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**HOUSE WEEK IN REVIEW**

The House of Representatives took up two of the bills that draw upon the work of the special House Utility Ratepayer Protection Committee which was appointed by the Speaker of the House following the announcement from Santee Cooper and SCANA’s South Carolina Electric and Gas that construction on the V.C. Summer nuclear reactors in Fairfield County was being abandoned after billions of dollars in fees had been collected from South Carolina’s ratepayers under the Baseload Review Act to support the failed nuclear power project.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.4379**, a bill creating a **UTILITIES CONSUMER ADVOCATE** within the Attorney General’s Office to safeguard the interests of consumers in dealings with public utilities that offer such essential services as electrical power, gas pipelines for heating and cooking needs, water, sewerage, and telecommunications. The new Utilities Consumer Advocate must be an attorney qualified to practice in all the state’s courts who is to be appointed by the Attorney General to serve at the pleasure of the A.G. The legislation includes provisions to prevent conflicts interests, including prohibitions on gifts and campaign contributions from public utilities. The Utilities Consumer Advocate is charged with representing the public utility interests of consumers which includes providing legal representation of the consumer interests before state and federal regulatory agencies. Along with the Public Service Commission’s Office of Regulatory Staff, the consumer advocate is charged with monitoring existing regulations, rate structures, and policies of those agencies of special interest to utility consumers and report to the public through the news media proposed changes under consideration and the effect of those changes on the lives of the citizens of the state. The consumer advocate is authorized to initiate, continue, or intervene in legal proceedings on behalf of the public at large. The consumer advocate must make an annual report to the General Assembly on the year’s activities on behalf of the interests of utility consumers. The legislation includes provisions to afford the consumer advocate access to records of the Office of Regulatory Staff and other state agencies. The Public Service Commission’s Office of Regulatory Staff is directed to make use of its subpoena powers at the consumer advocate’s request. A misdemeanor criminal penalty is established for failure to provide information requested. The financial integrity of public utilities is eliminated as a concern for the Office of Regulatory Staff.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.4378**, a bill that replaces the Public Utilities Review Committee with a new twelve-member **UTILITY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE** composed of six legislators holding key leadership positions, two members of the general public appointed by legislative leaders, and four members of the general public appointed by the Governor. The legislation establishes qualifications and duties for committee members. The oversight committee is charged with screening Public Service Commission candidates and making nominations for the election of commissioners by the General Assembly, nominating a qualified candidate for the Governor to consider appointing as the Executive Director of the Office of Regulatory Staff, and reviewing candidates for appointment to the South Carolina Public Service Authority Board of Directors as submitted by the Governor to determine whether they meet the qualifications. The annual budget proposals of the Office of Regulatory Staff and the Public Service Commission must be reviewed and approved by the oversight committee and the salary of the Executive Director of the Office of Regulatory Staff is set by the oversight committee. The oversight committee is required to make annual performance reviews of the Public Service Commission, the individual commissioners, the commission’s Office of Regulatory Staff, and the ORS Executive Director. The oversight committee must develop and distribute to those appearing before the PSC an anonymous and confidential survey to evaluate the commissioners on such matters as their temperament, knowledge, and whether they appear to be influenced by political considerations or the parties who appear before them. The oversight committee is authorized to evaluate the actions of the Public Service Commission so that the members of the General Assembly may better judge whether these actions serve the best interests of the citizens of South Carolina, both individual and corporate. The oversight committee must conduct an annual review of the State Energy Office’s action plan. The oversight committee is authorized to conduct other studies and make other pertinent reports and recommendations to the General Assembly. The legislation includes provisions to prevent conflicts interests for those serving as committee members.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.3920**, a bill establishing **REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO POST THE TOLL-FREE HOTLINE FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION** to the Department of Social Services. The legislation provides that, beginning in the 2018‑2019 School Year, each public school and charter school shall post at least five signs that provide the statewide toll‑free telephone number that may be used to report incidents of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation to the Department of Social Services along with related information about reporting allegations. A school must display the sign conspicuously in at least one high‑traffic common area that is readily accessible to and widely used by students. Virtual schools must post the required information electronically in appropriate places in the school’s learning management system.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.3699**, legislation that authorizes the **SHARING CHILDREN’S HEALTH INFORMATION WITH CAREGIVERS** in abuse and neglect cases, placements, or adoptions. The legislation removes prohibitions from sharing with foster parents, or other caregivers, the medical, mental health, and other known, or reasonably obtainable, information about children necessary to provide them with adequate care. This disclosure requirement applies to abuse and neglect cases, placements, or adoptions. The legislation provides additional immunity protections for those who report suspected child abuse or neglect.

