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**House Education and Public Works Committee**

Status of Bills Acted Upon by the Committee

(2023-24 Legislative Session)

The Honorable Shannon Erickson

Chair

May 23, 2024

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 **House Education and Public Works Committee**

Status of Bills Acted Upon by the Committee

(2023-24 Legislative Session)

**K-12 Subcommittee**

BILLS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

* **Act 8 (Senate bill 39)** establishes the "Education Scholarship Trust Fund (ESTF)." Eligible students may be awarded scholarships in the amount of $6,000 to pay for education expenses. Expenses may include tuition and fees, instructional materials, tutoring, computer hardware, assessments, and transportation (not to exceed $750 per year).

Public and independent schools may accept scholarship funds, but charter schools and home-schooled students are excluded. Eligible students must reside in the state and have attended a South Carolina public school, or received a scholarship, during the previous school year. Families must meet a specified percentage of the federal poverty guidelines to qualify:

* 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines for the 2024-25 school year;
* 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines for the 2025-26 school year;
* 400 percent of the federal poverty guidelines for the 2026-27 school year and subsequent years.

The bill establishes a cap in the number of students who may participate in the ESTF:

* A maximum of 5,000 students may participate in the 2024-25 school year;
* A maximum of 10,000 students may participate in 2025-26 school year; and,
* A maximum of 15,000 students may participate in the 2026-27 school year and all subsequent years.

The State Department of Education (SDE) must create an application process, determine student eligibility, and inform students and parents about the program. Parents or guardians must agree to provide instruction in at least English/language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Participating independent schools must meet curricula, diploma, and attendance requirements, comply with health and safety codes, and may not unlawfully discriminate based on race, color, or national origin.

Education Service Providers utilizing full-time instruction must use the following assessments:

* Grades three through eight must take the SC Ready or SC Ready alternative assessment.
* Grades four and six must take the SC Pass or SC Pass alternative assessment.
* Alternatively, grades three through eight may take a nationally normed formative assessment at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. SDE must approve the assessment.
* Grades nine through twelve must take a nationally norm referenced, or formative assessment approved by SDE.

The Education Oversight Committee must report on learning gains and graduation rates of scholarship recipients. A review panel is established to provide advice to the Department.

***(Act 8 was signed by the Governor on May 4, 2023.)***

* **Act 9 (Senate bill 299)** adds the State Child Advocate to the Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children.

***(Act 9 was signed by the Governor on May 10, 2023.*)**

* **Act 11 (Senate bill 581)** names the Venus Flytrap as the State’s official carnivorous plant.

***(Act 11 was signed by the Governor on May 8, 2023.)***

* **Act 21 (Senate bill 256)** prohibits public schools from banning the possession or personal use of sunscreen. (Charter schools are specifically included in the bill’s prohibition.) Sunscreen is defined as “a topical, non-aerosol product regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration for over-the-counter use for the purpose of limiting ultraviolet light-induced skin damage. Sunscreen does not include prescription medication.”

***(Act 21 was signed by the Governor on May 16, 2023.)***

* **Act 47 (House bill 4122)** adds medications such as Narcan to the list of lifesaving medicines that may be administered in schools. The Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and SDE must publish a list of permitted medications. The agencies are to collaborate on developing and implementing policies and procedures for the storage, maintenance, and administration of medications in schools. SDE must provide training for school personnel on the administration of these medications.

***(Act 47 was signed by the Governor on May 16, 2023.)***

* **Act 49 (House bill 4291)** designates August 8 of each year as "Clog Dancing Day" in South Carolina.

***(Act 49 was signed by the Governor on May 16, 2023.)***

* **Act 79 (House bill 3360)** directs the establishment of the Center for School Safety and Targeted Violence within the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED). The center shall “provide extensive training, education, and expertise in the fields of school safety and targeted violence.” SLED may incorporate new and existing personnel from any other unit or department as assigned by the Chief of SLED.

***(Act 79 was signed by the Governor on June 19, 2023.)***

* **Act 110 (House bill 4352)** designates March of each year as “Middle Level Education Month.”

***(Act 110 was signed by the Governor on February 5, 2024.)***

* **Act 112 (Senate bill 245)** provides guidelines for the financial operation of public school athletic booster clubs. Persons guilty of forgery, larceny, embezzlement, acting under false pretenses, or violating the Financial Transaction Card Crime Act may not serve as a booster club financial officer. If a financial officer is convicted of one of the crimes listed above, they must immediately resign from their role and a new officer must be appointed. A club may not disburse funds until the new officer is in place.

Each booster club within a school district or charter school must annually register with the district school board or charter authorizer. Booster clubs may be required by the district board of trustees or charter authorizer to submit an accounting compilation or review; however, the district board or authorizer may not require an external audit of the club unless there is a finding of cause.

A district board of trustees or charter authorizer must request a state criminal records check, including fingerprints, of the financial officer, and must immediately notify the club if the officer is prohibited from serving.

***(Act 112 was signed by the Governor on March 11, 2024.)***

* **Act 114 (Senate bill 418)** defines “Science of Reading,” “Foundational Literacy Skills,” Structured Literacy,” and “Literacy, and removes references to “evidence-based” instruction in favor of “scientifically-based.” Read to Succeed efforts are focused on grades pre-K to five instead of pre-K through twelve, and in middle schools where fifty percent or more of students score at the lowest achievement level on the state reading assessment. Instructional materials that use the three-cueing system model of reading and visual memory as the basis for teaching word recognition are expressly prohibited.

Teachers certified in early childhood, elementary, or special education must complete coursework in foundational literacy skills, structured literacy, and the science of reading or successfully complete the scientifically research-based reading instruction assessment approved by the board. Classroom teachers must receive pre-service and in-service coursework in foundational literacy skills, structured literacy, and the science of reading. Existing coursework requirements are removed.

Beginning September 1, 2024, early childhood, elementary, and special education teacher candidates seeking initial certification must pass a rigorous test of scientifically research-based reading instruction and intervention and data-based decision-making principles. Colleges are directed to report the success rate of teacher candidates who take the assessment. Teachers, administrators, and other certified staff must earn a literacy endorsement to maintain certification unless they are not educating or serving students in a school or other educational setting. Districts are required to offer professional development, coursework, certification, and endorsements at no charge. Teachers may exempt having to take the literacy endorsement courses if they pass the same literacy assessment given to pre-service educators.

