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Legislative Update

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Legislative Update (Profiles), 2024

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The legislation that these summaries are based on can be found in the House and Senate Journals (www.scstatehouse.gov) of the 125th Session, 2023-2024 (Second Regular Session, 2024). These legislative summaries are grouped by committees. In the Word file in the Table of Contents, you can go directly to the Act or bill summary by pointing the cursor at the line, pressing the Ctrl key + left click the mouse.

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- 1) a Word document showing that week's bill activity by date.
- 2) a Webpage (the Bill Summary Index) with hypertext links to the bills (by bill number, date, and the different stages in the legislative process).

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Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Environmental Affairs

H. 4611 Electronic Dog Controlled Devices Rep. Hixon

It is unlawful to intentionally remove or destroy an electronic collar or other electronic device placed on a dog by its owner. The bill provides for a penalty.

H. 4612 Airborne Hunting of Feral Hogs Rep. Hixon

Currently, it is unlawful to intentionally kill or attempt to kill any animals or birds while airborne. The legislation adds an exception for persons issued a permit by the Department of Natural Resources.

H. 4712 Yard Debris or Waste On Highway Rep. Ott

It is unlawful for a person to knowingly and willfully sweep, blow, move, place, or otherwise deposit yard debris or waste onto a public highway. The bill also provides for penalties for violations. This act takes effect on one hundred eighty days after approval by the Governor.

H. 4683 Open Season for Hunting Deer Rep. White

The bill changes open season for Game Zones 1 and 2 for hunting antlered deer with archery equipment and firearms from October 11 through January 15.

H. 4686 Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Rep. Bustos

This bill requires the Department of Environmental Services to promulgate regulations prohibiting the discharge of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl into the waterways and drinking water supplies. Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are synthetic chemicals found in many consumer products, such as clothing, carpets, fabrics for furniture, adhesives, paper packaging for food, and heat-resistant/non-stick cookware.

Education and Public Works

H. 4606 "South Carolina School Bus Privatization Act of 2024" Rep. Gillard

H. 4606 proposes that the state will cease to own, purchase, or acquire additional school buses after July 1, 2028. The current fleet will be sold or disposed of in a phased manner starting in 2025. Numerous sections detail what would follow from that: school districts' responsibility for transportation services, disposition of state school bus maintenance facilities, liability insurance requirements, all effective July 1, 2028, marking the full transfer of responsibility for school transportation services to the school districts in South Carolina.

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H. 4536 Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month Rep. Calhoon

H. 4536 would designate the month of July each year as "Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month."

H. 4568 County Public Library System Boards of Trustees Rep. Cromer

H. 4568 pertains to county public library system boards of trustees the bill removes obsolete language and amends current law provide that trustees could be removed by a two-thirds vote of county council members present and voting.

H. 4570 School District Trustees Delegation of Authority Prohibited Rep. Gilliard

H. 4570 would amend current law to provide that school district trustees may not delegate their authority or appoint proxies to vote or otherwise act on their behalf, making such actions null and void from the beginning. Moreover, trustees who delegate their authority or appoint proxies to vote or otherwise act for them would be subject to removal by the Governor.

H. 4582 Contracts for Public School Student Transportation Services Rep. Oremus

H. 4582 would amend current law clarifying the applicability to school districts relating to contracts for public school student transportation services with private individuals or contractors. In addition to deleting obsolete language, the bill adds language providing requirements that a contracting private entity must conform to state laws and regulations. Moreover, it provides for alternate bus specifications from another state (with reporting requirements to the General Assembly). Language also relates to supplies and maintenance of state-owned buses, so as to provide school districts may include school bus maintenance in such private contracts by entering an agreement with the state Department of Education that releases the district to include school bus maintenance.

H. 4583 Name, Image, or Likeness Protections Rep. Pendarvis

H. 4583 would add the policy of the state is to protect the ability of an athlete to earn compensation for their name, image, or likeness or participate in intercollegiate athletic events unless the athlete has committed a violation of the rules of an institution of higher learning or the athletic conference or collegiate athletic association. A subsequent section regarding an institution of higher learning would amend current law to include "sanctions" -- bringing that section into correspondence with the added policy language.

H. 4593 Penalties Added for Violations Regarding Left Hand Lane Access Rep. Taylor

H. 4593 would amend current law relating to overtaking and passing another vehicle in the farthest left-hand lane of a controlled access highway, establishing criminal penalties (fines between \$100 and \$200 or imprisonment for not more than thirty days) as well

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as the assessment of points (two) against a person's motor vehicle driving record. A current list of exceptions is deleted (i.e., exceptions to reporting regarding DMV/SLED records and insurance, law enforcement searches, conditions of admission, and possible civil liabilities).

H. 4601 Preventing the Escape of Loose Material and Debris Rep. Forrest

H. 4601 would amend current law relating to preventing escape of materials loaded on vehicles by incorporating the provisions of existing section 56-5-4110 (“No person shall operate on any highway any vehicle with any load unless such load and any covering thereon is securely fastened so as to prevent such covering or load from becoming loose, detached or in any manner a hazard to other users of the highway.”)

H. 4610 Highway Transfers to the State Highway System Rep. Hixon

H. 4610 would amend current law relating to highway transfers to the state highway system, so as to provide the policy prescription that Department of Transportation must properly maintain roads transferred into the state highway system: “The Department must properly maintain, repair, replace, abate, and when appropriate, upgrade the roads, and the infrastructure, preexisting conditions and all related responsibilities for the roads transferred from the county or municipal road system to the state highway system.”

H. 4613 Warning Tickets Issued to Military Veterans Rep. Jefferson

H. 4613 would provide an honorably discharged United States military veteran must be issued a warning ticket for a first offense speeding violation.

H. 4623 School Absences Rep. Haddon

H. 4623 would add new law regarding excused absences for public school students when participating in any work-based learning experience in which student participation and learning outcomes are directed by a certified teacher for assessment of competencies (e.g., organized competitions or exhibitions of state-level FFA organizations, the national FFA organization, and 4-H programs as part of organized competitions or exhibitions). Students and their parents are responsible for obtaining and completing assignments missed during such excused absences.

H. 4627 Motor Vehicle and Motorcycle Noise Rep. Bernstein

H. 4627 would add language so as to provide motor vehicle and motorcycle owners may be charged with violating local ordinances that restrict the production of excessive noise by a motor vehicle or motorcycle when their vehicles violate those ordinances.

H. 4649 Promote Safety And Security on School Premises Rep. Bannister

H. 4649 would provide that public school districts with more than 15,000 students may use certain security personnel to promote safety and security on school premises (pro

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vided they are licensed as a proprietary security business). The bill provides requirements regarding training, licensure, registration, and certification those security officers (with exceptions). The bill also maintains the obligation of districts to use school resource officers as currently required by law.

H. 4653 School Safety Accountability Rep. Bustos

H. 4653 would require the State Department of Education to conduct audits and on-site inspections of school districts to ensure compliance with statewide model safe school policies and related regulations. The bill outlines initial completion deadlines with subsequent annual inspection requirements.

H. 4655 Physical Activity and Physical Education Standards Rep. Haddon

H. 4655 would require certain mandatory minimum periods for physical education and recess from four-year old kindergarten through eighth grades each year and to provide that recess periods must be held indoors during times of inclement weather. The provisions of this act prevail to the extent they conflict with any such regulations and rules.

H. 4665 General Assembly Members Teaching/Volunteer Requirements Rep. Johnson

H. 4665 would require every member of the General Assembly to serve as a substitute teacher, or otherwise volunteer, in a South Carolina K-12 public school.