The House amended approved, and sent the Senate **H.3701**, a bill addressing **KINSHIP FOSTER PARENTS**, which requiresthe South Carolina Department of Social Services [SCDSS] to inform relatives of children, who are placed with them, about opportunities to become licensed foster parents. Potential kinship foster parents would be required to undergo background checks that include checking the Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect cases. The legislation sets forth the responsibilities of kinship foster parents and makes provisions for kinship care to be monitored by SCDSS. The legislation requires the agency to maintain specified kinship foster care data. The legislation also incorporates provisions addressing children victimized by human trafficking, including sex trafficking, within definitions of ‘child abuse or neglect’ and ‘harm’.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate to **H.3068**, a bill to provide for the "**UNIFORM ATHLETE AGENTS ACT OF 2017**". The legislation updates protection of student athletes and makes extensive changes to the elements of the athlete - agent relationship. The substantial changes include the definitions of athlete agent and student agent, definitions of licensure and representation, clarifications regarding signing, requires more information regarding registering with the Department of Consumer Affairs (including social media accounts - noting the expanded impact of social media on the solicitation and recruitment of student athletes by athlete agents) and also includes information regarding previous convictions and bankruptcies. The provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act apply. More direct powers are given to the Department for the suspension or revocations of registrations. The bill also requires clear notices associated with the signing of athletes to athletic directors. Educational institutions or student athletes may bring actions if the athlete is adversely impacted by actions or omissions of the agent. The legislation also includes provisions regarding reciprocal registration between states and adds new requirements to signing agent contracts.

The House approved **S.882** and enrolled the bill for ratification. The legislation authorizes **UPDATED VERSIONS OF SOUTH CAROLINA CODE VOLUMES 15A AND 18**.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ACTION**

AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES AND

**ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

The Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee met on Thursday, January 25, 2018 and reported out one bill.

In an effort to address an issue that is important to all counties around the state in order to make South Carolina a cleaner state, the committee gave approval with an amendment to **H.4458**, a bill relating to the **ILLEGAL** **DUMPING OF LITTER ON PRIVATE OR PUBLIC PROPERTY.** The legislation expands the definition of litter to include cigarette butts and cigarette components. Illegal dumping is defined as disposing of more than fifteen pounds of any collection of solid waste, litter, or other materials.

The bill also restructures penalties for violations. Fifteen pounds or less of illegal dumping (referred to as window trash…paper, cigarette butts) the fine ranges from $25-$100 and eight hours of community service. Penalties for littering 15 pounds or less on private property or in an area not intended for disposal of litter, the fine ranges from $50 - $150 and 16 hours of community service. More than 15 pounds less than 500 pounds, the first offense $200 -$500 and 16 hours of litter gathering; second offense $200 -$500 and 24 hours of litter gathering; and third or subsequent offenses $200 - $500 and 32 hours of litter gathering.

**BILLS INTRODUCED IN THE**

**HOUSE THIS WEEK**

AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES AND

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

 **H.4644 *SOLID WASTE EMERGENCY FUND* Rep. Dillard**

Among many things, the legislation establishes the Solid Waste Emergency Fund which will be administered by the South Carolina Department of Environmental Control. In addition, the legislation provides for the Fund’s funding. The legislation outlines that the funds may be expended by the department’s director to address a substantial release or threat of substantial release into the environment of any pollutant or other circumstance which may present an imminent and substantial danger to human health and the environment

 **H.4683** ***BEACHFRONT MANAGEMENT REFORM ACT* Rep. Hewitt**

Among many things, the bill excludes decisions to establish baselines or setback lines for an erosion zone from the appeal process and procedures.

 **H.4704 *COASTAL TIDELANDS AND WETLANDS* Rep. Loftis**

The bill authorizes the Department of Environmental Control to issue general permits under certain circumstances relating to permits to utilize critical areas.

 **H.4708 *HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES* Rep. Hill**

The bill outlines that a person who hunts on property that contains his primary residence or to his immediate family members who also claim the property as their primary resident, does not need to obtain a hunting license.