Districts must show how reading and writing assessments and instruction align to the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills and document how interventions are provided. Supplemental instruction shall be provided by teachers who have a literacy endorsement. Universal screeners that measure early language and literacy development, mathematical thinking, physical well-being, and social-emotional development are to be replaced with screeners that measure only language and literacy. Screeners must be aligned with first and second-grade standards for English/language arts.

Districts must report the number of first and second-grade students who are projected to score “Does Not Meet” on the statewide assessment. Students in the third grade who score “Does Not Meet" may no longer be promoted based solely on a reading portfolio; however, district superintendents may allow advancement if documentation shows proficiency.

Students in kindergarten through grade two who do not demonstrate reading proficiency must be given additional support in foundational literacy skills. Interventions must be at least thirty minutes daily in duration and be in addition to the minimum of ninety minutes of daily reading instruction. Summer reading camps must be open to all students in kindergarten through third grade who do not exhibit grade-level reading proficiency. Students at any grade who do not exhibit reading proficiency and do not meet the good cause exemption may be included in the camps.

***(Act 114 was signed by the Governor on March 11, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_ (House bill 3295)** allows the State Board of Education to waive applicable laws and regulations if a district is successful in its application to start a competency-based school. When applying, districts must ensure Competency Based Education (CBE) is applicable to all students in a selected school and show parental consultation regarding implementation.

CBE schools cannot be exempted from anti-discrimination laws, or health, safety, civil rights, and disability rights requirements, and state and federal assessment requirements may not be waived. All eligible students must be allowed to attend, and schools may not limit, deny, or show preference in admission.

SDE shall create evaluation criteria, and schools are required to submit data for a biennial review. If schools do not perform as expected, SDE may request revocation of the waiver.

State and federal assessments are still required. CHE and the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education must establish policies providing fair and equitable access for admission, scholarships, and financial aid for students with CBE credit or diplomas.

Students may earn credits for the successful completion of courses through traditional means or an assessment that shows mastery of standards. This may include methods and documentation such as tests, interviews, peer evaluations, writing samples, reports, or portfolios. Unless waived, schools must still ensure that at least 1,080 instructional hours are completed during the year.

***(H. 3295 was ratified on May 8, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_ (House bill 3309)** creates the Seizure Safe Schools Act. Districts must adopt a seizure training program that addresses epilepsy and its impact on student learning. Training must meet certain guidelines.

In addition to current requirements, Individual Health Plans must address the following:

* administration of medication needed for the student’s specific health care needs;
* training requirements for school personnel with direct student contact that is specific to the student’s health care needs;
* providing information to additional school personnel on recognizing signs and symptoms associated with specific medical conditions;
* allowing written authorization for the administration of medication by the student, school personnel, or volunteers; and,
* include training specific to the student’s health care needs for school personnel with direct student contact;

A school district and its employees are not liable for injuries arising from the administration of medication authorized by an Individual Health Plan.

***(H. 3309 was ratified on May 8, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_\_ (Senate bill 1188)** adds new notification requirements in the event a public school student faces expulsion proceedings. Section 59-63-210 currently provides that parents and legal guardians have the right to legal counsel and “all other regular legal rights including the right to question all witnesses.” The bill strikes this sentence and replaces it with more specific notification language. The bill states that parental notification must be written and include the following:
* right for legal counsel to be present at the hearing;
* right to question all witnesses;
* contact information for a legal aid service provider; and,
* Right to access the investigative file in its entirety at least three days prior to the hearing.

Compliance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) during the expulsion process is required.

***(S. 1188 was ratified on May 9, 2024.)***

BILLS AWAITING DELIBERATION BY THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

* **House bill 3728** is the Transparency and Integrity in Education (TIE) Act and provides that instruction in public schools should be non-biased and include a broad scope of history. Instructional material and professional development should not promote that one race, sex, ethnicity, religion, color, or national origin is superior, inherently privileged, or determines moral character. Moreover, those traits should not cause the assignment of fault or bias to an individual or group. Students and teachers cannot be required to attend gender or sexual diversity training unless it is part of a corrective action plan mandated by the district.

Districts are specifically allowed to teach state academic standards, including concepts such as the history of an ethnic group, the fact-based discussion of controversial aspects of history, and the impartial instruction of the historical oppression of a group of people based on race, ethnicity, and other characteristics. SDE must develop model lesson plans accessible to districts. Schools may not accept materials or technology that contain access to pornographic material. Library material must be age appropriate.

SDE must develop a complaint policy and process for districts. Districts must report information regarding complaints to the General Assembly. If a complaint cannot be resolved locally, an appeal may be made to the State Board for a final determination. If the district violates the law, it must work with SDE on a corrective action plan. The department may withhold funds from a district if it fails to adhere to the corrective action plan. Extra time is added for review of instructional materials.

***(A Conference Committee was appointed June 14, 2023)***

BILLS ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE BUT NOT ADOPTED BY THE SENATE

* **House bill 3843** amends statutes regarding students who attend public schools outside of their attendance zone and school district. Local school boards must adopt an open enrollment policy by the 2023-24 school year that is based on the requirements set forth in the legislation. SDE must develop a template to assist districts and include all district open enrollment policies on its website portal.

An open enrollment policy must adhere to federal desegregation and other education requirements and be posted prominently on a district’s website. Among the items to be posted are the following:

* A description of the application requirements and timeline;
* A method for allowing parents to declare school preferences;
* Lottery and wait list policies;
* Whether a nonresident fee will be charged to cover costs of enrollment; and,
* Whether there is a fee waiver or mitigation process.

Districts are not required to transfer local funds for students enrolling elsewhere, and costs charged to the student by the receiving district cannot exceed the local per pupil expenditure amount. Districts may, but are not mandated to, alter the structure of the school to create more space, but the expansion of programs cannot result in schools exceeding regulations concerning teacher workload and class size. Programs may be established, changed, or expanded and eligibility criteria may be waived. Transportation may be provided to students outside of their attendance zones.

Existing students may not be displaced due to transfers. Enrollment policies for students transferring from outside the attendance zone or district must be established using the following hierarchy:

1. Siblings of students who reside in the same household and are already enrolled in the school;
2. Students who meet the program or school’s requirements and seek to attend the designated school in the district’s feeder pattern;
3. Students whose parents or guardians are assigned to the school as their primary place of employment;
4. Students selected by lottery.