H. 4671 Specifications and Issuance of License Plates Rep. Crawford

H. 4671 would delete the provision relating to the portion of vehicle registration and license fees placed in a special restricted account to be used for the production and issuance of new license plates. In addition, the bill sets that license plates must be issued annually for interstate commercial motor vehicles (adding that no revalidation sticker may be issued for the plates).

H. 4672 Electronic or Digitally Issued Cards Rep. Erickson

H. 4672, in addition to definitions, would provide that the Department of Motor Vehicles may establish a system for issuing optional electronic or digitally issued cards (licenses, permits and identification cards).

H. 4673 Beginner's Permits Rep. Erickson

H. 4673 would amend the law regarding beginner's permits, hours and conditions of vehicle operation, renewal and fees, driver's training courses, and eligibility for full licensure. The bill would provide that persons at least eighteen years old may take the driving test after maintaining a beginner's permit for at least thirty days

H. 4674 The Display of License Plates on Motor Vehicles Rep. Erickson

H. 4674 would amend laws relating to the display of license plates: how license plates must be fastened to vehicles and to provide for the display of temporary license plates on large

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H. 4675 DMV Records Rep. Erickson

H. 4675 would amend the laws relating to the fee for expediting requests for copies of documents or records, increasing the fee, to provide that this section relates to the expedited delivery of beginner's permits, driver's licenses, and identification cards, to provide for the delivery of the cards, to delete references to the freedom of information act, and to provide the funds collected must be retained by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

H. 4678 Driver's Licenses Rep. S. Jones

H. 4678 would provide that it is unlawful to drive a motor vehicle with a driver's license not recognized in South Carolina.

H. 4654 and H. 4701 are identical. H. 4701 has a title ("Restricting Explicit and Adult-Designated Education Resources (READER) Act").

H. 4654 Public School Library Collections Standards Rep. Cromer

H. 4654 would provide for the creation of public-school library collections standards that prohibit the acquisition or retention of materials that are sexually explicit or harmful to children (with definitions and referencing current statutes regarding obscene materials and minors). The bill denotes that school districts shall not provide students access to sexually relevant materials without written parental consent. The bill would make the acquisition and retention of sexually relevant materials discretionary for school districts, provide requirements for schoolbook vendors, the library committee, the State Board of Education, and the State Department of Education. A "catalog" of material would be maintained with review and rating requirements by several entities. The library committee would develop certain voluntary standards for school district library services and mandatory standards for public school library collection development, the periodic review and update of these standards; provide dates by which certain initial review and reporting requirements of the Act must occur; and repeals current SC Code section 59-31-45 relating to the "selection of textbooks; requests; procedures." H. 4654 and H. 4701 are identical.

H. 4701 Restricting Explicit and Adult-Designated Education Resources (Reader) Act Rep. Caskey

H. 4701 would enact the "Restricting Explicit and Adult-Designated Education Resources (READER) Act"; creating public school library collection standards that prohibit the acquisition or retention of materials that are sexually explicit or harmful to children. H. 4654 and H. 4701 are identical.

H. 4702 "South Carolina Computer Science Education Initiative Act" Rep. Davis

H. 4702 would enact the "South Carolina Computer Science Education Initiative Act," which seeks to "continue to expand access to computer science learning experiences to all students because computer science supports literacy, math, problem solving, and technological skills, and advances productivity in every discipline, industry, and pro-

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fession.” H. 4702 provides for the expansion and enhancement of computer science education in public high schools through the creation and implementation of a statewide computer science education plan and the requirement that each public school offers at least one computer science course by the beginning of the 2022-23 school year.

H. 4703 South Carolina Stem Opportunity Act Rep. Davis

H. 4703 would enact the " South Carolina STEM Opportunity Act" by establishing the South Carolina Science, Technology, Engineering, And Mathematics (STEM) Coalition, the South Carolina Science, Technology, Engineering, And Mathematics (STEM) Education Fund within the State Treasury, and the SC Stem Coalition Advisory Council. The coalition would coordinate STEM education programs in K-12 and higher education, promote STEM education statewide in collaboration with business and industry, and work towards the development of a technology-ready STEM workforce in South Carolina. The coalition is also tasked with collaborating in research and development of STEM education tools and best practices, facilitating participation in STEM-related competitions, promoting STEM teaching as a career, and engaging business and industry in STEM activities for schools.

H. 4704 Qualifications of School District Superintendents Rep. Kilmartin

H. 4704 would amend the qualifications of school district superintendents, holding that possession of a doctoral degree may not be required among the qualification requirements for service or certification as a school district superintendent and revise academic requirements to include a minimum of a bachelor's degree instead of a master's degree.

H. 4706 School District Employees Who Hold Elected Public Office Rep. Ott

H. 4706 would provide that public school district employees who hold elected public office are entitled to the equivalent of five paid workdays during each school year to attend meetings or training related to their office, and to provide documentation requirements.

H. 4707 Sex Identification and Personal Pronoun Usages in K-12 Public Schools Rep. Pace

H. 4707 would establish statewide policies concerning sex identification and personal pronoun usages in K-12 public schools. “It must be the policy of every public K-12 educational institution that is provided in this State that the sex of a person is an immutable biological trait and that it is false to ascribe to a person a pronoun that does not correspond to such person's sex.” The bill does not require school employees, contractors, and students concerning personal pronoun use that does not correspond to the sex of a person. The bill also relates to the implementation of the comprehensive health education program, imposing related requirements for the classification of males and females in the comprehensive health education program. The remaining part of the bill relates to public review and hearings concerning instructional materials pending adoption by the State Board of Education and school districts, to provide public comment must be

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allowed in public meetings, that material adopted in violation of these provisions is void and prohibited for use in public schools, and to provide policies and procedures concerning objections to proposed materials.

H. 4708 School Protection Officer Act Rep. Pace

H. 4708 would enact the "School Protection Officer Act " providing that beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, the governing boards of government k-12 schools and government institutions of higher education may designate employees as school protection officers to provide armed protection and other related public safety functions on their campuses.

H. 4709 Cursive Writing Rep. Rivers

H. 4709 would require that cursive writing be taught in public elementary schools with cursive writing instruction must begin in second grade and continue in each grade through fifth grade. Additionally, the bill *continues* to maintain the requirement for students to memorize multiplication tables to effectively multiply numbers by the end of fifth grade.

Judiciary

H. 4535 "Safety In Private Spaces Act" Rep. Beach

All schools, jails, and other public buildings that maintain restrooms or changing facilities, would have to have facilities for the exclusive use of males, and separate facilities for the exclusive use of females. They could have unisex facilities as well. These entities would also be required to add violations of these requirements to their existing disciplinary systems. The Attorney General would receive noncompliance reports and have authority to take appropriate action against these entities to seek injunctive relief, or levy fines of up to the \$10,000.

H. 4537 Alcohol at the Golf Course Rep. B. L. Cox

A proposed revision of our South Carolina Code to allow the sale and consumption of liquor, beer, and wine by the drink at licensed golf courses, to be consumed anywhere on their premises.

H. 4538 "South Carolina Student Physical Privacy Act" Rep. Cromer

This bill would require every publicly-supported school with restrooms and changing facilities to designate them for use only by members of one sex. Exceptions to people of the opposite sex accessing these spaces would include custodians, providing medical assistance, emergencies, and among other things, providing assistance to the disabled. It seeks to protect the privacy, dignity, and order of these public-school students.

H. 4540 “Children’s Default to Safety Act” Rep. Guffey

If enacted, this legislation would require manufacturers of smartphones and tablets to install filters that would block harmful material availability to minors when these devices are activated. Parents would be extended rights to file civil actions against content providers violating the restrictions in this proposed legislation. The South Carolina Attorney General could enforce violations of this bill via injunctions, civil fines from \$5,000 to \$50,000, or seeking jail time against offenders. Anyone sharing passcodes with minors to bypass these device filters could face criminal prosecution. Parents would also have rights to file civil actions against offenders to recover their damages, attorney fees, and costs.

