROVAL OF TRAINING PROGRAMS; BY ADDING SECTION 61-3-130 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF ALCOHOL SERVER CERTIFICATES; BY ADDING SECTION 61-3-140 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE RENEWAL OF A PERMIT OR LICENSE; BY ADDING SECTION 61-3-150 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF RELEVANT PROVISIONS; BY ADDING SECTION 61-3-160 SO AS TO PROVIDE PENALTIES; BY AMENDING SECTION 61-2-60, RELATING TO THE PROMULGATION OF REGULATIONS SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, EDUCATION, AND ENFORCEMENT OF RESPONSIBLE ALCOHOL SERVER TRAINING PROVISIONS; BY AMENDING SECTION 61-6-2220, RELATING TO SALES TO INTOXICATED PERSONS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT A PERSON OR ESTABLISHMENT LICENSED TO SELL ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS OR LIQUOR BY THE DRINK PURSUANT TO THIS ARTICLE MAY NOT KNOWINGLY PROVIDE THESE BEVERAGES TO AN INTOXICATED PERSON; BY AMENDING SECTION 38-90-20, RELATING TO LICENSING, REQUIRED INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION, FEES, AND RENEWAL, SO AS TO INCLUDE LIQUOR LIABILITY INSURANCE; BY AMENDING SECTION 61-2-145, RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENT OF LIABILITY INSURANCE COVERAGE, SO AS TO PROVIDE LIMITS; BY AMENDING SECTION 61-2-145, RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENT OF LIABILITY INSURANCE COVERAGE, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT AN INSURER SHALL NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT IF A PERSON LICENSED TO SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES FOR ON-PREMISES CONSUMPTION EXCEEDS ITS AGGREGATE LIMIT PRIOR TO THE EXPIRATION OF THE POLICY; BY AMENDING SECTION 15-3-670, RELATING TO CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH LIMITATIONS PROVIDED BY SECTIONS 15-3-640 THROUGH 15-3-660 ARE NOT AVAILABLE AS DEFENSE, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT A VIOLATION IS CONSIDERED MATERIAL ONLY IF IT EXISTS WITHIN A COMPLETED BUILDING, STRUCTURE, OR FACILITY WHICH HAS RESULTED IN PHYSICAL HARM TO A PERSON OR SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO THE PERFORMANCE OF A BUILDING OR ITS SYSTEMS; BY AMENDING SECTION 56-5-6540, RELATING TO PENALTIES, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT A VIOLATION IS ADMISSIBLE AS EVIDENCE OF COMPARATIVE NEGLIGENCE; BY ADDING SECTION 15-7-65 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT A CIVIL

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ACTION TRIED AGAINST AN UNKNOWN DEFENDANT MUST BE TRIED IN THE COUNTY WHERE THE CAUSE OF ACTION AROSE; BY AMENDING SECTION 38-77-150, RELATING TO UNINSURED MOTORIST PROVISIONS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE UNINSURED MOTORIST PROVISION IS NOT REQUIRED TO INCLUDE COVERAGE FOR PUNITIVE OR EXEMPLARY DAMAGES; BY AMENDING SECTION 38-77-160, RELATING TO ADDITIONAL UNINSURED MOTORIST COVERAGE, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE CARRIERS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO INCLUDE COVERAGE FOR PUNITIVE OR EXEMPLARY DAMAGES IN THE MANDATORY OFFER OF UNDERINSURED MOTORISTS COVERAGE; BY AMENDING SECTION 15-78-30, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS, SO AS TO DEFINE OCCURRENCE; BY AMENDING SECTION 15-32-220, RELATING TO NONECONOMIC DAMAGES LIMIT AND EXCEPTIONS, SO AS TO PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR INTENT TO HARM, FELONY CONVICTIONS, AND INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS; AND BY ADDING SECTION 38-59-23 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR ACTIONS FOR BAD FAITH INVOLVING A LIABILITY.

3/6/2025 - Debate interrupted

SB274 UNEMPLOYMENT WEEKLY BENEFIT AMOUNT (Massey, A) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 41-35-40, RELATING TO THE WEEKLY UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT AMOUNT, SO AS TO SET THE MAXIMUM WEEKLY BENEFIT AMOUNT AT THREE HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS AND TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE MAXIMUM WEEKLY BENEFIT AMOUNT BE PUBLISHED ON THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE WEBSITE.