Policies may not cause racial discrimination. Districts denying enrollment must include specific reasons for the decision, and denial may occur only in the following situations:

* A documented lack of capacity in the school, level or program;
* The school does not offer the program;
* The students does not meet established eligibility requirements for the program; or
* There is a desegregation plan in effect for the district and denial is necessary for compliance.

A student who transfers one time in middle school or one time in high school may play their sport for their new school without having to wait one academic year.

State law that defines eligibility for public school attendance is amended to conform with the changes made by the bill. This includes the termination of the provision that allows students to gain residence by owning real property in a school district. Property will have to have been owned on or before June 30, 2024.

***(H. 3843 was adopted on March 30, 2023, and referred to the Senate Education Committee.)***

* **House bill 4060** was originated by the House’s State Economic Development and Utility Modernization Ad Hoc Committee. The bill addresses improvements to workforce education in K-12 and higher education.

The bill codifies the state’s workforce readiness goal of at least sixty percent of all working age South Carolinians having a postsecondary degree or recognized industry credential before 2030.

SDE must ensure that all public high schools provide remedial courses in language arts and math for students in their senior year of high school who desire to pursue postsecondary education but are not ready for college‑level course work. The courses will be elective credits. The State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education (SBTCE) must approve the courses adopted by SDE.

High school seniors must complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) before graduation. Students are exempt from this requirement if their parent or guardian declines to complete the form, the school counselor exempts them for good cause, or a student who is 18 years of age exempts themselves.

Development and housing of the Educator Preparation Report Card is transferred from the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) to SDE. CHE must develop a postsecondary articulation agreement for dual enrollment courses between school districts and higher education institutions. The agreement must ensure that dual enrollment courses are equivalent to collegiate courses and supersedes all previous local agreements. Dual enrollment may be offered in grades ten through twelve.

CHE and SBTCE must implement policies guaranteeing students who have earned an associate of arts (AA) degree or an associate of science (AS) degree from a public two‑year college will receive a minimum of sixty transfer credit hours at a public college or university and be considered part of the junior class. Public four‑year colleges and universities must create a reverse transfer option for public two-year college students who enroll without completing an AA or AS degree. Once coursework is completed at the four-year college, credits earned may be transferred back to the originating public two-year college.

The Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) must provide online access to information regarding the economic value of college majors. In addition to showing the economic value of each major offered in this State, DEW must also compare bachelor’s degree earned to job availability. DEW may expand its report to include master’s and doctoral degrees.

SBCTE and the State Board of Education must report to the General Assembly about how to best transfer adult basic education and adult secondary education from the State Board to the SBCTE.

***(H. 4060 was adopted on March 29, 2023, and referred to the Senate Education Committee.)***

* **House bill 4280** is entitled the Educator Assistance Act and removes the requirement that South Carolina educators must recertify their teaching credential. A credential is considered permanent unless it is revoked or suspended. SDE, in collaboration with the Education Oversight Committee (EOC), is to use data already being collected to report on in state and out‑of‑state college enrollment, college persistence, and postsecondary completion of high school graduates.

The bill also provides greater flexibility to teachers regarding employment contracts. Teachers who submit contracts before May 11 of each year will have ten days after publication of the employing district’s salary schedule to notify the district in writing that they are withdrawing acceptance of their contract. Districts may not report the withdrawal as a breach of contract if notice is promptly given.

When a certificate is suspended due to breach of contract, Section 59‑25‑530 is amended so that a suspension begins on the date of the breach. Instead of being mandated to suspend a certification, the State Board of Education is given discretion in this decision. Suspensions may not last for more than six months instead of the one-year limit now in place.

***(H. 4280 was adopted by the House on May 4, 2023, and referred to the Senate Education Committee. The bill was also amended onto Senate bills 134 and 305.)***

* **House bill 4649** allows school districts with more than 15,000 students to use the services of private security personnel who are armed or have arrest authority. Private security officers who work in schools must be twenty-one years of age. The bill has no impact on the School Resource Officer program, and private security personnel may not act in a teaching or advisory role similar to a School Resource Officer.

Security personnel may work on the premises of the district, and SLED must implement training requirements for personnel working in schools. Districts must apply to SLED for a license and ensure that they have a full-time district security and emergency management division and a written agreement with local law enforcement for joint training.

***(House bill 4649 was adopted by the House and referred to Senate Education on April 2, 2024.)***

* **House bill 4655** requires that four-year-old kindergarten and middle school students have time for physical activity in a manner similar to students in elementary schools. The twenty minutes of outdoor recess requirement established by the bill can be waived for short-term interruptions not to exceed three consecutive school days due to facility and staffing availability. Time dedicated to instruction in the arts must not be reduced.

***(House bill 4655 was adopted by the House and referred to Senate Education on March 21, 2024.)***

* **House bill 4702** is the “South Carolina Computer Science Education Initiative Act.” Three bills nearly identical to H. 4702 have been adopted by the House since 2017 but have not been passed by the Senate. Many provisions listed in the bill have been recommended by organizations such as Code.org.

The bill provides that the State Board to adopt a Statewide Computer Science Plan, requires regular review of standards, directs that elementary students must learn about coding, cybersecurity, and programming, and establishes career pathways for computer science students and teachers.

***(House bill 4702 was adopted by the House and referred to Senate Education on March 29, 2024.)***

* **House bill 4703** merges the South Carolian Coalition for Mathematics and Science and STEM Centers into the South Carolina Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Coalition. The entity is to build public/private partnerships with the goal of creating a STEM workforce and ensuring students are prepared for STEM careers.”

The bill creates a STEM Education Fund comprised of appropriations, donations, or other gifts. Funds may only be used to support the advancement of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Grants or gifts will be managed by Clemson University or its Foundation.

The STEM Coalition Advisory Council will approve expenditures from the Fund. The board is comprised of eleven members and is Chaired by the Executive Director of the Department of Employment and Workforce or his designee. The State Superintendent of Education, Speaker, President of the Senate, Governor and Higher Education have appointments to the Council.

***(House bill 4703*** ***was adopted by the House and referred to Senate Education on March 29, 2024.)***

* **House bill 4709** amends state law by requiring cursive writing instruction to begin in second grade and continue in grades three through five. Current state standards state that cursive writing must be taught in grades two and three.