H. 4541 “Child Data Privacy and Protection Act” Rep. Guffey

A proposal to establish protections for minors’ user data, and to prevent certain entities from collecting, retaining, processing, and selling personal data. Entities appealing to minor users with the content they provide would have to submit data protection impact assessments to our Attorney General, who, in turn, would provide this information to the House Speaker and President of the Senate. The Attorney General could enforce these protection requirements for providers not meeting protection requirements via civil fines from \$25,000 to \$250,000, injunctions, and/or private civil actions for damages, attorney fees, and costs. In addition, the Attorney General would prepare and distribute a public awareness campaign to educate the public about this initiative, and their rights under it.

H. 4542 Restrictions for Uploading Adult Content Rep. Guffey

Online platform operators and content providers would be prevented from uploading pornographic images to their sites, or allowing users to upload these pornographic images, without first obtaining specified permissions and verifications. Violators face civil fines of up to \$10,000 for each image --and each day-- that any image is improperly posted. Private civil actions also could be filed. In addition, this bill sets out the proposed members of a legislative review committee to investigate online technological exploitation, create sentencing guidelines for punishing offenders, and to issue its report on further legislation warranted by this fast-growing segment of the online community.

H. 4546 No Open-Ended Power Of Emergency (NOPE) Act Rep. Magnuson

The Governor would be required to justify any declaration of public health emergencies with scientific evidence, not federal declarations, if this legislation is enacted. A gubernatorial declaration would be valid for 30 days, but not be renewable. The bill would also allow the South Carolina General Assembly to extend a state of emergency via a concurrent resolution.

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H. 4555 Establishing Juneteenth as a State Holiday Rep. Rutherford

Juneteenth would become a state-recognized holiday under this proposal.

H. 4556 “Vulnerable Adult Maltreatment Registry Act” Rep. Trantham

Known perpetrators abusing vulnerable adults would be entered into a State Law Enforcement Division [SLED] Vulnerable Adult Maltreatment Registry under this proposal. Its contents would be confidential to anyone except the entities listed, which include law enforcement. An appeal review process for persons so listed is also contained in this bill. SC DSS, SC DHEC, and SLED would collaborate to issue annual reports about this registry and incidents of maltreatment that would be sent to the Governor, and the General Assembly for their review.

H. 4558 Alimony or Separate Support and Maintenance Cohabitation Modifications Rep. Wooten

Former spouses receiving alimony or separate support and maintenance payments could have those payments modified, reduced, or terminated for factors other than remarriage when alimony recipients cohabit, or intertwine their finances to the point of manifesting cohabitation, as well as under other circumstances set out in this bill.

H. 4559 Probate Court Appointed Representatives for Burn Pit Victims Rep. Bernstein

This bill seeks to amend South Carolina's probate code to allow appointment proceedings related to a claim under the 2022 PACT Act regardless of the date of the individual's death. The PACT Act provides benefits for individuals exposed to burn pits and other toxins during military service. This change would ensure veterans and families could file claims under the PACT Act even if the veteran passed away over ten years ago.

H. 4560 Garnishment for Underinsured Motorist Liabilities Rep. Hixon

If this bill becomes law, courts could order wages to be garnished to pay damages from an accident involving an underinsured driver. It would allow the court to direct the Department of Motor Vehicles [DMV] to garnish wages in accordance with the amount of damages the underinsured driver owes. The bill also would expand the definition of claimant agency to include the DMV for purposes of complying with this proposed new garnishment law.

H. 4561 Campaign Funds For Dependent Care Rep. Wetmore

This bill seeks to allow candidates and public officials to use campaign funds to pay for dependent care expenses incurred during campaign activities, or while carrying out official duties. Dependent care includes direct care for minors or family members with disabilities or medical conditions for whom the candidate or official has direct responsibility. The dependent care must be provided by a care provider licensed in South Carolina.

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H. 4563 Pre-1973 Special Purpose District Powers and Authorities Rep. Bernstein

The bill would clarify the powers of special purpose districts created before 1973 to own, acquire, purchase, hold, use, lease, convey, sell, or dispose of property.

H. 4572 Restrictions on School-Issued Digital Devices Rep. Guffey

The South Carolina Department of Education would review and approve all websites, applications, and software used on school-issued digital devices to ensure they are curriculum-aligned under this proposal. It would prohibit unapproved student communication on these school-issued devices and mandates filters to block unapproved sites and downloads. SDE would have to create a process for teachers to obtain approval before integrating specific resources supporting their curriculum on these devices as well.

H. 4576 Prosecutors Personal Protection Privacy Act Rep. J. E. Johnson

Current, and former, prosecutors could request that their personal contact information, such as their home addresses and phone numbers, be kept private by state and local government agencies. If they make these requests, agencies could not disclose or post these prosecutors' information online, absent specified exceptions applying. The bill would also require the South Carolina Commission on Prosecution Coordination to create forms for these prosecutors to make these privacy requests, or to withdraw them.

H. 4584 Ending Compulsory South Carolina Bar Membership for South Carolina Lawyers Rep. Rutherford

This bill would amend existing South Carolina law to remove the requirement that South Carolina lawyers must be members of the South Carolina Bar. It proposes allowing the Supreme Court to license and regulate attorneys through court rules, subject to state law, instead of requiring state bar membership. The bill also updates the definition of unauthorized practice of law in South Carolina to refer to anyone practicing law in our state without having been licensed by the SC Supreme Court.

H. 4585 Lobbyist and Judiciary Qualifications Rep. Trantham

This bill would increase the waiting period before current and former public officials in South Carolina could engage in lobbying from one year to two years. It also lengthens from one to two years the time a legislator must wait after leaving office before being eligible for election to any judicial position.

H. 4588 Voter Registration, DMV Change of Address Filings Rep. Beach

This bill would require the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles to transmit any voter's signature and change of address information to state election authorities when the licensed driver submits this updated information via mail, electronically, or in person.

H. 4589 Municipal Election Protests Rep. G.M. Smith

This bill would amend municipal election law to set out that newly elected officers could not be qualified until 48 hours after the last contest concludes. It removes the stay of this qualification under existing law when election contests are filed. Courts would handle these contests on a priority basis, and no stay of the election results would be allowed to be put in place.

H. 4590 Early Voting Hours Rep. G.M. Smith

This bill would extend the closing time for early voting centers from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays for statewide general elections and from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays for early voting during other elections that are not statewide general, or runoff, elections.

H. 4591 Ranked Choice Voting Ban Rep. Taylor

This bill would explicitly ban the use of ranked choice --or instant runoff-- voting in South Carolina elections. It prohibits county election boards and municipal election commissions from using instant runoff voting or ranked choice voting methods for general, special, or primary elections for any federal, state, or local office. Military and overseas voters would still be allowed to use absentee ballots as they have done so in the past, however.

H. 4592 Special Primary Runoffs Rep. Gilliard

This bill would eliminate runoffs in special primary elections. The candidate with the most votes will be that party's nominee in the event this legislation is passed.

H. 4596 Limiting Access on Government Electronic Devices Rep. Guffey

This legislation proposes prohibiting all state agencies, political subdivisions, and public schools from allowing its electronic devices to access websites and applications that threaten cybersecurity, or are from foreign and domestic threats, as has occurred on popular platforms. The Department of Administration would establish procedures for securing state executive agency devices. They also could assist other agencies with compliance, if requested to do so.

