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**HOUSE WEEK IN REVIEW**

The House of Representatives concurred in Senate amendments to **H.4014**, a bill **APPROVING FUNDING TO COMBAT THE COVID-19 VIRUS**. The bill was ratified by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor, effective immediately. The legislation allocates $45 million from the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Contingency Reserve Fund for use by the Department of Health and Environmental Control for the coordination of the state’s public health preparedness and response to the COVID-19 virus. DHEC is afforded the funding to cover an array of costs:

* Staffing ($14,598,760): paying the additional staff that DHEC needs to support COVID-19 disease surveillance and contact investigation, laboratory testing, and information phone lines.
* Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ($14,806,800): purchasing the protective equipment for DHEC’s healthcare workers to prevent spread of infection.
* Staff Support ($5,282,420): covering operating costs such as technology, lab supplies and reagents, travel, and facility cleaning.
* Education Campaign ($2,500,000): Support for TV/Radio airtime and printed materials.
* Quarantine ($1,703,580): addressing costs to quarantine and support indigent patients.
* Transportation ($1,394,958): covering costs to courier lab samples and the distribution of items from the Strategic National Stockpile.
* Contingency ($5,000,000): around 10% is allocated for unanticipated costs or changing assumptions based on disease spread.

A separate COVID-19 Response account is established for these funds and other funds that may be appropriated later. A reporting protocol is established for tracking expenditures. DHEC is authorized to expend funds from other sources for its coronavirus initiatives.

DHEC is afforded emergency authority to address disease hotspots rapidly by reallocating supplies and employees to meet the demands of hospitals and other medical providers who receive Medicaid or other state funds that are located within specific areas of this state where COVID-19 infections are most concentrated.

The legislation provides temporary authority for retirees in the South Carolina Retirement System and the Police Officers Retirement System to be hired as part of the state’s response to COVID-19 without being subject to the maximum earnings limitations imposed upon retirees who return to covered employment.

After passing this legislation, the House of Representatives voted to adjourn to next meet at the call of the Speaker of the House. The Speaker announced that, unless circumstances change, he does not anticipate calling for House Members to return during the next two weeks, the week of March 23 and the week of March 30.

**BILLS INTRODUCED IN THE**

**HOUSE THIS WEEK**

AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES AND

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

 **H.5420 COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUALS Rep. Wheeler**

The bill outlines that the Department of Health and Environmental Control shall charge a surcharge of thirty dollars per ton on any coal combustion residuals transferred to a landfill in a county with a population of less than 19,500.

**JUDICIARY**

 **S.9 *INTERSTATE LEFT LANE LOAFERS* Senator Peeler**

Absent very light traffic, inclement weather, right lane hazards, law enforcement or other official vehicles stopped on the right shoulder, or a left lane exit on interstates in South Carolina, drivers could only use interstate highway leftmost lanes to overtake or pass vehicles in the rightmost lane[s]. Law enforcement would be authorized to issue $25 penalty citations to these ‘left lane loafers’ for violations.

 **H.5419 *STATUTORY STAY OF EVICTIONS* Rep. Gilliard**

As part of state emergency responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, Magistrates or Circuit Court Judges could not conduct any tenant eviction proceedings within ninety [90] days of the effective date of this Joint Resolution.

**LABOR, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

 **S.481 *STATE FIRE RESPONSIBILITIES* Sen. Alexander**

This bill revises and updates provisions relating to the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation’s Division of Fire and Life Safety, alternatively referred to as State Fire, establishing that its primary program areas consist of: the Office of the State Fire Marshal, the State Fire Academy and the Emergency Response Task Force.

 **S.881 *REINSURANCE CREDITS* Sen. Cromer**

This bill revises provisions relating to reinsurance credits to adopt the reciprocal jurisdiction amendment from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) model law and make other conforming changes.

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

 **S.980 *REGIONAL TERTIARY LEVEL DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION CENTERS***

 **Senator Alexander**

These centers provide comprehensive developmental assessment and treatment services for children with developmental disabilities, significant developmental delays or behavioral/learning disorders. The bill provides technical changes by updating the names of the hospitals that are authorized agents of the state.

**WAYS AND MEANS**

 **S.719 *CHARITABLE RAFFLES* Sen. Hembree**

This bill makes revisions to provisions authorizing raffles conducted by nonprofit organizations that include: allowing charitable raffles to continue by extending the upcoming sunset date when these provisions are set to expire; increasing prize amounts; and, revising reporting requirements.

**The *Legislative Update* is on the Worldwide Web. Visit the South Carolina General Assembly Home Page (http://www.scstatehouse.gov) and click on "*Publications*," then click on "*Legislative Updates*." This will list all of the *Legislative Updates* by date. Click on the date you need*.* Also available on the website is a bill summary index, where bills referenced in one or more issues of the *Legislative Update* are listed in numeric order. Links to the specific text of the *Legislative Update* issue are provided in the bill summary index.**

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