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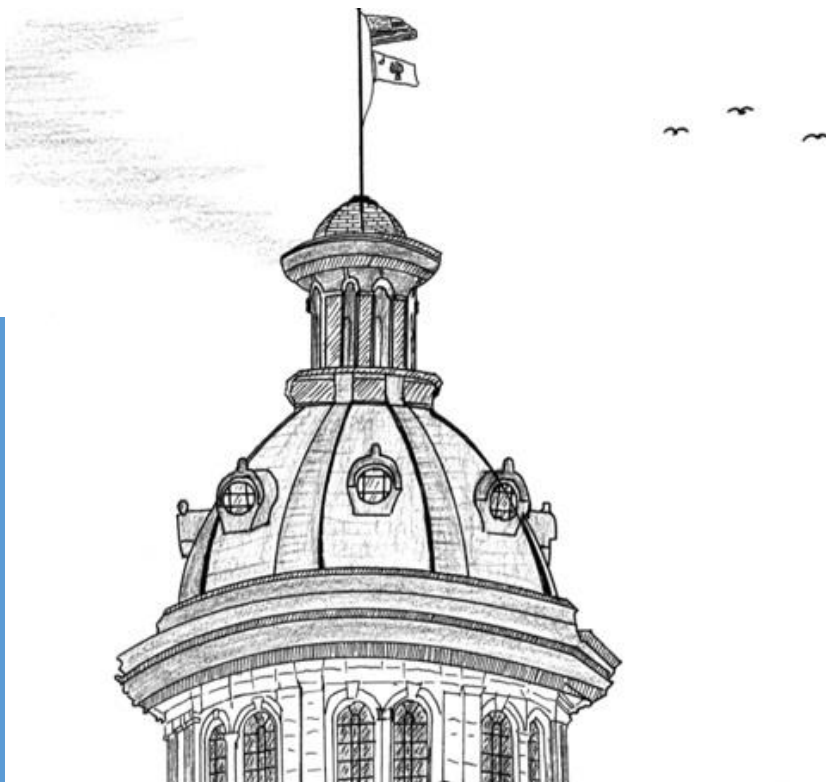


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# This week in the Senate

## May 9 - May 13, 2016

After completing the budget bill last week, the Senate worked through many bills on the calendar and set up the next round of major debate by setting two bills for special order - [H. 4548](#) and [H. 3799](#) - giving them priority status on the calendar.

H. 4548, also known as the dealer closing fee bill, is related to a dispute between car dealers and consumers over a charge used to finalize the purchase of a car. This bill responds to two lawsuits filed by consumers claiming the fee didn't relate to any real closing expenses. The South Carolina Supreme Court ruled in 2015 in favor of those consumers, but a cluster of pending lawsuits still exist. This bill clarifies what dealers can count as closing costs and calls for lawsuits brought under the closing fee statute to only be heard individually rather than as a group. Proponents of the bill say the mass action of pending lawsuits could bankrupt the car dealer industry. Critics say passing the bill could set a poor precedent where litigants turn to the legislature to overturn a court decision.

H. 3799 would extend concealed-weapon reciprocity to North Carolina and to Georgia. Proponents of the legislation have said the bill would make it easier for residents to travel between neighboring states should they decide to carry a

firearm. Critics have pointed to the absence of a gun-safety training requirement in Georgia and the state's lack of a centralized database of permit holder arrests.

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

### Third Reading:

[S. 923](#), Sponsored by Senator Kevin Bryant: Increases the punishment for anyone who injures or kills a police dog or horse.

[S. 1243](#), Sponsored by Senator Sean Bennett: Provides that the DMV may issue "Chase Away Childhood Cancer" special license plates.

[S. 936](#), Sponsored by Senators Katrina Shealy, Kevin Bryant, Greg Hembree, Thomas Alexander and Gerald Malloy: This bill, which is targeted to assist foster parents, allows minors to be able to apply for a beginner's permit, instruction permit, or driver's license under the authorization of a responsible adult.

[H. 3193](#) - Clarifies how campaign funds should be attributed to primaries and primary run-off campaigns as existing law was leading to confusion among some candidates.

[H. 3685](#) - Makes provisions for the electronic transmission of traffic tickets to bring South Carolina into compliance with federal electronic ticketing regulations.

[H. 3343](#) - Eliminates gas chambers for euthanasia in animal shelters.

[H. 3848](#) - Requires the study of the U.S. Constitution, the structure of government and other civics curriculum as a condition for graduation from high school.

[H. 4936](#) - Designates educational goals for high school graduates and the standards and areas of learning by which those goals are measured.

[H. 4940](#) - Sets up the Office of Transformation within the state's Department of Education to provide technical assistance for underperforming schools and districts.

[H. 4743](#) - Declares Lake Conestee Nature Park in Greenville County as a "wildlife sanctuary" for the protection and conservation of plants and wildlife.

[H. 4786](#) - Updates regulations in the governor's office relating to local emergency preparedness standards.

[H. 5009](#) - Eliminates a provision that limits the "Textiles Communities Revitalization Income Tax Credit" to 50 percent of income tax, corporate license fee and insurance premium tax liability. This bill is aimed at accelerating the claiming of the credit for redevelopment. Anyone who rehabilitates an old textile mill site is eligible for a tax credit under current law.

[H. 5218](#) - Declares the month of May as "Water Safety Awareness Month" to promote an understanding of water safety practices and the importance of water safety.

[H. 3927](#) - Allows the DMV to issue a new special personalized license plate for nonprofit organizations.

## Second Reading:

[H. 3560](#) - Allows teachers the opportunity for a hearing with a School Board or its designee if they have received written notice of dismissal.

[H. 3891](#) - Allows rental companies renting vehicles for 90 days or less to charge separately stated fees to cover certain taxes and fees.

[H. 4817](#) - Requires bondsmen to provide their business address, email, mailing and residential street address on their license application with the Department of Insurance.

[H. 3710](#) - Extends the multi-lot discount for developers who had the discount on December 31, 2011, until 2019.

[H. 4138](#) - Establishes requirements for mechanical contractors to display their licenses in a conspicuous manner at their business.

[H. 4939](#) - Establishes a committee to review the education statutes in South Carolina to determine which ones are obsolete and report the findings to the General Assembly by December 31, 2016.

[H. 3653](#) - Authorizes law enforcement agencies to enter into mutual aid agreements or multijurisdictional task force agreements with other law enforcement providers as may be necessary for public safety.

[H. 4932](#) - Provides specifications regarding the maximum lengths and weights of vehicles that may be operated on state highways to maintain consistency with federal requirements.

[H. 4999](#) - Places free healthcare provider services within the scope of “The Good Samaritan” law, allowing them to be immune from civil damage liability unless there’s gross negligence or willful misconduct.

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

Debate is expected on the two bills set for special order - H. 4548 and H. 3799.

The governor has declared she will veto the legislature’s \$40 million Farm Aid Bill, H. 4717. Debate on whether or not to override the governor’s veto is also expected when lawmakers return.

Senators Ray Cleary, Larry Grooms and Brad Hutto, along with three members of the House, are part of a conference committee trying to hammer out difference on H. 3579, a bill that reforms the governing structure of the Department of Transportation.

A portrait of Senator Clementa Pinckney will be unveiled during a ceremony in the Senate on May 25.