H. 4597 Inspector General Investigations of Local Governments Rep. McDaniel

This proposed legislation would establish parameters for South Carolina's State Inspector General to investigate counties, municipalities, and nonprofits receiving public funds. Investigations could only be initiated at the request of the Governor or a majority of a county legislative delegation. Any reports would be shared with local leaders, and the General Assembly would receive an annual report on these investigation requests.

H. 4602 Expungement Rights Expansion Rep. Hardee

This proposal would expand eligibility for expungement of criminal records to include first-time nonviolent offenders without any other convictions after ten years have passed, as well as offenders with successful completions of drug treatment court pro-

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grams without any other convictions after three years have passed. The amendments would also add these new expungement provisions to the list that solicitors' offices administer. It would clarify that offenders would qualify based on the offense they entered a plea to, rather than what their original charge was. These changes would apply retroactively to allow prior offense expungements to be processed under this new, proposed criteria.

H. 4603 Reckless Endangerment Rep. Hartnett

The bill proposes creating a new felony offense of reckless endangerment. Anyone discharging a firearm in a populated or residential area, discharging a firearm from a motor vehicle that would cause great bodily injury, or otherwise mishandling firearms in a dangerously and reckless way would violate this law. Violators could be punished by up to 15 years in jail, and up to a \$15,000 fine.

H. 4604 Pre-Trial Intervention for Second Degree Domestic Violence Offenders Rep. Rose

If enacted, offenders accused of committing second degree domestic violence offenses in South Carolina could be considered for disposal of this charge upon successful completion of a pretrial intervention program.

H. 4605 Reckless Endangerment Rep. Wooten

The bill proposes creating a new felony offense of reckless endangerment. Anyone discharging a firearm in a populated or residential area, discharging a firearm from a motor vehicle that would cause great bodily injury, or otherwise mishandling firearms in a dangerously reckless way would violate this law. Violators could be punished by up to 15 years in jail and up to a \$15,000 fine.

H. 4607 Sexual Extortion Statewide Database Rep. Guffey

This proposal aims to create a statewide database managed by the State Law Enforcement Division [SLED] to facilitate information sharing between law enforcement agencies regarding sexual extortion investigations and outcomes. If passed, all state, county, and local law enforcement departments would be required to submit any relevant data to SLED to include in the database. The database information would be exempt from Freedom of Information Act disclosure. SLED would also be authorized to set out appropriate punishments for misuse, which would require legislative approval before being implemented.

H. 4614 No *Nolle Prosequi* Dispositions for Felony Driving Under the Influence Offenses Without Attorney General Approval Rep. J. E. Johnson

Drivers charged with driving under the influence resulting in great bodily harm or death would not be able to have circuit solicitors dismiss their cases *nolle prosequi* without approval by the South Carolina Attorney General.

H. 4616 Pardon Eligibility Guidelines Rep. McCravy

This legislation proposes clarifying that parolees are eligible to apply for a pardon five years after being discharged from parole. All other offenders are eligible to apply for a pardon at any time.

H. 4618 Rescinding Paternity and Child Support Obligations Rep. King

This bill amends current law to require the SC Bureau of Vital Statistics to remove a putative father's name from a birth certificate and revocation of any child support order when a court finds he is not the child's father. It mandates notifying relevant licensing entities within 14 days of such a determination, and immediately reissuance of any revoked professional licenses after prior support obligations are voided.

H. 4620 Criminal History Background Checks for Guardian *Ad Litem* Appointees Rep. Robbins

This legislation aims to strengthen requirements for qualifying guardians *ad litem* to serve in South Carolina cases. It would additionally mandate criminal background checks before these guardians could work any case to which they are appointed.

H. 4621 Acknowledged or Adjudicated Paternal Visitation Rep. Robbins

Courts, after appropriate hearings and determinations, would have to grant fathers visitation rights when their paternity has been established for, or acknowledged by the mother of, their illegitimate child. A mother would still be allowed to file a motion for reconsideration within ten days of any visitation order if she submits an affidavit stating the father is unfit or a risk to the child's well-being.

H. 4625 "Faithful Constitutional Convention Commissioner Act" Rep. Taylor

This legislation seeks to establish guidelines for commissioners representing South Carolina at a federal constitutional convention. Commissioners who exceed their authority could face felony fines of up to \$1,000 and imprisonment for up to one year. Obstructing or attempting to bribe a commissioner in the performance of their duties is also deemed a felony under this proposal. It sets out key terms and penalties for commissioners and non-commissioners who fail to adhere to the rules for Constitutional Convention representation.

H. 4626 Commissioners to Federal Article V Constitutional Convention Rep. Taylor

This proposal establishes guidelines for commissioners representing South Carolina at a federal Article V Constitutional Convention. It details the selection and oversight of commissioners as well as their duties and limitations. Commissioners would be appointed by the General Assembly but remain under an advisory committee authority to ensure attendees act within the scope of their representation. This resolution would empower commissioners, while maintaining oversight of their actions at the same time.

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H. 4629 Lieutenant Governor as Secretary of Transportation Rep. Magnuson

This bill would require the South Carolina Lieutenant Governor to serve as the Secretary of Transportation, beginning January 15, 2027. It also would add that candidates for governor would have to take into consideration the ability of their chosen lieutenant governor to properly fulfill the duties of both positions.

H. 4633 Mandatory Minimum for Kidnapping a Minor Rep. Murphy

This bill would amend existing state law to require a person who is convicted of kidnapping a minor to serve a mandatory minimum sentence of five years in prison, no part of which could be suspended or otherwise modified from an offender serving straight time.

H. 4641 Military Courts Constitutional Amendment Rep. Mitchell

This bill proposes amendments to Article I and Article III of the South Carolina Constitution to allow establishing military courts for maintaining order and discipline within South Carolina's state militias.

H. 4642 Military Code and Code of Military Justice Revisions Rep. Mitchell

A comprehensive bill that would add state militias and the SC state guard to various sections of the South Carolina Code related to the military code and code of military justice. In addition to adding these soldiers, punishments meted out would no longer include military pay forfeitures, but would allow imprisonment of up to five years.

H. 4647 Statement of Economic Interest Requirements Rep. Cromer

Elected officials would be required to provide additional financial information when filing their annual Statement of Economic interest [SEI] with the State Ethics Commission. This additional financial information would include W-2s, 1099s, benefits from scholarships/grants, and any increases/decreases in business ownership for themselves and all of their family members, should this bill become law. Elected officials would need to continue providing this information for three years after leaving office.

H. 4648 No More Financial Gains to Public Officials and Their Family Members From Any Governmental Source Rep. Cromer

This proposed legislation would prohibit public officials --and their family members-- from realizing any financial gains from any governmental source. This prohibition would include any lobbying, consulting, or other contractual arrangements.

H. 4651 Annexation Fairness Act Rep. Beach

This legislation aims to provide counties with legal standing to challenge municipal annexations or deannexations, require agreements between municipalities and counties for specified types of annexations or deannexations, and establish additional procedures for county and public input about municipal annexations or deannexations.

H. 4657 E-Verify Documentation Rep. S. Jones

Under this proposal, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, Attorney General, solicitor in any circuit where an employee works, and the Department of Employment and Workforce would have access to all employment verification documents filed under E-Verify. Anyone making a request for these documents would have to rely on the federal government to verify employment eligibility, and could not independently declare any applicant to be an illegal alien.