**EDUCATION AND PUBLIC WORKS**

 **H.4645 *APPLICATION OF CHEMICALS* Rep. Allison**

This bill requires the Department of Administration to post visual notification markers at least forty eight hours prior to the outdoor application of chemicals on public property and to require the owner of a public building to post a visual notification marker at every entrance into the building.

 **H.4672 *VISION SCREENING* Rep. Elliott**

This bill provides that vision screening is required upon renewal of a driver’s license, and to provide that a certificate of vision examination form must be executed by the certifying ophthalmologist or optometrist.

 **H.4676 *UNITED STATES SELECTIVE SERVICE* Rep. Collins**

This bill relates to the issuance of a beginner’s permit, a conditional driver’s license, and a special restricted driver’s license, and the requirement that certain individuals must register with the United States Selective Service.

 **H.4679 *AIR AMBULANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT* Rep. Hardee**

This bill enacts the “Air Ambulance Affordability Act” and provides that no aircraft may be operated as an air ambulance without a permit issued by the Department of Health and Environmental Control, provides requirements for this permit, and provides for the duration of the permit absent revocation or suspension. The bill also amends definitions concerning emergency medical services, so as to define the term “air ambulance”; and provides that all individual and group health insurance policies and health maintenance organizations shall provide coverage for air ambulance transportation to a hospital or medical facility for emergency treatment or when a physician considers air transportation a medical necessity. The bill also addresses how this coverage must pay for air ambulance transportation under these policies and provides that the rate requirement is retroactive five years from the effective date.

 **H.4680 *STEM PATHWAY RESOURCE NETWORK (CONSTRUCTION)***

 **Rep. S. Rivers**

This bill creates the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) pathway resource network to facilitate the provision of STEM education throughout the state. This includes particular attention to construction and manufacturing career pathways, with a collaborative design of a career pathway for students within the construction industry and within the manufacturing sector (to connect school districts, technical colleges, vocational schools, junior colleges, and four‑year institutions of higher education with adult education programs, local workforce development programs, and regional construction industry partnerships and regional manufacturing sector partnerships in a manner to allow a student to earn income while progressing along the career pathway). To accomplish this, the bill creates seven manufacturing and construction career pathway districts in the state, with one representing each congressional district, within each of which are established two manufacturing and construction career pathway centers to provide coursework and guidance for residents seeking to pursue studies in a manufacturing career pathway program or a construction career pathway program

 **H.4681 *HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION COURSE* Rep. Norrell**

This bill, relating to the issuance of commercial driver’s licenses and commercial driver instruction permits, provides that a person may not be issued a commercial driver’s license or have his driver’s license renewed before he completes a human trafficking prevention course.

 **H.4682 *PROOF OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY* Rep. Willis**

This bill deletes the filing of a bond and the filing of a certificate of deposit of money or securities as methods of establishing proof of financial responsibility.

 **H.4701 *“B. P. ACT” ADMINISTRATION* Rep. S. Rivers**

This bill enacts the “B. P. Act”, relating to current bullying prohibition policies adopted by school districts, so as to provide procedures for responding to and remediating allegations of bullying, and to require an appeals procedure.

 **H.4702 *“B. P. ACT”* Rep. S. Rivers**

This bill enacts the “B. P. Act”, relating to bullying prohibition policies adopted by school districts, to provide that when school officials determine that a student has committed a prohibited act, the school shall notify his parent, guardian, or another adult who consents to having responsibility for the student within one business day, and shall then meet with the student and his parent, guardian, or another adult who consents to having responsibility for the student within three business days after this notice is given. The bill further provides the student must be suspended from school until the student and his parent, guardian, or another adult who consents to having responsibility for the student agrees to attend counseling offered or approved by the district. Also, the bill provides that the district shall make counselors, school psychologists, or other appropriate personnel currently employed or contracted by the district available for this counseling; to provide the district shall inform the student and his parents, guardians, and other adults who consent to having responsibility for the student that the requirements proscribed by the counselor must be met or the student will be suspended until such counseling requirements are met, which must include attendance by the parents at two of five counseling sessions; and to provide the district shall inform another school in which the students seeks to enroll of the student’s misconduct and failure to comply with related counseling requirements.

