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**HOUSE WEEK IN REVIEW**

The House of Representatives amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.4404**, a bill enacting the **“VETERANS NURSING DEGREE OPPORTUNITY ACT”** as a means of both addressing the state’s nurse shortage and smoothing the transition for veterans from military life to professional civilian careers. The legislation establishes programs to enable veteran military clinical personnel, such as medics and corpsmen, to accelerate the process at participating South Carolina public and independent colleges and institutions for obtaining associate’s degrees and bachelor’s degrees in nursing by awarding academic and clinical credit or waivers for relevant education, experience, and skills acquired from their military service.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.3199**, a bill **REQUIRING INSTRUCTION ON STUDENT LOANS IN HIGH SCHOOL FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMS**. The legislation expands high school financial literacy program requirements so that they also include instruction on college and education loans, key loan terms, monthly payment obligations, repayment options, credit, and education loan debt. The State Board of Education is directed to incorporate these new instructional topics with the adoption of the next revisions scheduled for the social studies academic standards under cyclical review.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.3257**, a bill that provides for updating public school **INSTRUCTION ON MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, AND SOCIAL HEALTH** under the Comprehensive Health Education Act. The legislation provides that, at the next cyclical review of the health standards, the State Board of Education shall continue to revise existing age appropriate standards and concepts that address mental, emotional, and social health. Before September 1, 2020, in addition to the current standards, the board shall continue to make standards aligned instructional materials available to districts. Districts shall continue to adopt or develop curriculum locally. Beginning with the 2020-2021 School Year, each seventh grade student must be offered one unit of instruction in mental health and wellness based on the instructional unit selected or adopted by the board, and each ninth grade student shall receive and successfully complete a one unit course of study in mental health and wellness based on the instructional unit selected or adopted by the board.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.4403**, a bill revising provisions relating to **BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICIES** that must be adopted by school districts. The legislation provides for a more expansive definition of “harassment, intimidation, or bullying”. Procedures are established for responding to and remediating allegations of bullying. The legislation requires an appeals procedure. Local districts are required to adopt policies for the prevention of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that are at least as stringent as the model policies developed by the State Board of Education. A procedure is established that requires the state board to approve local policies to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.4076**, a bill **REQUIRING BOARD AND COMMISSION MEMBERS TO SIGN STATEMENTS ACKNOWLEDGING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY**. The legislation establishes a protocol under which an agency or instrumentality in the executive branch of state government or a public institution of higher learning with a governing board or commission is required to have its board or commission members sign a written document outlining statutory duties and powers. Board or commission members are not eligible to receive mileage, subsistence, or per diem unless these documents are signed in a timely manner. Repeated refusal to sign the required documents constitutes grounds for removal from office by the Governor for persistent neglect of duty. The bill implements recommendations arising from the House Legislative Oversight Committee’s study of the South Carolina Commission on Indigent Defense.

The House amended and gave second reading approval to **S.996**, a joint resolution authorizing an **EXTENSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION CANDIDATE SCREENING** to provide an opportunity to find additional qualified candidates to present to the General Assembly for election to the commission that oversees public utilities. The legislation authorizes an extension in screening for candidates for PSC Seats 1, 3, 5, and 7 that allows the Public Utilities Review Committee to accept applications for a time period beginning Monday, February 3, 2020, through noon on Friday, February 28, 2020. Provisions are made for advertising these positions. In screening candidates for the Commission and making its findings, the Review Committee is directed to give due consideration to race, gender, and other demographic factors to assure nondiscrimination, inclusion, and representation to the greatest extent possible of all segments of the population of this state.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.4504**, a bill to provide the Department of Health and Environmental Control with more effective means of regulating **WASTE TIRE FACILITIES**, particularly those facilities that amass large quantities of tires without recycling them in a timely manner. The legislation authorizes DHEC to promulgate regulations to protect human health and safety of the environment from the adverse effects of improper, inadequate, or unsound management of waste tires. DHEC is authorized to conduct inspections and investigations, obtain records of waste tire processing, storage, or hauling activities, obtain samples, and conduct research regarding the operation and maintenance of any waste tire management facility. A protocol is established for DHEC to place a facility under a suspension when it exceeds its permitted capacity and to sanction a facility that violates a suspension by accepting additional waste tires. DHEC is charged with maintaining a Waste Tire Rebate Facility List that includes only facilities that are in compliance and fulfill the requirements of a waste tire recycling facility.