***(House bill 4709 was adopted by the House and referred to Senate Education on February 29, 2024.)***

* **House bill 5105** requires the State Board for Technical College Board to adopt a policy for all sixteen colleges that recognizes and awards credentials and college credit for courses and experiences completed in the military. Colleges must work with the Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish guidelines to ensure the consistent review and awarding of eligible credit. The courses and experiences must be recommended by the American Council on Education (ACE). ACE’s contract with the Department of Defense makes it the sole source of information for courses and occupations evaluated for the military.

***(H. 5105 was adopted by the House and referred to Senate Education on March 7, 2024.)***

* **House bill 5144** creates the School Mapping Data Program within the State Department of Education. Subject to funding, the Department is directed to contract with a vendor to provide school mapping data for each public school in the State. Data must be given to each school district (including charter schools), local law enforcement agency, and public safety agency. The data must be compatible with software platforms already used by the schools and agencies without them having to purchase additional software.

Districts must pay an annual maintenance fee to update the school maps, but the fee may not exceed $650 for each school. SDE is to consult with SLED’s Center for School Safety.

***(H. 5144 was adopted by the House and referred to Senate Education on April 10, 2024.)***

* **House bill 5164** revises Act 8 of 2023--Education Scholarship Trust Fund.With the Fund in place, the House adopted improvements to the existing law. Changes include allowing charter schools to provide educational services to students as permitted in all other eligible schools. The requirement that students must attend a public school during the previous school year is removed.

Children of active-duty military personnel are eligible to participate if their parent is on active duty and receives a change of station order to a military base in South Carolina. Homeschool students may participate in the program, but the curricula and testing requirements do not apply to option two and three families. Additionally, the household income threshold is removed beginning in the 2026-27 school year. Fees for internet connectivity, school uniforms, and interdistrict transfers are eligible expenses.

When accepting applications, existing participants may apply first. SDE will accept applications on a rolling basis until capacity is met and then keep a waitlist. To ensure scholarships are available in a fairer method, application windows are created. At the conclusion of the window for siblings, a window for new participants opens for at least thirty days for the following:

* Students whose parent is an active-duty member of the military and will be living in South Carolina;
* Students with a Medicaid card or other supporting documentation;
* Students meeting the definition of “exceptional needs child”; or,
* Students in the custody or guardianship of the Department of Social Services.

Once the final early window closes, all other applications may be submitted.

After the 2024-25 school year, the scholarship increases from $6,000 per student to an amount equal to the percentage increase in the State Aid to Classroom funding. The cap on the number of families who may participate is removed after the 2025-26 school year.

***(H. 5164*** ***was adopted by the House on March 21, 2024, and referred to the Senate Education Committee.)***

* **House bill 5245** amends the Charter School Act so that schools may give an enrollment preference to children of active-duty military servicemembers who reside, or are stationed, in the state. The preference is limited to no more than twenty percent of the school’s enrollment.

In regard to all students who wish to enroll in a particular charter school, only one preference may be used if more than one is applicable. If a student is denied an enrollment preference because the number of preferences a school has available is exceeded, the student may still participate in the enrollment lottery.

The twenty percent preference cap for military dependents will not contradict the fifty percent preference cap that already exists for charter schools located on military installations.

***(H. 5245* *was adopted by the House on March 29, 2024, and referred to the Senate Education Committee. The bill was given second reading by the Senate on May 8, 2024.)***

SENATE BILLS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE BUT NOT THE SENATE

* **Senate bill 124** creates a pilot program allowing certain schools to hire noncertified teachers in a ratio of up to twenty-five percent of the teaching staff. Participation in the program is optional and school principals wishing to participate must have approval of their district superintendent. A participating school must be in either in a critical geographic area or critical need certification area as defined in statute.

SDE must adopt guidelines to include at least the following requirements for noncertified teachers:

* Possess a baccalaureate or graduate degree for the position they are to teach;
* Have at least five years of relevant workplace experience;
* Be subject to educator evaluations as established in State Board regulations;
* Have initial and ongoing training and support; and,
* Enroll in a certification program within three years of employment.

The pilot program is considered to be renewed after five years unless ended by the General Assembly. SDE must include the number of noncertified teachers employed by a school in the school’s report card. The Department is directed to submit an annual report to the General Assembly containing recommendations for the initiative.

Noncertified applicants must complete a registration form, pay associated fees, and provide transcripts. They must also undertake FBI, SLED, and Teacher Education and Certification Clearinghouse checks. Individuals whose South Carolina educator certificate has been suspended or revoked may not be employed as a noncertified teacher.

Teachers are guaranteed four workdays for professional development with two of those days reserved for self-directed work to prepare for the school year.

H. 4280 (Educator Assistance Act) as adopted by the House is added to the bill.

***(S. 124*** ***was amended and adopted by the House on May 3, 2024. The Senate amended the bill, but the House non-concurred on May 9. The bill was not addressed further by the Senate.)***

* **Senate bill 305** directs theState Department of Education (SDE) to award credit to teachers for years of occupational experience in their content field. One year of credit is to be given for each year of experience. Years of experience may be awarded only for the purpose of advancement on the teacher salary schedule.

If an educator entered the teaching profession prior to July 1, 2023, and has occupational experience in the content field of their certificate, they may request that the additional years of experience be added to their certificate as well.

If additional years are awarded, the educator may have their pay adjusted for the current school year to reflect the new step on the state minimum salary schedule; however, they are not entitled to retroactive pay. The provisions of this bill do not apply for state retirement or state health plans purposes.

House bill 4280 (Educator Assistance Act) is added in its entirety as adopted by the House.

***(S. 305 was amended and adopted by the House on May 3, 2024. The Senate amended the bill, but the House non-concurred on May 9. The bill was not addressed further by the Senate.)***

SENATE BILLS NOT ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE

* **Senate bill 134** requires the governing bodies of school districts, charter schools, and special schools to make “reasonable and necessary efforts” to ensure that meetings are open and accessible to the public. This includes “live electronic access” such as livestream. A district that does not post recordings to its own website must make them available online through a link displayed on their website.

The State Board of Education is directed to adopt a model livestream meeting policy. Local governing bodies must adopt a conforming policy within three months of the Board approving the model policy, and their policies must be sent to the State Board for approval.

The model policy is to provide for penalties if there are violations or noncompliance by the local board. Penalties may not to exceed one percent of state funds to the district, charter school, or special school, and must have escalating tiers based on frequency, duration, and severity.

If a governing body provides evidence of limited or no broadband access, it may request from the State Board up to an additional twelve months to comply.