 **H.4710 *PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERAN SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES***

 **Rep. Hill**

This bill provides that the Department of Motor Vehicles may issue Persian Gulf War veteran special license plates.

 **H.4712 *STUDY REQUIREMENTS* Rep. G. R. Smith**

This bill, relating to requisite study of the United States Constitution and other texts reflecting the history of the United States in public high schools and publicly supported colleges and universities, provides that the Commission on Higher Education may identify related recommended instructional materials and to remove a loyalty oath, among other things, including the role of the State Superintendent of Education to enforce these study requirements and prescribe suitable tests.

**JUDICIARY**

 **H.4670 STATE WORK PROGRAM FOR INMATES Rep. Chumley**

Proposes establishing a state work program for nonviolent, misdemeanor inmates. Successfully participating inmates would earn parole eligibility under this bill.

 **H.4671 TAXING MARIJUANA DEALERS Rep. Elliott**

Marijuana dealers would no longer have to be convicted of dealing before the South Carolina Department of Revenue could tax them under this proposal. Seventy-five percent of revenues collected would be equitably distributed amongst the state or local law enforcement agencies who have located taxable dealers.

 **H.4673 DIVORCE, ANNULMENT, OR FAMILY COURTS ORDERS AFFECTING PLAN BENEFICIARIES Rep. G. M. Smith**

Beneficiary designations under employee benefit plans administered by the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority [PEBA] would not be subject to revocation by divorce, annulment, or a Family Court order terminating marital property rights.

 **H.4674 CONTINUUM OF CARE FOR EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED CHILDREN**

 **Rep. G. M. Smith**

Would create a South Carolina Department of Children’s Services. If created, sets out a procedure for appointing a Division Director for the Continuum of Care for emotionally disturbed children as part of the Department of Children’s Services. This Director would have to ensure annual reports would be made to the governor and the General Assembly. In addition to including the Continuum of Care in this new department, the Foster Care Review Board and Cass Elias McCarter Guardian *ad Litem* program would also be included. The Department of Commerce would administer an Office of Economic Opportunity and a Division of Small and Minority Business Contracting and Certification within the State Fiscal Accountability Authority. The Children's Case Resolution System would cease.

 **H.4677 FINE PAYMENT CONVENIENCE FEES Rep. Pitts**

County and city councils could institute convenience fees, capped at $5.00, for the electronic payment of electronically-issued traffic and other citations under this legislation. Separate accounts would be established for these funds, which could only be spent for certain items.

 **H.4684 PERMANENT DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME Rep. Chumley**

After 2:00 a.m. on the second Sunday, March, 2018, Daylight Saving Time [DST] would become permanent in South Carolina. The state attorney general would be required to submit a waiver request to the federal Secretary of Transportation permitting this time change to become permanent.

 **H.4686 SUBPOENAS *DUCES TECUM* FOR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

 **Rep. Pitts**

Would expand General Assembly standing committees subpoena and subpoena *duces tecum* authority, to include private entities or individuals, financial institutions, and medical records.

 **H.4694 SOUTH CAROLINA CODE UPDATES Rep. Delleney**

Revised South Carolina Code Volumes 15A and 18, updated as of January 1, 2018, would become permanent volumes upon enactment of this legislation.

 **H.4705 RELIGIOUS COUNSELORS MANDATED CHILD ABUSE REPORTERS**

 **Rep. Bannister**

Mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect would include clerical, and nonclerical, religious counselors under this bill.

 **H.4707 LOCAL LAWS REGULATING TO FIREARM ACCESSORIES Rep. Hill**

Political subdivisions, including counties and municipalities, could not regulate firearm accessories if this legislation is enacted.

 **H.4709 WHERE TO LEGALLY CARRY A CONCEALED WEAPON Rep. Hill**

Greatly expands the list of locations where concealed weapons could be legally carried. The only exception to this broadened scope of permitted places, for carrying concealed weapons, would be anywhere prohibited by federal law.

 **H.4714 TEEN DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT Rep. Norrell**

The "Teen Dating Violence Prevention Act" contains necessary definitions, creates a criminal offense of teen dating violence, sets penalties, and allows teen dating violence victims to seek orders of protection or restraining orders. Prohibits violators from participating in any pretrial intervention [PTI] programs. Also would add teen dating violence education to the comprehensive health education curriculum.