The House approved and sent the Senate **H.4811**, a bill revising beachfront management restrictions placed on erosion control structures or devices seaward of the setback line to allow for the placement of shoreline perpendicular **WINGWALLS** that extend landward at a ninety degree angle from the ends of existing erosion control structures or devices that are consistent in height and composition with the existing erosion control structures to which they are attached subject to any special conditions imposed by the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

The House approved and sent the Senate **H.4202**, a bill requiring the state registrar of vital statistics at the Department of Health and Environmental Control to issue, upon receipt of certain documentation, a **CERTIFICATE OF FOREIGN BIRTH** for a child with United States citizenship who is born in a foreign country to a parent who is a resident of South Carolina.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.4286**, a bill revising requirements for **PRESCRIPTION DRUG LABELS** to provide that the lot number of the prescription must be indicated on the label, patient receipt, or bar code.

The House amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H.3695**, a bill establishing provisions that make **MOTORCYCLES OR MOTORCYCLE THREE-WHEEL VEHICLES ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE HIGH MILEAGE TAX DEDUCTIONS**.

The House appointed a conference committee to address its differences with the Senate on **H.3357**, a bill allowing for a **HEARING IMPAIRMENT NOTATION ON A MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION**.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ACTION**

**EDUCATION AND PUBLIC WORKS**

The Education and Public Works Committee met on Wednesday, January 22, and gave a favorable with amendment report on **H.4760**, a bill revising the **STUDENT ASSESSMENTS** that are administered in the state’s public schools as a means of: ensuring that standardized testing is not unnecessarily burdensome; improving notification about upcoming assessments; and, affording parents, guardians, and teachers with access to test results so that this information might be better used to improve student achievement. The legislation eliminates the summative assessments in social studies and United States History that are not required under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act accountability provisions. In addition to streamlining summative testing, which is conducted at the end of a school year to determine what a student has learned in a course of study, the legislation also places limits and conditions on formative testing, which is conducted during the course of a school year to determine what progress a student is making towards mastering particular subjects. With certain exceptions, the legislation provides for students to be administered no more than one state or locally procured formative assessment, and for the standardized test that is procured to be given no more than three times during an academic year. A protocol is established that requires schools to provide notification to parents and guardians about upcoming formative assessments and their purpose at least one week before testing. No more than one week after the administration of a formative assessment, schools are required to provide teachers, parents, and guardians with test results. In addition to test scores, the material that parents and guardians receive must include information on how the formative assessment aligns with state standards and summative assessments, and suggestions for how to support the child’s learning at home.

**BILLS INTRODUCED IN THE**

**HOUSE THIS WEEK**

AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES AND

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

**H.5012 *EXPLORATION, DEVELOPMENT, OR PRODUCTION OF OFFSHORE CRUDE OIL OR NATURAL GAS* Rep. Newton**

A county, municipality, or other political subdivision is prohibited from approving a plan, permit, or license application for the construction or use of infrastructure for which the principal purpose is, among other things, to facilitate the transportation of crude oil or natural gas into the territorial waters of the state.

**H.5015 *IMMOBILIZATION OF WILDLIFE* Rep. Hixon**

The Department of Natural Resources may obtain and utilize Schedule III nonnarcotic and Schedule IV controlled substances for the capture and immobilization of wildlife.

**H.5018 *TRANSMITTING OF CERTAIN WATERCRAFT AND OUTBOARD MOTORS***

***DOCUMENTS ELECTRONICALLY* Rep. Hiott**

The bill outlines that the Department of Natural Resources is authorized to transmit and receive certain information through secure electronic means.