H. 4660 Synthetic Media: Deceptive and Fraudulent Deepfake Media in Elections Rep. J. L. Johnson

This bill would prohibit distributing “synthetic media” depicting any candidate in any way that is intended to deceive voters. Synthetic media is defined as an image, audio, or video that is intentionally manipulated in order to create realistic but false images, audio, or videos. It would require disclosing synthetic media being used. Candidates could seek legal action if synthetic media violations occur. Criminal prosecutions could result in fines of up to \$1,000, and up to five years in jail. Successful civil litigants could collect damages, attorney fees, and court costs. However, internet posters and on-air broadcasters airing specified disclaimers could be exempt from these punishments and liabilities.

H. 4661 Local Government Referendums Only During Statewide General Elections Rep. Pace

Any referenda by political subdivisions for approving bonds, incurring debt, modifying tax rates, or imposing taxes or fees would have to be held during statewide general elections in even-numbered years if this bill is enacted.

H. 4662 Homicide by Child Abuse Rep. Pope

This bill would raise the age of a “child” from under 11 years old to under 18 years old in homicide by child abuse prosecutions. It also more specifically defines “child abuse or neglect and harm to a child's health or welfare.” The penalties for anyone convicted of homicide by child abuse would range from 10 years to up to life in prison.

H. 4663 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Rep. Beach

With the passage of this bill, South Carolina state agencies and higher education institutions would be prohibited from promoting, instituting, or fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion [DEI] practices on their premises. It would ban DEI tenets from training and hiring. Institutions would have to report on compliance with proscribed conduct, and measure impacts on student outcomes.

H. 4667 Family Court, Additional Judges For The Eleventh Circuit Rep. Caskey

A bill that would increase the number of family court judges in the Eleventh Circuit from three to five.

H. 4668 Bond, Circuit Court For Illegal Aliens Rep. S. Jones

This bill would require a circuit court judge to set or deny bond, and determine any conditions of release, for anyone charged with a crime carrying maximum sentences of three years, or more, when a suspect is alleged to be in the US illegally.

H. 4669 Executing Offenders Committing Criminal Sexual Conduct With A Minor Rep. Pace

If enacted, this bill would amend existing law to remove the existing prerequisite of having repeat offender status, such that first time offenders committing criminal sexual conduct with a victim under 11 years of age could receive the death penalty.

H. 4670 Mental Fitness To Stand Trial Rep. Pope

This bill would amend existing law so that courts could order inpatient treatment at a state mental health facility for any defendant deemed unfit to stand trial. Pending commitment to a state mental health facility, courts could allow these defendants to remain out on bond prior to being placed in the custody of the Department of Mental Health after bed space opens there.

H. 4676 Increasing Penalties for Driving Without a License Rep. S. Jones

Penalties could increase for driving without a license should this bill be enacted. If a person convicted of driving without a license is also found to be an undocumented illegal alien, additional fines of up to \$1,000 and enhanced sentences of up to one year in jail could apply. Summary courts would have exclusive jurisdiction over these cases.

H. 4677 "Maddie's Law" in Reckless Vehicular Homicides Rep. S. Jones

This bill proposes increasing maximum jail time for reckless vehicular homicide offenders from up to 10 to up to 15 years in jail. These cases would be ones where the other drivers, or passengers, die within three years of the wreck, or are permanently disfigured or physically impaired from the collision.

H. 4679 Credit for Time Served Rep. Pope

Prisoners would not be given credit against their sentences for any time served prior to their trials spent under monitored house arrest.

H. 4682 Abandoned Motor Vehicles Rep. White

This bill would designate illegally parked motor vehicles on public highway rights-of-way to be considered abandoned motor vehicles and litter. It would allow them to be towed and sold as unclaimed motor vehicles at a duly-noticed public auction.

H. 4687 Infant Safe Havens Rep. Dillard

This bill would require infants left at safe havens to be in "newborn safety devices." Safe havens would be required to request other parent information about any person not leaving the infant in this device at their locations.

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H. 4689 “Children’s Device Protection Act” Rep. T. Moore

This proposal would mandate that smartphones and tablets sold in South Carolina have filters to block obscene content access from minors. Penalties for non-compliance would include revoking business licenses, private action civil liability, and paying attorneys’ fees and costs. Any minor’s nonparent providing passcodes to minors also could be held civilly liable for doing so in violation of this proposed law.

H. 4691 Parental Rights Protections Rep. M. M. Smith

The bill seeks to safeguard parental rights regarding their children's healthcare, education, and upbringing by requiring parental consent for medical procedures and treatments. Exceptions for emergency situations, parents providing blanket consents for procedures, or parents not being reasonably located would apply. It also provides parents with the ability to bring civil actions for damages, costs, and attorneys’ fees for noncompliance; however, governments would be required to indemnify their employees who provide treatment in these situations.

H. 4696 Technology Transparency and Private Data Protections Rep. Guffey

This bill would introduce data privacy protections for South Carolina residents. They could manage their personal information held by various companies. Data collection and usage would be more regulated. The Attorney General could enforce these privacy rights. Websites would have to post notices of data sales it intends to make.

H. 4698 Hard Cider and Mead Tastings and Sales Rep. Leber

Licensed makers of hard cider and mead could provide free tastings or sell their products on site, and at up to three other locations, if this bill becomes law in our state.

H. 4700 South Carolina Social Media Regulation Act Rep. W. Newton

This legislation aims to regulate social media use by minors in South Carolina. Social media companies would be required to verify the ages of its users and have parental consent for minors to utilize these platforms. The bill also seeks to limit what minors can see, do, and have access to on any social media platforms.

H. 4711 Electioneering Limitations Rep. Guffey

If enacted, this proposal would limit electioneering near polling places by prohibiting certain campaign activities within a 50-foot zone of polling sites during elections. “Electioneering” would include displaying, or audibly sharing, information advocating for candidates, political parties, or referenda outcomes.

H. 4713 Public Funds for Lobbying Ban Rep. A. M. Morgan

This proposal would ban state agencies from using public funds to hire lobbyists.

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H. 4716 Consent for Wiretapping Rep. Henderson-Myers

This bill updates the state law to require the consent of all parties before any Federal Communications Commission employee could intercept any electronic communications, wires, or conversations.

H. 4718 Constitutional Amendment for Abortion Rep. Stavrinakis

This legislation proposes a ballot referendum for voters to approve, or disapprove, an amendment to the South Carolina Constitution to establish “reproductive freedom” rights for South Carolinians, including access to abortions.

H. 4719 Law Enforcement Remediation Rep. Henderson-Myers

Law enforcement agencies would be required to establish mediation programs for resolving officer misconduct complaints. These mediation programs would be required to meet minimum standards set out by the Law Enforcement Training Council.

Medical, Military, Municipal and Public Affairs

H. 4533 “Defend The Guard Act” Rep. Beach

If this bill would pass, members of the South Carolina National Guard may not be released from the State into active duty combat unless the United States Congress has passed an official declaration of war or other actions authorized by the United States Constitution.

H. 4552 Certain Affordable Housing Projects Qualifies for Redevelopment on Federal Military Installation Rep. Pendarvis

The bill outlines that an affordable housing project (defined referencing median income percentages according to US HUD) where all or a part of new property tax revenues generated in the tax increment financing district are used to provide or support publicly and privately owned affordable housing in the district or is used to provide infrastructure projects to support affordable housing qualifies as a redevelopment project for federal military installations.

H. 4573 “Private Property Protection Act of 2024” Rep. Hewitt

The bill prohibits a governing body of a municipality or county from enacting an ordinance that prohibits the rental of a residential dwelling to a short-term guest. The bill would supersede previous similar local government actions. “Short-term rental” means a residential dwelling that is offered for rent for a fee and for fewer than twenty-nine consecutive days. The penalties for violation would be loss of tax, Local Government Fund, and State Aid to Subdivision monies.