***(S. 134 was adopted by the Senate and assigned to the House Education and Public Works Committee on February 15, 2023. The bill was reported to the House floor but did not receive a second reading.)***

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

BILLS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

* **Act 81 (House bill 4023)** updates state law regarding First Steps to School Readiness. The Act changes the composition of local partnership boards. Instead of a maximum of twenty-five members, the number is reduced to a maximum of twelve. (This number could increase if there are multiple school districts in a partnership coverage area.)

No more than four members may be elected by the partnership to its board, and the county legislative delegation must appoint an additional six members. (If counties decide to create multicounty partnerships, the delegations will modify their appointments based on a plan approved by the state First Steps Board.) The Department of Social Services, Department of Health and Environmental Control, and Head Start or Early Head Start must make appointment recommendations to the delegations. The county public library located within a local partnership coverage area must recommend one employee for appointment by its county council to serve on the partnership. Each public school district board located within a particular local partnership coverage area must appoint one of its employees to serve as a member of the local partnership. Legislative delegations may designate some or all of their appointments to the county council. Elected partnership members may not serve in a holdover capacity.

Local partnerships must obtain approval from the First Steps Board of Trustees when hiring an executive director or increasing the director’s salary. Local boards must provide performance reviews regarding their executive director to the First Steps Board. When counties opt to create a multi-county partnership, approval by the First Steps Board is required. First Steps must establish personnel policies and procedures for local partnerships and create a standard process for reviewing the performance of local partnership executive directors.

The State Board, in consultation with the Office of Procurement, must develop procurement policies and procedures that the local partnerships must adopt. All publicly funded early childhood-serving agencies and entities must participate in data sharing initiatives supported by the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC).

The Department of Mental Health is given an *ex officio* appointment to the First Steps Board.

ECAC must serve as the governing body for an early childhood data collection system and is required to develop and maintain parent knowledge-building activities including portals to inform parents about programs. A five-year strategic plan must be developed by ECAC.

First Steps to School Readiness is permanently enacted and reauthorization is no longer necessary.

***(Act 81 was signed by the Governor on June 26, 2023.)***

BILLS AWAITING DELIBERATION BY THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

* **Senate bill 862** amends state law regarding childcare caregivers. The bill expands caregiver eligibility by allowing them to have at least a high school diploma, high school equivalency credential, Certificate of Completion, or a South Carolina High School Employability Credential instead of just a diploma or GED.

The Senate version requires new caregivers to be supervised by a staff person “until such time as the caregiver has completed the required health and safety service provider training.” The House provides that new caregivers must be supervised for at least thirty days by a staff person until training is completed.

The House version further states that self-reported incidents made by a representative of a childcare facility are not included in the definition of a complaint. Additionally, the length of a license is extended from two to three years beginning in 2025.

Both entities agrees that caregivers with a credential listed above and at least six months' experience as a caregiver in a licensed or approved facility are exempt from the supervision requirements.

The House version provides that operators of private childcare facilities must complete the following:

* A minimum of fifteen hours of approved training every year for the first five years of operation or employment.
* Only ten annual hours are required for operators and employees with between five and twenty years of experience.
* Operators and employees with more than twenty years’ experience do not have to receive training unless it is required for health and safety purposes.

First Steps, SDE, and DSS may provide up to five hours of the required training virtually.

[This bill was assigned to the K-12 subcommittee.]

***(A conference committee was appointed May 9, 2024.)***

* **Senate bill 946** changes the composition of the State Advisory Committee on the Regulation of Childcare Facilities. The number of committee members is reduced from seventeen to fifteen.

The Senate requires four members of the committee to be parents of children who receive childcare services with two representing entrepreneurial facilities, while the House requires three members to be parents of children who receive childcare services with two representing for-profit facilities.

The Senate requires seven members to representatives of owners and operators of childcare facilities, but the House requires six members to be representatives of owners and operators of childcare facilities with one appointed from a registered faith-based center.

The House directs that the Executive Director of First Steps and the State Child Advocate shall serve as *ex officio* members. Both bodies strike the requirement that the member appointed to represent the business community must be nominated by the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce.

Additionally, there is agreement that members may not serve on the committee in a hold-over capacity at the conclusion of their term for more than ninety days. A quorum is determined to be a majority of the members appointed and found qualified. State law currently specifies that a quorum exists when eight members are present.

[This bill was assigned to the K-12 subcommittee.]

***(A conference committee was appointed May 9, 2024.)***

**HIGHER EDUCATION**

BILLS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

* **Act 41 of 2023 (House bill 3857)** allows four-year comprehensive institutions of higher learning to add a new category for doctoral/professional degrees. Each individual institution may have up to five professional doctorates or Ph.Ds.

***(Act 41 was signed by the Governor on May 16, 2023.)***

* **Act 141 of 2024 (House bill 4349)** allows Greenville Technical College Commissioners to serve on the board without term limits. The Greenville Technical College Commission was the only Technical College board whose board members had term limits. Commissioners appointed must be qualified electors of Greenville County except for one at-large seat nominated by the Greenville County School District Board of Trustees and one at-large seat nominated by the Greenville County Workforce Investment Board. Both at-large seats must be filled by an individual who works or lives in Greenville County. The Act also allows chairman of the commission to excuse a commission member’s absence from a meeting.

***(Act \_\_\_ was signed by the Governor on May 13, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_\_\_of 2024 (House bill 4957)**, also known as the Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) bill, gives public and private institutions of higher learning the ability to facilitate NIL contracts. Any officer, trustee, director, or employee “may directly or through an agreement with a third party, identify, create, solicit, facilitate, and otherwise enable opportunities for a currently enrolled intercollegiate athlete to earn compensation for the use of the intercollegiate athlete’s name, image, or likeness.”

Colleges and universities may not receive compensation or fees directly from an athlete related to the facilitation of NIL, and appropriated funds of an institution of higher learning may not be used to pay an athlete’s compensation.

An institution of higher learning and their officers, trustees, directors, employees, including athletics coaching staff, may not be held liable for damages to an athlete’s ability to earn compensation for the use of NIL resulting from decisions or actions routinely taken during intercollegiate athletics. At the same time, nothing in the Act may be used to bar any common law claims by an athlete for fraud or misrepresentation.