**EDUCATION AND PUBLIC WORKS**

**S.656 *SALE OF UNCLAIMED VEHICLES AND THE DISPOSITION OF PROCEEDS***

**Sen. Grooms**

Throughout the provision the term demolisher is replaced with automotive dismantler or recycler when referring to transfer of a vehicle. The bill outlines that the terms “automotive dismantler or recycler” mean any person, firm, corporation, or other business entity that acquires vehicles for the purpose of dismantling, wrecking, or otherwise removing parts for resale as used automotive parts. The terms also include a salvage yard.

**H.4973 *“FAIR PAY TO PLAY ACT”* Rep. Bamberg**

A public institution of higher learning in this State that participates in intercollegiate athletic competition as a member institution of an athletic association, conference, or organization with authority over intercollegiate athletics including, but not limited to, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, may not enforce or uphold any rule, requirement, standard, or other limitation that prevents a student who participates on such an intercollegiate athletics team from earning compensation as a result of the use of his name, image, or likeness.

**JUDICIARY**

**H.4965 *INMATE ELECTRONIC VISITATIONS* Rep. Rutherford**

Inmate visitation rights generally could not be unreasonably limited or denied under this legislation. Exceptions to this general right include misbehavior during emergencies. Electronic media could be made available as an additional means for inmates to communicate with their visitors.

**H.4974 *ADDITIONAL CIRCUIT AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES* Rep. Lucas**

Proposes increasing the number of at‑large circuit court judges from sixteen to seventeen. It would also add two more at‑large family court judges.

**H.4991 *RED FLAG GUN AND AMMUNITION SEIZURES* Rep. Govan**

This proposal would authorize law enforcement officers to seize firearms and ammunition if anyone poses a risk of imminent personal injury to themselves or others. Establishes criteria for solicitors, assistant solicitors, or two law enforcement officers to apply for, and receive, warrants. Requires Probate Court judges to hold hearings within seven days of any warrant executions. The scope of these hearings will be to determine whether seized firearms and ammunition should be returned to owners.

**H.4996 *SOUTH CAROLINA RESEARCH AUTHORITY BOARD MEMBER DESIGNEES***

**Rep. Elliott**

Members of the South Carolina Research Authority Executive Committee would consist of university presidents or their designees. Sets requirements for these designees, including being a vice president with direct-report responsibility to the university president. Also would allow the Executive Committee to elect two additional members. These additional members would not have to be trustees of any post-secondary academic institution at the time of their selection. This board could invest in certain obligations of private entities that exist under United States law, and have an investment-grade rating. South Carolina Research Authority host companies located in innovation centers could remain for up to five years, or until they are worth $5,000,000. This limitation would not apply to 35% of any innovation center’s total floor space.

**H.5010 *RENEWING RECORDED JUDGMENTS* Rep. Brown**

This bill would modify current law to extend the ten-year effectiveness of judgment liens for ten more years. These final judgments or decrees would have to be renewed within one year of expiring. Sets out necessary procedures for renewing these judgments, including giving notice to debtors of the intent to renew the judgment. Debtors would have a right to contest any proposed renewals.

**H.5011 *NO RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS PROHIBITING SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS***

**Rep. Herbkersman**

This proposed legislation would make any deed restriction, covenant, or homeowners association document, attempting to prohibit the installation of any residential solar energy system, void and unenforceable. These associations would retain review authority over the design of any proposed installation, however.

**H.5019 *REPORTING ELECTION AND VOTING PROBLEMS* Rep. W. Cox**

If enacted, this legislation would require the directors of county boards of voter registration and elections, as well as municipal election commissions, to issue election reports. The contents of these reports would include all voting‑related issues, complaints, problems, or difficulties. They would also include all remedial measures taken as a result of issues arising. These reports would have to be filed within 90 days of general, municipal, special, primary, or primary runoff elections.