3/6/2025 - Senate LCI: Ad Hoc Subcommittee, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

SB279 DEW RESTRUCTURING (Massey, A) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 41-29-20, RELATING TO THE APPOINTMENT, REMOVAL, AND COMPENSATION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 41-29-35, RELATING TO THE APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SO AS TO PROVIDE QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE; BY AMENDING SECTION 41-27-710, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE REVIEW COMMITTEE, SO AS TO REMOVE THE PROVISION THAT A PERSON MAY NOT BE APPOINTED UNLESS THE COMMITTEE FINDS THE APPOINTEE QUALIFIED; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 41-27-720, RELATING TO DUTIES OF COMMITTEE, SO AS TO REMOVE THE PROVISION THAT THE COMMITTEE SHALL NOMINATE THREE QUALIFIED APPLICANTS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE GOVERNOR.

3/6/2025 - Senate LCI: Ad Hoc Subcommittee, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

3/6/2025 - Senate Subcommittee recommends passage LCI Subcommittee

SB287 ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEM REGULATION (Alexander, T) A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 44-95-65 SO AS TO PROVIDE REGULATIONS FOR THE SALE OF ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND TO PROVIDE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THIS SECTION; AND TO PROVIDE A TIMELINE FOR THE REQUIRED DEALER CERTIFICATION, DIRECTORY PUBLICATION, AND EFFECTIVE DATE OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS.

3/6/2025 - Senate Medical Affairs, (Bill Scheduled for Hearing)

3/6/2025 - Senate Committee recommends passage, as amended Medical Affairs Committee

SJR253 AUDIT SUPPORT (Peeler, Jr., H) A JOINT RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION TO EXPEND CERTAIN FUNDS TO ENGAGE AN INDEPENDENT COMPLIANCE CONSULTANT FOR REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE OF THE OFFICE OF THE STATE TREASURER, THE OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL, AND THE

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OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR WITH RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE ALIXPARTNERS FORENSIC ACCOUNTING REPORT AND OTHER RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS.

3/6/2025 - Ratified R 1

Legislative Meetings and Important Dates

Scheduled Live Broadcasts link
Click this link for all notations of Live Broadcast

Archive Video
All Live Broadcasts are Archived here for later viewing

Monday, March 10th	
House of Representatives convenes to begin FY 2025-26 State Budget Debate - H.4025, General Appropriations Bill - H.4026, Capital Reserve Fund Bill	1:00 pm – Live Broadcast
Tuesday, March 11th	
Senate convenes	12:00 noon – Live Broadcast
House of Representatives to continue Budget Debate - H.4025, General Appropriations Bill - H.4026, Capital Reserve Fund Bill	Time TBA – Live Broadcast
Senate Finance Constitutional Budget Subcommittee - State Fiscal Accountability Authority - AlixPartners --- third party auditing company hired to determine state accounting error	2:00 pm 209 Gressette – Live Broadcast
Senate Finance Property Tax Subcommittee - S.102, Cities with no millage	2:30 pm 207 Gressette – Live Broadcast
FULL Senate Judiciary Committee - S.336, Judicial Elections - Additional bills – review AGENDA	3:00 pm 105 Gressette – Live Broadcast
Wednesday, March 12th	
Senate Convenes	1:00 pm – Live Broadcast

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House of Representatives to continue Budget Debate - H.4025, General Appropriations Bill - H.4026, Capital Reserve Fund Bill	Time TBA – Live Broadcast
Senate Finance Natural Resources and Economic Development Budget Subcommittee - AGENDA to be announced	10:00 am 209 Gressette – Live Broadcast
Senate Transportation Subcommittee chaired by Senator Adams - S.340, Prohibit smoking in vehicles with 12-year-old or younger passengers - S.371, DMV may issue Mobile Drivers' Licenses	11:00 am 308 Gressette
Senate Medical Affairs Subcommittee chaired by Senator Davis - Large AGENDA, please review --- numerous Proposed Regulations	11:00 am 209 Gressette
Thursday, March 13th	
Senate Convenes	11:00 am – Live Broadcast
TENTATIVE **House of Representatives convenes to continue Budget Debate if not concluded on Wednesday** - H.4025, General Appropriations Bill - H.4026, Capital Reserve Fund Bill	Time TBA – Live Broadcast
Senate Medical Affairs Subcommittee chaired by Senator Garrett - Large AGENDA, please review --- numerous Proposed Regulations	9:30 am 209 Gressette
Senate Finance Constitutional Budget Subcommittee - AGENDA to be announced	Upon Senate adjournment 209 Gressette – Live Broadcast