H. 4586 “Private Landowner Protection Act” Rep. Wooten

Among many things, there may be no deannexation under this section that results in the formation of one or more unincorporated islands or in part of the area remaining in the municipal corporation no longer being a contiguous area of such municipal corporation. The bill also outlines that an area or property that is contiguous to a municipality only may be annexed to the municipality after filing with the municipal governing body and county governing body a petition signed by 75 percent of the freeholders/landowners.

H. 4609 Golf Carts Rep. Hixon

The bill provides that certain local governments may enact ordinances to allow golf carts to operate in designated areas within their jurisdictions at night.

H. 4617 Xylazine Rep. Hixon

The bill would add Xylazine (for veterinarian use) on the list of Scheduled II Drugs (with exceptions). The bill also outlines that it is unlawful for any person to knowingly or intentionally produce, manufacture, distribute, or possess with intent to produce, manufacture, or distribute xylazine for a use other than a nonhuman use.

H. 4619 “South Carolina Children Deserve Help Not Harm Act” Rep. Oremus

The bill would enact the “South Carolina Children Deserve Help Not Harm Act” which deals with gender reassignment of minors. Among many things, the bill outlines that a physician or other health care professional shall not provide gender transition procedures to any individual under eighteen years of age.

H. 4622 Itemized Billing For Healthcare Patients Rep. Sessions

The bill establishes that a healthcare provider shall submit a written request for payment along with an itemized bill of the alleged cost of each service and supply provided to the patient during the patient's visit. The legislation further outlines what must be contained in the itemized bill.

H. 4624 Gender Reassignment Procedures Rep. Hiott

This bill prohibits any health care professional from engaging in the provision of gender transition procedures to a person under eighteen years of age. The bill also prohibits the use of public funds for gender transition procedures. Additionally, the bill prohibits the South Carolina Medicaid Program from reimbursing or providing coverage for practices prohibited under the provisions of the bill for individuals under twenty-six years of age. The bill provides penalties for violations of the provisions of the bill and grants enforcement authority to the appropriate licensing entity. In the final section, the bill prohibits public school staff and officials from knowingly withholding a minor's perception of their gender that is inconsistent with his or her sex from the minor's parent or legal guardian.

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H. 4628 Regulations for Products Containing Hemp-Derived Cannabinoids Rep. Henderson-Myers

The bill provides regulations for the sale and distribution of products containing hemp-derived cannabinoid. Among many things, the bill outlines that it is an offense for a person to knowingly sell or distribute a product containing a hemp-derived cannabinoid to a person who is under twenty-one years of age.

H. 4630 Video Camera In Residential Care Facilities Rep. Cobb-Hunter

The legislation outlines that every skilled nursing facility, nursing home, community residential care facility, or an assisted living facility shall provide an audio/video camera in each patient's room for the family or legal guardian of a resident in the facility to use for purposes of remotely monitoring the care of the resident.

H. 4640 County Veterans' Affairs Officers Rep. Gilliam

The bill outlines that the General Assembly shall appropriate the necessary funds for two full-time employees in each county veterans' affairs office.

H. 4646 "First Responders Communication Act" Rep. M. M. Smith

The bill adds under the First Responders Communication Act that a public employee may not be prohibited from communicating with an elected public official for any job-related purpose.

H. 4652 Local Government Planning and Permitting Procedures Rep. Burns

The bill outlines that local planning commissions, local planning departments, zoning boards, architectural review boards, and local building permitting entities shall review an application for a building permit, certificate of occupancy, zoning variance or appeal, or license and render a decision on the application within 45 calendar days after the application is filed. If no decision is made, certain remedies are outlined.

H. 4680 Firefighter Cancer Health Care Benefit Plan Rep. M. M. Smith

Under the firefighter cancer health benefit plan, the bill expands the definition of a "firefighter" to include a nonresident who resides in a contiguous state who engages in rescue, fire suppression, or related activities.

H. 4681 First Responders Advisory Committee Rep. M. M. Smith

The bill adds a person who represents the South Carolina Coroners' Association to the First Responders Advisory Committee. As a result, the committee membership increases from nine to ten.

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H. 4684 “Pressley Cavin Stutts, Jr., Patient and Health Provider Protection Act” Rep. Burns

The bill enacts the “Pressley Cavin Stutts, Jr., Patient and Health Provider Protection Act.” Under which it adds that a prescriber may issue a prescription for any drug, including an off-label drug, if the prescriber has obtained the patient’s informed consent or the consent of the person holding the patient’s health care power of attorney.

H. 4688 Data Collection From Certain Hospitals Rep. S. Jones

The bill requires certain hospitals to collect data on the immigration status of patients and also to require hospitals to report such information to the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

H. 4690 School And Childcare Vaccination And Immunization Requirements Rep. A. M. Morgan

No institution of learning, public or private children facility may admit a child as a pupil unless satisfactory evidence is provided for having been vaccinated or immunized. As a result, the bill provides a list the names of the particular vaccines/ diseases. The bill also states that any additional mandated vaccinations must be approved by the General Assembly.

Labor, Commerce, and Industry

H. 4539 Public Housing Authority/Agency Responsibilities for Relocating Displaced Residents Rep. Gilliard

This bill requires a public housing authority or agency that is engaging in a project that displaces residents pursuant to Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) under the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to ensure that sufficient funds are available to relocate all displaced residents into housing that is equivalent to the housing they are forced to leave.

H. 4543 Real Estate Prohibition for the Chinese Communist Party Rep. Haddon

This bill provides that any company or development owned or controlled by a company that is owned, in whole or in part, by, or is a subsidiary of, a company that is owned by the People’s Republic of China or the Chinese Communist Party or whose principal place of business is located within the People’s Republic of China may not own, lease, possess, or exercise any control over any real estate in South Carolina.

H. 4544 “Religious Institutions Affordable Housing Act” Rep. W. Jones

This bill establishes provisions under which a religious institution may utilize its contiguous property for the purpose of building affordable housing without losing its property tax-exempt status.

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H. 4549 “Amateur Radio Antenna Protection Act” Rep. Pedalino

This bill establishes limitations on county ordinances and restrictions imposed by homeowners associations as a means of protecting the right of amateur radio operators to install and use antennas on their property.

H. 4553 Landlords Prohibited from Photographing Tenant’s Personal Belongings Rep. Rutherford

This bill provides that a landlord is prohibited from taking photographs of a tenant’s personal belongings while in the rental property without the tenant’s express permission.

H. 4562 Professional and Occupational Licenses Rep. Beach

This bill revises provisions authorizing the issuance of temporary professional and occupational licenses for spouses of active-duty members of the United States Armed Forces stationed in South Carolina so as to make these licenses permanent rather than temporary.

H. 4564 Architectural Review Ordinances for Commercial Properties Rep. Chumley

This joint resolution provides that local ordinances or regulations for architectural review of commercial properties in South Carolina may not be enforced until July 1, 2026.

H. 4565 Automobile Insurer Optional New Car Replacement Coverage Rep. Chumley

This bill requires an automobile insurance carrier that offers optional new car replacement coverage for automobiles to make an offer of such coverage on the optional coverages form.

H. 4567 Insurance Premium Tax Revenue Rep. Crawford

This bill revises the allocation of insurance premium taxes by providing that 25 percent of the revenue collected must be transferred to the Disaster Relief and Resilience Reserve Fund to be used for developing, implementing, and maintaining the Statewide Resilience Plan and for disaster relief assistance, hazard mitigation, and infrastructure improvements.

H. 4569 Limitation on Bank Fees for ATMs Rep. Gilliard

This bill provides that a bank or other financial institution doing business in South Carolina, whose charges or fees are not regulated solely by federal law may not charge a fee in excess of \$1.50 for a cash transfer, deposit, or withdrawal conducted at automated teller machines [ATMs].