**LABOR, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

**H.4990 *ABATEMENT OR COMPLIANCE PLANS MADE WITH THE U.S. OCCUPATIONAL***

***SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION* Rep. Sandifer**

This bill provides that, unless otherwise prohibited by law, in circumstances where the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation has adopted without alteration a safety or health standard promulgated by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (U.S. OSHA), the director or his designee shall adopt abatement or compliance plans or other written agreements establishing measures of compliance for that standard that have been made between U.S. OSHA and an entity regulated by the department. The legislation specifies that these provisions do not alter the authority of the department to enforce certain occupational health and safety standards in this state. The acceptance and enforcement of abatement plans or other related written agreements are exempted from regulation promulgation requirements.

**H.4993 *LOCAL GOVERNMENT-OWNED BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE***

**Rep. Bamberg**

This bill establishes new provisions to regulate local government-owned broadband Internet access service providers.

**H.4995 *HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR HEARING AIDS***

**Rep. Garvin**

This bill establishes requirements for all health insurance and group health benefit plans to cover hearing aids and replacement hearing aids for insureds with impaired hearing.

**H.5013 *INSURERS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS PROHIBITED FROM ENGAGING IN***

***SURPRISE BILLING* Rep. Garvin**

This bill establishes provisions to prohibit insurers and health care providers from engaging in surprise billing in legislation designated the “Stop Surprise Bills Act”. The legislation provides that it is an unfair trade practice for an insurer or health care provider to engage in the practice of surprise billing.

**H.5017 *VEHICLES PARKED ON PRIVATE PROPERTY WITHOUT PERMISSION***

**Rep. Sandifer**

This bill makes revisions relating to vehicles parked on private property without permission, so as to provide that only certain storage costs may be charged to the owner and lienholder of a vehicle found parked on private property without permission. The legislation revises provision for liens for storage, so as to prohibit the collection of storage costs by a towing company, storage facility, garage, or repair shop prior to the person sending notice to the owner and lienholder. The legislation revises provisions relating to payments for the release of abandoned vehicles, so as to provide that a towing company and storage facility may not charge any storage costs before notice is sent to the owner and lienholder. The legislation revises provisions relating to law enforcement towing and storage procedures, so as to provide that a towing company, storage facility, garage, or repair shop may not charge any storage costs before notice is sent to the owner and lienholder.

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

**H.4966 *“PERINATAL INTEGRATION ACT OF 2020”* Rep. Hill**

The bill requires DHEC to promulgate regulations to integrate birthing centers and midwives into the organization of perinatal levels of care.

**WAYS AND MEANS**

**H.4992 *RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCE PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION* Rep. Ballentine**

This bill establishes a property tax exemptions for a renewable energy resource property having a nameplate capacity of, and operating at no greater than, twenty kilowatts.

**H.4994 *DOUBLING THE VALUE OF THE HOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION***

**Rep. Long**

This bill revises the homestead property tax exemption allowed for persons who are over the age of sixty five years, disabled, or legally blind, so as to increase the exemption amount from the first fifty thousand dollars to the first one hundred thousand dollars of the fair market value of the homestead.

**H.4998 *“P-20 EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM FOR PRESCHOOL THROUGH AGE 20”* Rep. White**

This bill abolishes the Education Oversight Committee and the Commission on Higher Education on July 1, 2020, and devolve their duties, responsibilities, and functions upon a newly-created South Carolina Commission for Comprehensive Education. The legislation makes provisions for the commission’s membership, organization, and functions as the lead agency to coordinate and implement initiatives for lifelong learning. The legislation enacts new comprehensive provisions for a seamless system of education initiatives designed to include every level of education from early childhood education through graduate studies known as the “P-20 Educational System for Preschool through Age 20”.

**H.5016 *SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS ELIGIBLE FOR STATE RETIREMENT HEALTH AND***

***DENTAL INSURANCE BENEFITS* Rep. B. Newton**

This bill revises eligibility provisions for the South Carolina Retirement System to include school board members. The legislation provides that school board members are eligible for retiree State Health and Dental Insurance Plans.

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