Institutions cannot be penalized by an association (SEC, ACC, or NCAA) for facilitating NIL contracts. All terms of the athletes’ NIL contract are protected under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Athletes may not earn compensation for the use of their name, image, or likeness for the endorsement of tobacco, alcohol, illegal substances, or activities, banned athletic substances, or gambling, including sports betting. Fees that athlete agents can acquire off NIL contracts is capped at twenty percent of the contractual benefit.

***(Act \_\_\_ was signed by the Governor on \_\_\_\_, 2024.)***

* **Act 124 of 2024 (Senate bill 1047)** clarifies that the eight Commissioners on the Denmark Technical College Area Commission must be appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of a majority of the members of the General Assembly representing Allendale, Bamberg, and Barnwell Counties after a weighted vote by those delegation members. Commission members are to be appointed to a four-year term. The Commission must make periodic reports of its activities and progress to the legislative delegations from Allendale, Bamberg, and Barnwell counties. The Act strikes statutory language that limits Commission membership to the three respective local counties.

***(Act \_\_\_ was signed by the Governor on May 13, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_\_ of 2024 (Senate bill 125)** expands the LIFE and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship STEM stipend to accounting and education majors. The Commission on Higher Education (CHE) must define what constitutes an education major beginning with the 2024-2025 School Year to students who did not receive a LIFE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend before the 2024-2025 School Year. The definition of an education major must include, mathematics education majors, science education majors, and students who major in mathematics, science, or another subject and obtain teacher certification in a subject area related to their major prior to completion of their undergraduate degree.

CHE is to set the eligibility criteria that education majors must meet to receive the LIFE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend. This includes a contractual requirement that the recipient shall, upon graduation, work in a South Carolina public school for at least one school year for every year they received the stipend. Persons who qualified for the LIFE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend before the 2024-2025 School Year remain qualified and eligible for the stipend and are exempt from the contractual work requirement of education majors.

The Act also allows for modification of the minimum SAT/ACT if, after the 2024-2025 school year, the scoring scale range of the SAT is changed. Upon a change, CHE shall adjust the minimum SAT/ACT score to maintain a minimum scoring requirement that is the functional equivalent of the 2024-2025 standard. Assuming an adjustment is made, a college or university may apply the minimum scoring requirement on the SAT/ACT that dates back to when the test was initially taken and apply it to what CHE determines was the minimum standard at that time.

***(Act \_\_\_ was signed by the Governor on \_\_\_\_, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_\_\_of 2024 (Senate bill 974)** expands the definition of “public or independent institution” for purposes of the Palmetto Fellows, LIFE, and HOPE scholarships. This new definition includes institutions accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC). Prior to the Act, §59-113-50(1) provided that an independent institution of higher learning must be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (SACS); however the American College of the Building Arts is accredited by the ACCSC. The Act permits students attending the American College of the Building Arts to receive the Palmetto Fellows, LIFE, and HOPE Scholarships.

***(Act \_\_\_ was signed by the Governor on \_\_\_, 2024.)***

BILLS ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE BUT NOT THE SENATE

* **House bill 3501** allows an exception for “certified athlete agents” who pay expenses incurred before the signing of an agency contract in certain circumstances. The change is needed due to the NCAA altering eligibility rules to allow for payments by athlete agents to basketball student-athletes and family members for meals, hotels, and travel in connection with the recruiting and signing the student-athlete as a client. This bill would bring the State into compliance with other states who have made this change in their version of the Revised Uniform Athlete Agents Act (RUAAA).

***(H. 3501 was reported favorably by the House on May 3, 2023, and referred to the Senate Education Committee. Senate Education gave the bill a favorable report, but the bill failed to get third reading before sine die.)***

* **House bill 4289**, referred to as the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) bill, prohibits preferential treatment based on group identity within the State’s institutions of higher learning. Public institutions of higher learning may not take or require a diversity statement for student admission to the institution or from prospective faculty and staff members (including promotions). It also prohibits mandatory diversity training for faculty and employees at an institution.

The bill provides that if an institution receives a promise or declaration regarding DEI or other associated political issues, it may not promote or engage in differential treatment based on the opinions expressed in the promise or declaration. Colleges and universities may not infringe on a student, faculty member, or employee’s first amendment right to free speech and may not engage in viewpoint discrimination. Institutions of higher learning must annually report to the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) specific programs and funding associated with DEI. CHE must then report the findings to the General Assembly. Institutions of higher learning are not prohibited from applying for a federal grant or complying with the terms of accreditation by an accrediting agency.

***(H. 4289 was reported favorably by the House on March 28, 2024, and referred to the Senate Education Committee.)***

SENATE BILLS NOT ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE

* **Senate bill 538** requires the public institutions of higher learning to establish a tenure review process for every tenured faculty member. The process is to occur at least once every six years after the faculty member under review has gained tenure. The Commission on Higher Education (CHE) is to ensure the compliance of each public college and university and annually collect information necessary to ensure compliance with the review process. CHE shall annually report this information to the General Assembly.

***(S. 538 was adopted by the Senate and assigned to the House Education and Public Works Committee on March 21, 2024.)***

**MOTOR VEHICLES**

BILLS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

* **Act 24 (Senate bill 363)** prohibits vehicles from being “squatted.” The bill amends existing law so that passenger vehicles may not be raised or lowered more than six inches off the ground even if the vehicle remains leveled. A violation of the subsection remains a misdemeanor with fines ranging from $25 to $50 and does not apply to pickup trucks.

Additionally, pickup trucks are prohibited from operating on state highways if the height of the front fender is raised or lowered four or more inches above or below the height of the rear fender. Violation of the subsection is a misdemeanor with the first offense resulting in a $100 fine. The fine for a second offense is $200. A third offense results in a $300 fine and a twelve-month license suspension.

Penalties for violating the act do not begin for a period of 360 days. Drivers violating the act must be issued only warning tickets for a period of 180 days after the effective date.

***(Act 24 was signed by the Governor on May 16, 2023.)***

* **Act 51 (Senate bill 549)** makes several changes to statutes involving the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Among those changes are the following:
* **Driver Financial Responsibility**: The bill incorporates language adopted by the House in H. 3518 and updates the driver’s license reinstatement fee program to allow for the payment of fees over twelve months instead of six. The amount of fees needed for program eligibility is reduced from $300 to $200. DMV may keep $5 of the $40 administrative fee and $35 is sent to the State Highway Fund. If a driver receives a suspension while in the program, the new fee must be satisfied before participation may continue. Drivers must surrender license plates within five days after the cancellation or expiration of a vehicle’s liability insurance policy.