H. 4571 Medical Debt and Consumer Credit Reports Rep. Gilliard

This bill provides that consumer credit reports must not include reporting of medical debt information and certain other information that is not relevant to the credit or pay-

ment history of a consumer. The legislation makes provisions for investigating violations and establishes penalties for violations.

H. 4578 Hair Braiding and Make-Up Artistry Rep. McDaniel

This bill revises definitions cosmetology provisions to provide that hair braiding is distinct from barbering and cosmetology, and to remove certain excluded activities. The legislation exempts persons providing hair braiding and persons providing make-up artistry from regulation by the State Board of Barber Examiners and the State Board of Cosmetology. The legislation repeals provisions relating to the regulation of hair-braiding practitioners.

H. 4580 Off-Site Cosmetologist, Esthetician, and Nail Technician Services Rep. McDaniel

This bill provides authorization under which a licensed cosmetologist, esthetician, or nail technician may provide services permitted under his or her license on location in a client's home or at an event venue, such as a church, hotel, or similar event venue, when requested by the client and with permission of the venue. Under the legislation, the licensed provider shall ensure all equipment is appropriately sanitized when providing services outside of a salon.

H. 4581 Blow-Dry Styling Rep. McDaniel

This bill establishes a definition for blow-dry styling which provides that it is distinct from barbering and cosmetology. The legislation exempts persons providing blow-dry styling services from regulation by the State Board of Barber Examiners and the State Board of Cosmetology.

H. 4587 Health and Accident Claims-Related Information Rep. Wooten

This bill provides that a health and accident insurer that requests and receives claims-related information from one of its insureds or beneficiaries shall provide a confirmation of receipt to the insured or beneficiary in writing by United States mail, email, or fax, upon request and based on the preference of the insured or beneficiary. This confirmation must include the claim number and a confirmation number unique to that communication and must be provided within seven days of receipt for information received by mail, facsimile, electronic transmission, or orally in person or by telephone. Penalties are established for noncompliance.

H. 4615 Vehicles in Funeral Processions Rep. King

This bill makes provisions that certain equipment must be maintained on funeral escort and lead vehicles. The legislation makes provisions for right of way conditions for funeral processions and conditions for the operation of vehicles in funeral processions. The legislation provides for the imposition of liability for injuries that occur in funeral processions. Penalties are established. The legislation provides that drivers of funeral

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lead vehicles, funeral escort vehicles, and vehicles in funeral processions are exempt from certain provisions relating to obedience to traffic-control devices.

H. 4635 Automobile Safety Glass Repair Rep. White

This bill provides that automobile insurance appraisers and insurers may not require insureds to use certain facilities to repair or replace damaged automobile safety glass. Penalties are established for violations.

H. 4639 Housing Discrimination Rep. Dillard

This bill revises provisions relating to housing discrimination to provide that an individual may not be discriminated against due to source of income.

H. 4650 Encouraging the Use of Natural Gas, Liquid Natural Gas, Propane, and Butane as Electric Generation Resources Rep. Forrest

This joint resolution encourages interested parties to identify and implement opportunities for the use of natural gas, liquid natural gas, propane, and butane as electric generation resources. These resources are to be considered “green energy” resources, and state government entities are required to incorporate these resources to the maximum extent possible.

H. 4658 Requirements for Providing Life Insurance Policy Information to Funeral Directors, Funeral Establishments, and Crematories Rep. King

This bill requires insurers to provide certain life insurance policy information of a decedent to funeral directors, funeral establishments, or crematories contacted on behalf of the family of the decedent. The legislation provides for related procedures and requirements and establishes penalties for violations.

H. 4685 Prohibition on Placing Septic Tanks Near Waterways or the Coast Rep. Bustos

This bill provides that the Department of Health and Environmental Control, or its successor agency, shall not permit the construction or installation of septic tanks within a two-mile straight-line distance of any waterway or the coast of South Carolina.

Ways and Means

H. 4534 Tax Deductions and Exemptions for Military, First Responders and Their Surviving Spouses Rep. Beach

This bill makes provisions for a first responder retirement income deduction and an income tax deduction for certain surviving spouses of first responders. The legislation

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includes emergency medical technicians in the property tax exemption provisions for surviving spouses of members of the military killed in action and first responders killed in the line of duty. The legislation makes provisions for an “Honor Card” to be issued to a qualified surviving spouse of a member of the military killed in action or a first responder killed in the line of duty that allows the surviving spouse to purchase all tangible personal property tax free.

H. 4545 State Employee Birthday Holiday Rep. King

This bill provides that, in addition to South Carolina’s state holidays, a full-time state employee is entitled to one paid holiday during the month of the employee’s birth.

H. 4547 Abandoned Buildings Revitalization Act Extension Rep. B. Newton

This bill extends the provisions of the South Carolina Abandoned Buildings Revitalization Act until December 31, 2035, and requires the maximum revitalization tax credit amount to be reviewed annually.

H. 4548 State Retirees Returning to Covered Employment as School Bus Drivers Rep. Oremus

This bill revises the earnings limitation for a retired member of the South Carolina Retirement System upon the return to covered employment to provide that this limitation does not apply to members who return to covered employment as a school bus driver.

H. 4550 Emergency Personnel Income Tax Deduction Increase Rep. Pedalino

This bill provides for an increase in the income tax deduction allowed for certain emergency personnel.

H. 4551 State Child Income Tax Credit Rep. Pendarvis

This bill provides that a taxpayer is allowed an income tax credit equal to the amount the taxpayer claimed on his federal income tax return for the Child Tax Credit in the same income tax year. If the amount of the credit exceeds the taxpayer's income tax liability for that taxable year, the taxpayer may carry forward the excess for up to three years.

H. 4554 Special Assessment Ratio on Residential Property Claimed by a Spouse Rep. Rutherford

This bill revises provisions for the special assessment ratio on residential property to allow a taxpayer’s spouse to claim the four percent assessment ratio on a residential property.

H. 4557 Sales Tax Exemption for Small Arms and Small Arms Ammunition Rep. Trantham

This bill establishes a sales tax exemption for small arms and small arms ammunition.

H. 4566 Local Government Public Works Employees Who May Be Deployed in Emergencies Rep. B. L. Cox

This bill includes a county or municipal public works employee who may be deployed in emergencies. These sections regard provisions relating to COVID-19 vaccinations for first responders; individual income tax deductions for first responders; provisions relating to first responder surviving spouses qualified to receive certain tax deductions; provisions for first responders receiving workers' compensation award payments by the State Accident Fund; and, provisions relating to first responders in the South Carolina Overdose Prevention Act.

H. 4574 South Carolina Higher Education Excellence Enhancement Program Eligibility Rep. Hyde

This bill revises requirements concerning single-gender women's institutions in eligibility provisions for South Carolina Higher Education Excellence Enhancement Program funding.

H. 4575 Teacher Salaries Rep. Jefferson

This bill provides that a new certified teacher hired to teach in a public K-12 school in South Carolina must receive a starting salary of no less than \$52,000 and a current certified public K-12 teacher who earned less than \$52,000 in the 2023-2024 School Year must receive a salary of no less than \$55,000.

H. 4577 Special Education Teacher Salaries Rep. J. L. Johnson

This bill provides that each school district shall pay each certified special education teacher who is teaching special education courses in the district a full-time annual salary of at least \$52,000 beginning with the 2024-2025 School Year.

H. 4579 Annual Local Government Audits Conducted by the State Auditor Rep. McDaniel

This bill provides the state auditor to conduct annual audits of each county, county agency and office, municipality, municipal agency and office, judicial office, and school district. The legislation repeals local government audit provisions.

