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NOTE: There were no bill introductions nor committee meetings this week.

NOTE: These summaries are prepared by the staff of the South Carolina House of Representatives and are not the expression of the legislation's sponsor(s) or the House of Representatives. They are strictly for the internal use and benefit of members of the House of Representatives and are not to be construed by a court of law as an expression of legislative intent.

# HOUSE WEEK IN REVIEW

The House of Representatives amended, approved, and sent the Senate **H. 4100**, the General Appropriation bill, and the House approved and sent the Senate **H. 4101**, the joint resolution making appropriations from the Capital Reserve Fund, which together comprise the **Fiscal Year 2021-2022 State Government Budget**. The budget includes $9 billion in recurring state general fund revenue, after $650 million is transferred to the Tax Relief Trust Fund that provides for the residential property tax caps. The budget’s nonrecurring funds include $36.3 million in surplus funds estimated for Fiscal Year 2020-2021, $104 million in the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Contingency Reserve Fund, and $176 million in Capital Reserve Funds.

$500 million in nonrecurring funds is allocated to a Pandemic Stabilization Reserve Fund.

$50 million in nonrecurring funds is appropriated for the Disaster Relief and Resilience Reserve Fund that is to be used for disaster relief assistance, hazard mitigation and infrastructure improvements, and statewide resilience planning.

In public education, the base student cost is increased to $2,500 per pupil, utilizing an additional $50 million in recurring general funds.

$48 million is provided for instructional materials.

$10.2 million in Education Improvement Act funding is used to expand 4K programs through the First Steps to School Readiness Program.

$5.5 million in Education Improvement Act funding provides for a school nurse in every South Carolina school.

Charter schools are afforded $15 million in recurring Education Improvement Act funds and $9.5 million in nonrecurring EIA funds.

$2 million in EIA funding is used to add more school resource officers.

$1.5 million in Education Improvement Act funding is devoted to a GED Incentive Program which allows someone receiving unemployment benefits to receive a $500 one-time payment for earning a GED.

Full funding is provided for the LIFE, HOPE, and Palmetto Fellows higher education scholarship programs through $318 million in Education Lottery funds.

$31.5 million is allocated to a Scholarship Trust Fund that is to be used to cover scholarship costs should the state experience lottery revenue shortfalls in future years or an increase in the number of eligible students.

The Lottery Tuition Assistance Program is afforded $51 million.

The Commission on Higher Education is afforded $60 million in lottery funds for need-based grants. $20 million in lottery funds is provided for tuition grants.

$750,000 in lottery funds is provided for college transition program scholarships for individuals with disabilities.

$16 million is provided for workforce scholarships that provide grants for tuition, fees, and textbooks expenses to SC residents enrolled in a career education program at a technical school or professional certification program.

The Board of Technical and Comprehensive Education is afforded $17 million in lottery funds for SC Workforce Industry Needs scholarships that help provide full tuition at technical colleges for SC WINS recipients seeking degrees in industry sectors with critical workforce needs.

The Board of Technical and Comprehensive Education is provided $18 million in lottery funds for high demand job skill training equipment.

$2.5 million from the Capital Reserve Fund is allocated to the Ready SC Program which provides worker training at the state’s technical colleges that is customized to the needs of new and expanding business and industry.

The Capital Reserve Fund is devoted primarily to capital needs at the state’s colleges, universities, and tech schools with most of the $176 million in these nonrecurring funds allocated among the institutions for repairs, renovations, and maintenance of various facilities.

The Commission on Higher Education is charged with determining which of the state’s public institutions of higher learning are in compliance with statutory requirements for providing instruction on the nation’s founding documents: the U.S. Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Federalist Papers.

SC State PSA receives $350,000 in nonrecurring funds for small business assistance and training.

The budget emphasizes assistance for the state’s tourism sector which has been hard hit by the shutdowns and disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism receives $15 million in nonrecurring funds for destination-specific tourism marketing, $5 million in nonrecurring funds for tourism advertising grants, and $1.1 million in nonrecurring funds for SC Association of Tourism Regions.

$1.5 million in nonrecurring funds is provided for statewide community arts grants through the Arts Commission.

$3.7 million in nonrecurring funds is provided for the Deal Closing Fund that the Department of Commerce uses to recruit new business to the state.

$30 million in nonrecurring funds is devoted to expanding broadband access statewide. Priority is given to completing projects begun through the use of CARES Act federal funds.