Future Legislative Meetings and Important Dates

Senate Budget Schedule	
- March 18 – 20 Budget Subcommittees and Proviso Recommendations - March 25 – 27 Budget Subcommittees and Proviso Recommendations - April 1 – 3 Budget Subcommittees and Proviso Recommendations - April 8 – 10 Full Senate Finance Committee Deliberations - April 15 – 17 Senate Finance Version of the Budget printed - April 22 – 24 Senate floor debate of the Budget - April 29 – May 1 Budget returned to the House, Conference Committee - May 6 – 8 Conference Committee / Budget to the Governor	

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Week of March 17th through 21st --- HOUSE PERFUNCTORY SESSION	
***TENTATIVE* – House of Representatives to convene in perfunctory session only to focus on committee work post-budget week; Subcommittees and Committees will meet**	
Wednesday, March 19th	
House Government Efficiency and Legislative Oversight Committee - Public Input Meeting - AGENDA - Opportunity for public input re: Conservation Bank, Department of Employment and Workforce, Tuition Grants Commission, Department of Education, Department of Insurance, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, State Law Enforcement Division and the Administrative Law Court - **REGISTER TO TESTIFY IN ADVANCE** no later than 9:00 am on March 19th	1:30 pm 110 Blatt – Live Broadcast
Monday, March 31st	
Governor's Nuclear Advisory Council - AGENDA to be posted	1:00 pm 105 Gressette – Live Broadcast
Week of April 14th through 18th --- HOUSE FURLOUGH	
House of Representatives annual Easter Week Furlough - House will **not** convene in statewide session	

State Agency Meetings of Interest

South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office **State Board of Economic Advisors** • **Thursday, March 20th – Web Conference at 9:00 am** Monthly Revenue Report • **Thursday, April 10th** Monthly Revenue Report **Monthly General Fund Revenue Reports ---- Forecast Data** **Local Government Finance Reports / Legislative Fiscal Impact Statements**	9:00 am unless otherwise noted 417 Rembert Dennis Building Bowers Conference Room Columbia, SC 29201 Meeting Agenda and Materials BEA Information Page
South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services **Medical Care Advisory Committee (MCAC)** • **Tuesday, May 13th** • **Tuesday, August 12th** • **Tuesday, November 4th**	10:00 am unless otherwise noted DHHS – 1801 Main Street Columbia, SC 29201 - Link for WebEx Registration - Link for Meeting Materials

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South Carolina General Assembly

Session Dates: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 – Thursday, May 8, 2025

The annual session of the South Carolina General Assembly begins on the second Tuesday in January and runs through the second Thursday in May. The Senate and House of Representatives meet in statewide session on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week unless otherwise decided by the Senate President and Speaker of the House. The 2025 session is the first year of the 126th biennial session. Legislation not achieving passage by 5:00 pm on Thursday, May 8th holds its place in the legislative process and carries forward to 2026.

Governor: Henry McMaster (R)
Lieutenant Governor: Pamela Evette (R)

House/Senate Party Breakdown:
House: 88 Republicans / 34 Democrats / 0 Independents / 2 Vacancies
Senate: 34 Republicans / 12 Democrats / 0 Independents

Leadership of the General Assembly:
President of the Senate: Thomas Alexander (R)
Speaker of the House: Murrell Smith (R)

RILEY POPE & LANEY, LLC
2838 DEVINE STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 11412 (29211)
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29205
TELEPHONE 803-799-9993 FACSIMILE 803-239-1414
WWW.RPLFIRM.COM

THEODORE D. "TED" RILEY – triley@rplfirm.com (803) 622-7261 M
HOBART O. TROTTER, JR. – htrotter@rplfirm.com (803) 622-7263 M
TARA P. BOONE – tboone@rplfirm.com (803) 422-4399 M

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