The bill ends the practice of allowing the operation of uninsured motor vehicles upon payment of a fee. All drivers will have to carry insurance. A person who operates an uninsured vehicle is guilty of a misdemeanor and must be fined not less than $100 and not more than $200 or imprisoned for 30 days.

* **DMV Financing Agreements:** Vendor, transaction, and similar fees paid to agencies for goods and services through payment methods other than cash will not have to be set in statute or regulation**.**  Consumers will pay the statutory cost for the product in addition to fees. Vendors profit solely through convenience fees, and customers can avoid the fee by paying cash.
* **Traceable Temporary License Plates:** Temporary license plates will be issued at the point of sale by dealers versus the optional program. Temporary plates are valid for 45 days regardless of the vehicle buyer and are immediately linked to the vehicle to aid law enforcement. DMV must solicit for a temporary plate distributor (paper supplier) and the Act defines who may be a temporary plate distributor. All dealers must participate in the program.
* **Quality Assurance for Dealer Work:** Aprivatized quality assurance entity to assess dealer work is created to ensure that information is correctly transmitted to DMV following the purchase of a vehicle from a dealer. The agency must solicit for the entity. Vehicle buyers must pay $10 for quality assurance--$5 is sent to the Quality Assurance entity, $2.50 goes to DMV for technology modernization, and $2.50 is sent to the SCDOT.
* **Dealer Licensing Laws:** The dealer licensing validity period changes from one to three years to reduce the administrative burden on DMV. The bond is raised from $30,000 to $50,000 for RV and retail dealers, with motorcycle dealer bonds increasing from $15,000 to $25,000. Disqualifying crimes for people attempting to become licensed dealers are added along with increases in the penalty for selling a vehicle without a dealer license. (Casual sellers are not impacted.)

The bill grandfathers dealers who have one license but contiguous lots and codifies the licensing of adjacent lots in the future. Also codified are existing agency procedures that assess points against a dealer’s license when dealers make errors. A Dealer Sanction Review Board is established to hear appeals on whether the public is made aware of points issued against a dealer.

* **Driver Training:** Changes are made to driver training. The term “defensive driving course” is now “driver training course.” The classroom portion of the training may be done in-person, virtually, or by online methods. Online training must contain the following:
	+ A student username and password;
	+ The ability to measure the amount of time a student spends in the course;
	+ Twenty-four-hour, seven day per week, technical support to students;
	+ Personal validation questions which appear throughout the course;
	+ Ways to keep students from completing more than four hours of instruction in a calendar day;
	+ A final examination at the completion of the program. A passing score of at least eighty percent is required and students have three attempts at passing.
* Previous law provided that no one may receive a driver's license unless and until all other operator's licenses are surrendered to the DMV. The bill adds a deadline of forty-five days upon a person becoming a resident of the State, unless specifically exempted by law.
* The vision screening required to obtain a driver’s license can be waived if a driver has a certificate of vision examination dated within the past 36 months. Active-duty members of the military are exempt from the requirements of this section as long as they provide a non-expired military identification card and a Leave and Earning Statement dated within thirty-one days of applying for, or renewing, their license.

***(Act 51 was signed by the Governor on May 30, 2023.)***

* **Act ­­\_\_ (House Bill 3355)** provides that, for recreational purposes only, a pick-up truck utilizing a fifth wheel assembly to tow a vehicle may tow one additional separate trailing vehicle. The pick-up truck and trailing vehicles may not exceed a combined total length of 65 feet. The weight of the final trailing vehicle must not exceed 3,000 pounds. A truck operating this combination must be equipped with a video system which allows the driver of the truck to monitor the final trailing vehicle as it is being towed. The final trailer must be attached with both a primary connection and an additional safety device of sufficient strength to retain the connection between the fifth wheel assembly and the final trailer under all conditions while the final trailer is being towed.

***(Act \_\_ was signed by the Governor on May 13, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_ of 2024 (House Bill 4436)** requires that drivers maintain control of their vehicles in emergencies, including scenes with stopped vehicles. Drivers must not obstruct emergency vehicle operations or operators of emergency vehicles. The Act protects tow truck drivers who respond to emergencies on the state’s roadways. Violation of this Act is a misdemeanor and carries a fine of not less than $300, nor more than $500.

***(Act \_\_ was signed by the Governor on May \_\_\_, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_ (House Bill 4673)** provides that a person eighteen years of age or older may attempt the driving test to obtain a regular driver’s license after maintaining a beginner’s permit for at least 30 days. A person fifteen to seventeen years old must still hold a beginner’s permit for 180 days before attempting the driving test.

A person is not required to obtain a beginner’s permit before operating a motor vehicle during the driving test with a DMV employee if the person has satisfied the beginner’s permit requirements set forth in law or has sufficient previous driving experience that exempts the person from the beginner’s permit requirements. Additionally, a person obtaining a moped operator’s license pursuant to Section 56-1-1720 is not required to hold a beginner’s permit before operating a moped.

***(Act ­­\_\_ was signed by the Governor on May 13, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_ (House Bill 4674)** requires license plates to be secured in a horizontal and upright position to the vehicle to prevent swinging. Intrastate large commercial motor vehicle may display a motorcycle-sized temporary license plate in the front, passenger side windshield of the vehicle. This change was in response to issues with normal temporary paper tags on the front of large commercial motor vehicles ripping on the interstate from wear and tear.

This bill also provides for the transfer of a special plate for National Guard members to a surviving spouse and includes all of the new special license plates added during the 2024 legislative session. New special license plates include:

* + “Hearing Impaired” plate;
	+ “South Carolina Equine Industry” plate;
	+ “Native American” plate for motorcycles;
	+ “Catawba Nation” plate;
	+ “Cherokee Indian Nation” plate;
	+ “South Carolina Beekeepers Association” plate;
	+ “Autistic and Neurodivergent” or “Just Bee” plate;
	+ “South Carolina Association for Pupil Transportation” plate;
	+ “University of South Carolina 2017, 2022, and 2024 Women’s Basketball National Championship” plate; and
	+ Navy and Marine Corps Medal plate.

***(Act ­­\_\_ was signed by the Governor on May ­­\_\_, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_ (House Bill 4819)** allows applicants for handicapped parking placards to provide an approved photograph for the placard. Previously, applicants were required to use the photograph on file with the SCDMV from their driver’s license or identification card.