H. 4594 State and Federal Income Tax Conformity Rep. Ballentine

This bill updates reference to the federal Internal Revenue Code in state income tax statutes and provides for conformity so that any extensions adopted at the federal level are adopted for South Carolina income tax purposes.

H. 4595 State and Federal Income Tax Conformity Rep. Blackwell

This bill updates references to the federal Internal Revenue Code in state income tax statutes and provides for conformity so that any extensions adopted at the federal level

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are adopted for South Carolina income tax purposes. The legislation revises provisions relating to Internal Revenue Code sections specifically not adopted by the state, so as to adopt Internal Revenue Code Section 168(k) relating to bonus depreciation.

H. 4598 Tax Exemption for Sales Made to Nonprofit Organizations Rep. Burns

This bill establishes a state sales tax exemption for sales made to a nonprofit organization with federal tax-exempt status.

H. 4599 Parks and Recreation Development Fund Rep. B. Newton

This bill revises provisions for the disbursement of bingo tax revenues to increase the percentage that is credited to the Parks and Recreation Development Fund and decrease the percentage credited to the state's General Fund. The legislation revises provisions for the allocation of proceeds of the Parks and Recreation Development Fund to increase the amount that must be credited to each county.

H. 4600 Income Tax Credit for Hiring the Formerly Incarcerated Disallowed for Registered Sex Offenders Rep. Thayer

This bill makes revisions to the income tax credit for taxpayers that hire formerly incarcerated individuals to provide that the credit is not earned if the hired individual is required to register as a sex offender on the Sex Offender Registry.

H. 4631 Teacher Salaries Rep. Gilliard

This bill provides that a new certified teacher hired to teach in a public K-12 school South Carolina must receive a starting salary of no less than \$70,000 and a current certified public K-12 teacher who earned less than \$70,000 in the 2023-2024 School Year must receive a salary of no less than \$75,000.

H. 4634 Grant Reporting Requirements for State Agencies Rep. Taylor

This bill provides that a state agency that receives a grant from any source shall maintain an itemized list of any matching funds the agency is providing. The agency also shall maintain a summary of any conditions associated with the grant that the agency must comply with in order to receive the grant money and any conditions on how the grant money must be spent.

H. 4636 Paid Military Leave Rep. Pace

This bill revises provisions for leaves of absence for public officers and employees in National Guard or reserve military forces by providing that these state and local government employees receive up to thirty days of paid military leave each year, rather than the current annual maximum of fifteen days. The legislation expands eligibility for this paid military leave to include school district employees.

H. 4637 Free Admission to State-Funded Festivals for South Carolina Residents Rep. Cromer

This bill provides that any festival that receives state funding or incentives must provide free admission to all South Carolina residents who present a valid proof of residency.

H. 4638 Governing Boards of State-Funded Businesses and Nonprofit Organizations Rep. Cromer

This bill provides that an individual may not participate as a board member or trustee on a board that receives state funding or incentives if that individual is a board member, trustee, owner, lobbyist, consultant, or in a management position in another business or nonprofit organization that receives state funding or incentives.

H. 4643 “Taxpayer Transparency Act” Rep. Oremus

This bill establishes requirements for a county council to develop, maintain, and make publicly available a searchable budget database website. The legislation provides that certain meetings must be made available for public viewing in real time by live video stream.

H. 4644 Property Tax Exemption for Church Property Used For Instruction of Children Rep. Oremus

This bill establishes a property tax exemption for certain church property being used for the instruction of children from preschool to twelfth grade.

H. 4645 Income Tax Credit for Private School, Parochial School, or Home School Expenses Rep. Pace

This bill provides that a taxpayer whose child attends a qualifying private school, parochial school, or home school for grades K-12 is entitled to a refundable tax credit against income taxes equal to \$7,000 or the cost of tuition, for a private school or parochial school, whichever is lower, for each child.

H. 4656 School Board Members Eligible for State Health and Dental Insurance Plans Rep. J. L. Johnson

This bill expands eligibility provisions for state health and dental insurance plans to include school board members.

H. 4659 Development Impact Fees Rep. McGinnis

This bill revises the authority for municipalities and counties to impose impact fees on both residential and commercial developments to provide that these political subdivisions also may impose impact fees that apply: (1) only to residential developments; or (2) only to commercial developments.

H. 4664 Requirements for Prioritizing the Employment of South Carolinians in Economic Development Incentives Offered by the State Rep. Cromer

This bill requires the state to ensure a business will give South Carolina residents priority in employment before offering economic incentives to recruit the business to this state. The legislation requires a business to certify certain staffing requirements before receiving an economic incentive.

H. 4666 “Save Our Property Act” Rep. Magnuson

This bill establishes a protocol under which an individual who owns residential or agricultural real property that is subject to property tax may file an application for relief with the assessor if the individual has owned the property for at least twenty years or inherited the property from an immediate family member. Under the protocol, the assessor shall defer all of the property tax due if the assessor determines that the individual’s income is less than or equal to 60 percent of the county median income. If the individual’s income is greater than 60 percent of the county median income but less than 100 percent of the county median income, then the assessor may defer parts of property tax due until the next tax year.

H. 4697 Tax Exemption for the Retirement Income of First Responders, Law Enforcement Officers, and Teachers Rep. Kilmartin

This bill establishes a tax exemption for the retirement income of first responders, law enforcement officers, and teachers.

H. 4699 Prohibition of Subsidies for Companies Engaging in ESG Ratings Rep. Magnuson

This bill provides that neither the state of South Carolina nor any of its political subdivisions may offer any incentives or subsidies to a company that participates in a scoring or rating system that evaluates that company on the basis of Environmental, Social, or Governance (ESG) goals, objectives, or outcomes, including sustainable development, which a prudent person in a like capacity would reasonably believe has no material effect or impact on the financial risk of, or return on, an investment.

H. 4705 Prohibition on Public Schools Subsidies for Professional Association Membership Fees or Dues Rep. Kilmartin

This bill provides that a school district and a charter school may not use funds appropriated for school operating purposes to directly or indirectly pay or otherwise defray the costs of professional association or other association membership fees or dues on behalf of its employees or trustees or reimburse its employees or trustees for the payment of such fees or dues. A school district employee who pays fees or dues for membership in an association directly related to their profession must receive an increase in salary in the amount of such fees or dues paid, up to a total of one thousand dollars for each school year, upon providing the school district with documentation of the payment and its purpose.

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H. 4710 Duration of Unemployment Benefits Rep. West

This bill revises provisions that establish the maximum unemployment insurance benefits allowed by setting the duration of these unemployment benefits based upon seasonal adjusted statewide unemployment rates.

H. 4714 County Budget Transparency and Supermajority Requirement for Approving Property Tax Increases Rep. Oremus

This bill provides that, if the annual operating budget of a county results in an increase in property taxes imposed, then adoption by the county council requires a vote of two-thirds of the total county council. The legislation establishes transparency requirements under which the residents of a county are entitled to access the public budget process and all public meetings pertaining to any property tax increase or the annual budget must be streamed live in both audio and visual formats.

H. 4715 State Funding of County Veterans' Affairs Officers Rep. Ott

This bill provides for the General Assembly to appropriate sufficient monies to pay the full salary and fringe benefits of the county veterans' affairs officer with each county receiving the same amount for its officer. The salary must be comparable to the salary of a similarly situated state employee considering the skill required to effectively complete the duties of the job.

H. 4717 "Young Farmer Loan Program" Rep. Haddon

This bill makes provisions for the South Carolina Conservation Bank to establish, operate, and administer a "Young Farmer Loan Program."

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