**LABOR, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

 **H.4643 *DIRECT PRIMARY CARE AGREEMENT NOT CONSIDERED A***

 ***CONTRACT OF INSURANCE* Rep. Thayer**

This bill establishes that a direct primary care agreement is not a contract of insurance and not subject to regulation by the Department of Insurance.

 **H.4654 *FINGERPRINTING REQUIRED FOR LICENSURE AS AN INSURANCE***

 ***PRODUCER* Rep. Sandifer**

This bill revises licensing requirements for individual and agency insurance producers, so as to require an applicant to provide a complete set of fingerprints with the application. Failure to provide a complete set of fingerprints constitutes grounds for denial of an application. The legislation provides for certain exceptions to the fingerprinting requirement.

 **H.4655 *“SOUTH CAROLINA INSURANCE DATA SECURITY ACT”***

 **Rep. Sandifer**

This bill establishes standards for data security and standards for the investigation of and notification to the Director of the Department of Insurance of a cybersecurity event that impacts insurance licensees.

 **H.4656 *REINSURANCE CREDITS* Rep. Sandifer**

This bill revises provisions relating to reinsurance credits, so as to authorize the Director of the Department of Insurance to adopt additional requirements for reinsurance credits. A reinsurer is required to demonstrate it has adequate financial capacity to meet its reinsurance obligations to qualify for a credit. The legislation allows for the reduction of a trusteed surplus for an assuming insurer who has permanently discontinued underwriting new business. The legislation allows for credit when reinsurance is ceded and enumerates certain eligibility requirements. The legislation allows for an assuming insurer who is not licensed, certified, or accredited in this state to become eligible for a credit under certain circumstances. The director is authorized to suspend or revoke the accreditation or certification. The legislation requires an insurer to manage its reinsurance recoverables proportionate to its book of business. The director is authorized to adopt rules and regulations. The legislation revises provisions relating to liability reductions for reinsurance, so as to authorize the director to adopt additional requirements for an asset or reduction from liability for reinsurance ceded by a domestic insurer and to expand the acceptable form of security for a liability reduction.

 **H.4657 *INSURANCE LAW ADMINISTRATION AND OVERSIGHT***

 **Rep. Sandifer**

This bill revises provisions relating to administrative penalties for the violation of the insurance laws of South Carolina, so as to allow the Department of Insurance to enforce these penalties for violations of federal insurance laws subject to enforcement by the department. The legislation revises provisions relating to the authority of the Director of the Department of Insurance to conduct examinations and investigations, so as to require that information related to an examination or investigation to be treated as privileged and confidential. The legislation revises provisions relating to investigations conducted by the Department of Insurance, so as to authorize the department to respond to motions and complaints against health maintenance organizations and persons licensed to transact the business of insurance in this state and to establish a deadline for responses to the department’s inquiries. The legislation provides for documents, materials, or other information submitted in support of an application to be treated as confidential. The legislation revise provisions relating to the examinations of the affairs of a health maintenance organization, so as to require an examination no less than every five years. The legislation revises provisions relating to levy of administrative penalty in lieu of other penalties, so as to allow the levy of an administrative penalty for violations of state and federal insurance laws subject to enforcement by the Department of Insurance. The legislation revises provisions relating to the approval of insurance policies, contracts, or policies by the Department of Insurance, so as to require that all forms filed with the department satisfy all applicable state and federal laws and to authorize the director to impose a penalty in certain circumstances. The legislation revises provisions relating to the penalties for issuing or delivering a policy that violates Chapter 71, so as to extend the penalties to any insurer or health maintenance organization who violates applicable state or federal laws governing the transaction of the business of insurance subject to enforcement by the Department of Insurance.

 **H.4675 *CAPTIVE INSURANCE COMPANIES* Rep. Sandifer**

This bill makes revisions relating to captive insurance companies. The legislation establishes requirements for a captive insurance company to possess and maintain free and unimpaired paid‑in capital, surplus, or a combination thereof. The legislation provides that captive insurance company requirements apply to captive insurance companies formed as a mutual insurer. The legislation establishes reporting requirements for captive insurance companies. The legislation allows a captive insurance company to discount its loss and loss adjustment with approval by the Director of the Department of Insurance. The legislation establishes oversight requirements for risk retention groups and captive insurance companies. The legislation allows for certain captive insurance companies to make loans to its parent company and affiliates with approval by the director. The legislation establishes standards for aggregate taxes for protected cells. The legislation allows the director to reduce capital requirements for an inactive captive insurance company. The legislation removes certain asset requirements. The legislation alters participant requirements for a sponsored captive insurance company. The legislation repeals Coastal Captive Insurance Company Act provisions.