Provisions are made for an Office of Broadband Coordinator within the Office of Regulatory Staff to serve as the central planning body to coordinate with all levels of government and the private sector to expand access to the high-speed Internet connections that can further distance learning, telework, and telehealth and enhance economic development opportunities. The Coordinator is charged with producing a broadband map of South Carolina that can be used to determine where connections exist and which underserved areas are in need of infrastructure improvements.

The Department of Health and Human Services is afforded $16.5 million in recurring funds for Medicaid maintenance of effort to address program cost growth.

Provisions are made for a statewide Mobile Health Units Coordination Project that charges the South Carolina Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare with providing technical assistance and coordination to make the most of the state’s mobile health units. These units are to deliver services that increase access to preventative and diagnostic health care, and reduce health inequities for rural, vulnerable, underserved, and displaced populations in South Carolina.

The budget includes a provision for the Department of Health and Human Services to transfer $1 million to the Medical University of South Carolina Hospital Authority to develop a comprehensive approach to advancing the awareness, detection, treatment, and scientific knowledge of sickle cell disease and trait within South Carolina. The MUSC Hospital Authority is authorized to partner with independent research entities to advance curative therapies for sickle cell disease and trait and is authorized to endow one or more nationally leading academic research centers with a research chair named the “Rena N. Grant Endowed Chair for Hematology” in furtherance of this goal. Additionally, to improve the quality of care provided to sickle cell patients, the authority is charged with performing statewide cultural competency training in all hospitals, including urgent care centers, in this state in order to educate and increase the awareness of health care professionals that are most likely to treat sickle cell patients on the symptoms and stigma associated with sickle cell disease and trait, especially pain relief.

The Department of Mental Health is afforded $27 million in nonrecurring funds for two new VA nursing homes certification state match.

The Forestry Commission is provided $1 million in nonrecurring funds for firefighting equipment.

$3.8 million in recurring funding is allocated to implement the new firefighter cancer health insurance benefit plan.

$250,000 in recurring funding is appropriated for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder for firefighters and other first responders. $250,000 in recurring funding is appropriated for PTSD treatment for law enforcement officers.

The budget emphasizes funding for step salary increases and retention programs for law enforcement and correctional officers across the seven agencies that employ officers.

$90 million in flexibility from federal CARES Act funding is used for upgrades at Department of Corrections institutions to enhance the safety of the public, officers, and inmates.

$1.6 million in recurring funding is utilized to establish an Insurance Fraud Division within the Department of Insurance, with responsibilities transferred from the Attorney General’s Office.

The Judicial Department is afforded $10 million in nonrecurring funds for case management modernization and $7.6 million in nonrecurring funds for virtual courtroom expansion.

A child welfare provider protection provision is included in the budget to prevent state funds for adoption or foster care services from being used in a manner that discriminates against religious organizations or individuals with sincerely held religious beliefs or moral convictions.

The budget funds the constitutional reserve accounts that the state uses to cope with revenue shortfalls.

$5.9 million in recurring funds is included to cover the increased costs of operating the state's health and dental insurance plans so that employees will have no premium cost increases.

A total of $32 million from the General Fund and $4 million in Education Improvement Act funds is devoted to the 1% increase in the employer contribution rates for the South Carolina Retirement System and the Police Officers Retirement System that is in keeping with the schedule for addressing the unfunded liability facing the state’s pensions established in Act 13 of 2017.

The budget includes $17.6 million for full funding of the Local Government Fund that is consistent with the revised approach for sending revenue to political subdivisions established in Act 84 of 2019.

$1 million in Education Lottery funds is devoted to increasing aid to county libraries.

The State Election Commission is directed to submit a report to the General Assembly by August 1, 2021, on the number of election fraud investigations conducted regarding the November 2020 election. The report must also be posted on the commission’s website.

The Conservation Bank is afforded $2 million in nonrecurring funds.

$250,000 in recurring funds is provided to establish the South Carolina Office of Resilience.

$12.7 million in nonrecurring funds is provided for the state FEMA match for Hurricane Dorian.

The budget legislation includes a provision that any funds received from the Federal government that are not allocated directly to a state agency must be expended through the legislative budgeting process.

NOTE: There were no bill introductions nor committee meetings this week.

Sources: The source for this document is the *House Journal* for the 124th Session, 2021-2022, South Carolina General Assembly and committee staff materials.

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