***(Act ­­\_\_ was signed by the Governor on May 13, 2024.)***

* **Act \_\_ (Senate Bill 207)** creates the Piedmont Gateway Scenic Byway and identifies the three segments that comprise the byway.

***(Act \_\_ was signed by the Governor on May \_\_, 2024.)***

* **Act ­­\_\_ (Senate Bill 968)** allows an applicant for a driver's license or permit to voluntarily disclose his or her blood type. The Department of Motor Vehicles will create a form for the disclosure and require a certification from a medical provider.

***(Act \_\_ was signed by the Governor on May \_\_, 2024.)***

BILLS ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE BUT NOT THE SENATE

* **House Bill 3168** allows for the operation of antique motor vehicles at night as long as the vehicle is equipped with working headlights and rear lights. Existing statute provides that motor vehicles and motorcycles may be classified by the Department of Motor Vehicles as an antique if the following conditions are met:
* Over twenty-five years old;
* Owned solely as a collector's item; and,
* Used for participation in club activities, exhibits, tours, parades, and similar uses; but,
* Not used for general transportation.

***(H. 3168 was adopted by the House on April 28, 2023, and referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.)***

* **House Bill 3359** creates a new section regarding Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTV). The definition of UTV does not include golf carts or vehicles designed to carry individuals with disabilities.

Before it may be operated on a road, a UTV must be registered in the same fashion as a passenger vehicle. Owners must obtain a license plate from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) upon presenting proof of ownership and liability insurance. There is a ten-dollar biennial fee of which DMV may keep $2.00 per plate to cover the costs of production and issuance. Four dollars is sent to the State Highway Fund, and $4.00 is given to the Transportation Infrastructure Bank.

Owners are exempt from paying property taxes on UTVs, but are subject to road-use fees for vehicles powered by electric, hydrogen, and fuels other than motor fuel. UTVs may be operated on roads for which the speed limit is fifty-five miles an hour or less but may cross at intersections where the road has a speed limit of more than fifty-five miles an hour.

UTV operators must be at least sixteen years of age and hold a valid driver’s license. Operators driving on a highway or street must have the license plate and registration, proof of insurance and a driver’s license. If the UTV operator is sixteen years old and has a conditional driver’s license, the UTV may only be operated during daylight hours. UTVs may not be operated by anyone who holds a beginner’s permit or moped operator’s license. UTVs may not be operated by holders of a temporary alcohol license, route restricted driver’s license, provisional driver’s license, or solely a motorcycle license.

Children under eight years of age may not be a passenger on a UTV while it is being operated on a road. Drivers and passengers under the age of eighteen must wear the protective gear described in state law. UTVs must have a Type 2 seat belt assembly at each seating position and have operable headlights, brake lights, taillights, and turn signals. Drivers and passengers of UTVs must wear a fastened safety belt. Failure to do so may result in a fine pursuant to existing state law.

DMV may not register or renew the registration of a UTV unless a certificate of title has been issued to the owner or an application has been delivered to the department. Certificates issued under this subsection must carry the brand ‘off road use only’ to designate that a vehicle’s Manufacturer Certificate of Origin is not manufactured for use on public roads.

***(H. 3359 was adopted by the House on March 30, 2023, and referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.)***

* **House Bill 3414** prohibits vehicles from being “squatted.”

**[Please see the summary for Senate bill 363 which is a companion bill to H. 3414.]**

***(H. 3414 was adopted by the House on April 5, 2023, and referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.)***

* **House Bill 3518** regards driver financial responsibility.

***(H. 3518 was adopted by the House on February 8, 2023. The Senate amended the bill on May 11, 2023, to strike the original language in full and insert a Senate bill regarding DUI and the Ignition Interlock Device Program. Please see the summary for S. 549. The provisions of H. 3518, as passed by the House, were inserted into S. 549*.*)***

***(Act \_\_\_ was signed by the Governor on May 13, 2024.)***

* **House Bill 3160** allows for limousines and chartered vehicles to be requested through ride-sharing apps, such as Uber and Lyft.

***(H. 3160 was adopted by the House on March 7, 2024, and referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.)***

* **House Bill 3732** expresses that “the restoration, exhibition, showing, and enjoyment of classic and antique motor vehicles is the official family friendly pastime of the State.”

***(H. 3732 was adopted by the House on April 28, 2023, and referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.)***

* **House Bill 4933** exempts law enforcement vehicles from the sunscreen device or window tint restriction in current law, allowing for blackout tint on those vehicles.

***(House Bill 4933 was adopted by the House on March 3, 2024, and referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.)***

**Transportation**

BILLS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

* **Act \_\_ of 2024 (House Bill 4601)** deals with the requirement that loads and covers must be firmly attached to a vehicle driven on any public highway. The bill shifts language from one code section to another to clarify that the transportation of certain farm products and materials is exempt from the requirement to cover and any violations that could result from the escape of the products and materials.

**(Act \_\_ was signed by the Governor on May \_\_, 2024.)**

* **Act \_\_ of 2024 (House Bill 5023)** establishes the work zone safety program within the Department of Motor Vehicles and requires all persons obtaining an initial driver's license, and who are required to complete a driver's education course, to take the work zone safety program course. DMV must make a presentation for the program available online and include a question-and-answer portion. The agency must also keep a record of those who complete the program.

***(Act \_\_ was signed by the Governor on May \_\_, 2024.)***

* **Act 2 of 2023 (Senate bill 361)** deals with contract extensions that allow the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to expand the scope of work of an already existing road construction contract if the work is being done in the same vicinity. All extensions must be executed by the SCDOT Secretary and ratified by the Commission to ensure transparency in the contract extension process.

***(S. 361 was signed by the Governor on March 20, 2023.)***

Bills Adopted By the House BUT NOT THE SENATE

* **House bill 3750** updates the SCDOT Procurement Code so that the Department can construct mass transit facilities and conduct improvements on the State’s rights of way.

***(H. 3750 was reported favorably by the House on March 8, 2023, and referred to the Senate Finance Committee.)***

* **House Bill 5024** provides for the transfer of special military tags of National Guard members to their surviving spouses. The bill includes two additional special license plates--one for Autistic and Neurodivergent recognition, and one for the South Carolina Association for Pupil Transportation.

**[Please see the summary for H. 4674. The provisions in H. 5024 were inserted into H. 4674.]**

***(H. 5024 was adopted by the House on March 27, 2024, and referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.)***