 **H.4695 *APPROVAL FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION REQUIRED***

 ***FOR A CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF A RETAIL ELECTRIC PROVIDER***

 **Rep. Rutherford**

This bill provide that, notwithstanding another provision of law, formal application to and written approval from the Public Service Commission must be obtained before the sale, assignment, pledge, or transfer of an existing or future franchise with a South Carolina retail electric provider, or control of an existing or future franchise with a South Carolina retail electric provider is changed, altered, or amended through stock transfer, lease, or otherwise, or a merger or consolidation affecting a retail electric provider made through acquisition or control by stock purchase or otherwise. The legislation provides that the Public Service Commission’s approval must be given if justified by public convenience or necessity. These provisions do not apply to regular trading in listed securities on recognized markets.

 **H.4696 *CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR BUILDING CODE VIOLATIONS***

 **Rep. Allison**

This bill establishes criminal penalties for those persons found to be in violation of a building code or regulation. Those persons charged with violating a building code or regulation must be tried exclusively in the appropriate magistrates or municipal court.

 **H.4706 *“SOUTH CAROLINA NET NEUTRALITY PROTECTION AND***

 ***MAINTENANCE ACT”* Rep. J. E. Smith**

This bill enacts the “South Carolina Net Neutrality Protection and Maintenance Act”. The legislation provides that a telecommunications or Internet service provider engaged in the provision of broadband Internet access service publicly shall disclose accurate information regarding the network management practices, performance, and commercial terms of its broadband Internet access services sufficient for consumers to make informed choices regarding use of these services and for content, application, service, and device providers to develop, market, and maintain Internet offerings, and to prohibit certain practices by telecommunications or Internet service providers engaged in the provision of broadband Internet access service in South Carolina. The legislation provides that violations of this act are not reasonable in relation to the development and preservation of business and constitute an unfair or deceptive act in trade or commerce and an unfair method of competition for the purpose of applying the South Carolina Consumer Protection Code. The legislation provides that a public entity may not enter into a contract with a telecommunications or Internet service provider engaged in the provision of broadband Internet access service in South Carolina unless the contract includes a representation that the telecommunications or Internet service provider is not currently engaged in, and an agreement that the telecommunications or Internet service provider will not engage in, those practices prohibited by this act.

 **H.4711 *LENDERS ALLOWED TO CHARGE A CONVENIENCE FEE FOR***

 ***ACCEPTING AN ELECTRONIC PAYMENT* Rep. Sandifer**

This bill revises provisions for additional charges a lender may charge in connection with a consumer loan, so as to allow a lender to charge a convenience fee for accepting an electronic payment and to establish certain standards for the convenience fee.

 **H.4723 *NO‑FEE ELECTRIC SMART METER OPT‑OUT* Rep. Loftis**

This bill requires electric utilities and cooperatives to offer customers a no‑fee smart meter opt‑out. The Public Service Commission is charged with making periodic reports on the savings realized through the use of smart meters, as well as on the occurrence of any breaches to an electric utility’s or cooperative’s cybersecurity infrastructure that must be submitted to both the Senate and House Committees on Labor, Commerce and Industry.

 **H.4724 *TELEMARKETERS PROHIBITED FROM MAKING FALSE USE OF***

 ***SOUTH CAROLINA AREA CODES* Rep. Putnam**

This bill establishes prohibitions against the practice of falsifying caller identification system information known as spoofing, by disallowing a telemarketer or telephone solicitor from making a consumer telephone call with a telephone number that displays a South Carolina area code on the recipient’s caller identification system unless the telemarketer or telephone solicitor maintains a physical presence in the state. The legislation establishes remedies for violations.

 **H.4726 *AUTOMOTIVE RECYCLERS* Rep. Pitts**

This bill revises duties imposed on a demolisher or secondary metals recycler, to provide that certain of these provisions do not apply to an automotive recycler, and that certain provisions do not apply to sales conducted at salvage pool auctions.

