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State Senate  
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# This week in the Senate

## April 3 - April 7, 2017

The Senate finalized its version of the budget on Thursday after a 44-0 vote, sending it back to the House of Representatives. The bill, [H. 3720](#), is expected to head to a joint conference committee where legislators from the House and Senate will hammer out details.

Here are some highlights of the 2017-2018 appropriations bill approved by the Senate:

- \$145 million set aside to help make the state's retirement system healthier;
- \$69 million in additional money for K-12 schools through the EFA;
- \$46 million in additional money for building upgrades at schools; and
- \$16 million in new funding for higher education.

Additionally, the Senate passed [H. 3721](#), the capital reserve fund bill, which is used to finance previously authorized capital improvement bond projects and to retire interest or principal on previous bonds. This bill included \$75 million for Hurricane Matthew and other natural disaster recovery efforts.

## **Other bills passed by the Senate this week include:**

### ***READ THIRD TIME:***

**S. 3 - Senators Rankin and Hembree:** Allows anyone having custody of an animal due to the animal's owner being accused of a crime against the animal to petition the magistrate's court requesting that the accused deposit funds into an account to pay for the animal's care.

**S. 289 - Senators Shealy, Rankin, McElveen, Sheheen, Hutto and McLeod:** Attempts to consolidate victim services by creating the South Carolina Crime Victim Services Division within the Office of the Attorney General. The goal of the division would be to ensure victims throughout the state have access to the same services regardless of where they reside.

**S. 462 - Senator Hembree:** Requires school districts to provide students with personalized pathways to earn a diploma, based on their individual plans after graduation.

**S. 170 - Senators Shealy and Hutto:** Adds requirements for county coroners in regards to establishing Child Fatality Review Teams when a child under 18-years-old has died. The bill requires coroners to schedule a review team within seven working days to perform a case review when a child has died and sets rules for who must be on the review team.

**S. 570 - Senator Massey:** Changes state regulations regarding plant nurseries with the aim of clarifying the language and layout of the regulations and adjusting fee schedules.

**S. 480 - Senator Hutto:** Devolves all of the responsibilities of the existing Denmark Technical College Area Commission to the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education and requires the state board to initiate a study concerning the most effective delivery of technical college education opportunities in certain counties.

**S. 367 - Senator Alexander:** Seeks to regulate boat speeding and increases the "no wake" zone along the state's waterways.

**S. 179 - Senators Hutto and Hembree:** Provides for limited immunity from prosecution for specified drug and alcohol-related offenses committed by someone who seeks medical assistance for another person who is experiencing a drug or alcohol-related overdose, or by someone who himself is experiencing a drug or alcohol-related overdose and seeks medical assistance.

**S. 448 - Senators Young, Shealy, Johnson, Climer, Talley and McElveen:** Authorizes the Department of Social Services to disclose specific information about unfounded cases of child abuse or neglect that resulted in a child fatality or near fatality.

**S. 199 - Senators Bryant, Alexander, Shealy and Grooms:** Allows the Department of Public Safety to issue a civil penalty to the registered owner of a vehicle found to have passed a school

bus unlawfully after the inspection of digital images captured from a camera mounted on the stop arm of a school bus.

**S. 131 - Senators McLeod, Hutto, Jackson, Kimpson, Margie Bright Matthews, Fanning, Shealy, Senn and Malloy:** Aims to narrow the definition of the state’s disturbing schools law to have it apply mainly to non-students who threaten, loiter, trespass or otherwise cause a disturbance on a school or college campus.

**S. 415 - Senators Malloy and Campsen:** Simplifies and clarifies the processes and authority of the state’s Probate Court with the aim of promoting uniformity throughout the state. In particular, the bill gives probate judges the authority to waive filing fees for indigent persons. It also increases the availability and practicality of limited guardianships and aims to create consistency between conservatorships and guardianship actions.

**S. 596 - Senators Peeler, Nicholson, Sheheen and Gambrell:** Removes the current members of the John de la Howe School Board of Trustees and devolves the board's powers upon an interim board of trustees who shall serve until June 30, 2019, or until a full new board of trustees is appointed.

**S. 478 - Senators Hutto, Jackson, Shealy, McElveen and Alexander:** Changes the child passenger restraint requirements by increasing the age until which a child must be properly secured by a passenger restraint system from five-years-old to eight-years-old.

**S. 479 - Senator Hutto:** Authorizes the Department of Motor Vehicles to institute and supervise an Intrastate Vision Waiver Program. Pursuant to the program, the DMV may waive the vision standards for a commercial driver’s license for certain visually-impaired individuals

**S. 617 - Senators McLeod, Setzler, Malloy, Massey, McElveen, Rice, Bennett, M.B. Matthews, Gregory, Timmons, Talley, Senn, Nicholson, Sabb, Jackson, Peeler, Davis, Alexander, Fanning, Sheheen and Grooms:** Allows the DMV to issue special “University of South Carolina 2017 Women’s Basketball National Champions” license plates.

***READ SECOND TIME:***

**H. 3517**- Authorizes the director of the Department of Natural Resources to issue a special authorization waiving the fees for hunting and fishing licenses for anyone under 21-years-old who has been diagnosed with a terminal or life threatening illness or injury.

**Look ahead to next week and beyond:**

The Senate will not meet until Tuesday, April 18 at 2 p.m.

**H. 3516**, commonly called the roads bill, is expected to receive significant attention when the Senate reconvenes.

The General Assembly’s Sine Die adjournment will be Thursday, May 11.