**MEDICAL, MILITARY, PUBLIC AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS**

 **H.4698 *LICENSE TO PRACTICE MEDICINE* Rep. G. M. Smith**

The bill waives certain additional examination requirements for applicants who are to practice in a position within the Disability Determination Services Unit of the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Agency.

 **H.4717 *“SOUTH CAROLINA NURSING MOTHERS ACT”***

 **Rep. Henderson-Myers**

The bill creates the “South Carolina Nursing Mothers Act”. Before July 1, 2019, governmental buildings and buildings owned by school districts must provide suitable accommodations in the form of a room, other than a toilet stall, for the exclusive use of any woman to breastfeed a child or express breast milk. The bill also outlines provisions for exemptions.

**WAYS AND MEANS**

 **H.4678 *TAX EXEMPTION FOR ALL‑TERRAIN VEHICLES PURCHASED OR***

 ***LEASED IN ANOTHER STATE* Rep. Yow**

This bill revises exemptions from the use tax, so as to exempt an all‑terrain vehicle purchased or leased in another state if the purchaser paid the sales tax in the other state.

 **H.4685 *PRIVATIZATION OF THE STATE’S PUBLIC FOUR‑YEAR***

 ***INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING* Rep. Pitts**

This bill makes provisions for the State Fiscal Accountability Authority, beginning July 1, 2019, to transfer state public four‑year institutions of higher learning to a not‑for‑profit organization for the purpose of operating them as private rather than public institutions.

 **H.4699 *SOLAR ENERGY PROPERTY INCOME TAX CREDIT***

 **Rep. Cobb-Hunter**

This bill provides for an income tax credit to an individual or business that constructs, purchases, or leases certain solar energy property and places it in service in this state.

 **H.4700 *PROPERTY TAXES ON AIRLINES CREDITED TO THE STATE***

 ***AVIATION FUND* Rep. Herbkersman**

This bill makes provisions for crediting the proceeds of property taxes on airlines to the State Aviation Fund.

 **H.4703 *“SOUTH CAROLINA NATURAL GAS PIPELINES INITIATIVE ACT”***

 **Rep. S. Rivers**

This bill enacts the “South Carolina Natural Gas Pipelines Initiative Act” to provide tax incentives for the construction of natural gas pipelines. The legislation revises provisions for the allocation and apportionment of income, so as to authorize the Department of Revenue to enter into an agreement establishing the allocation and apportionment of the income of a taxpayer that builds or expands a natural gas pipeline and invests at least ten million dollars. The legislation revises exemptions from the state sales tax, so as to exempt building materials necessary to build or expand natural gas pipelines in this state.

 **H.4715 *TAXATION OF BOATS AND WATERCRAFT* Rep. Kirby**

This bill revises procedures concerning assessments and payments for property taxation of boats and watercraft and the issuance of certificates of number for boats and watercraft.

 **H.4718 *PART‑TIME SCHOOL CAFETERIA WORKER RETIREMENT SYSTEM***

 ***PARTICIPATION OPTION* Rep. Felder**

This bill adds part‑time school cafeteria workers to the list of employees who are able to exercise the option of not becoming members of the South Carolina Retirement System.

 **H.4725 *EXTENSION OF THE TEACHER AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION***

 ***INCENTIVE PROGRAM* Rep. Brown**

This bill revises retirement system provisions relating to the Teacher and Employee Retention Incentive Program, so as to extend the date on which the availability of participation in the TERI Program ends to June 30, 2021.

 **H.4727 *SOUTH CAROLINA CONSERVATION BANK REVISIONS* Rep. White**

This bill revises provisions relating to the Board of the South Carolina Conservation Bank, so as to extend voting privileges to certain members and to prohibit certain members from serving as chairman. The legislation the powers and duties of the South Carolina Conservation Bank, so as to require the bank to develop criteria and a conservation prioritization map, and to prohibit the award of a grant or loan unless the funds are presently available in the trust fund. The legislation revises provisions relating to grants or loans for land interests, so as to expand the conservation criteria to include the value of the proposal for access to the public, to require certain access disclosures on a grant or loan application, and to prohibit the purchase of a conservation easement for more than five hundred thousand dollars. The legislation discontinues the crediting of a portion of the Deed Recording Fee to the South Carolina Conservation Bank Trust Fund. The legislation repeals the requirement to periodically reauthorize the South Carolina Conservation Bank Trust Fund.

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