

NO. 52

JOURNAL
OF THE
SENATE
OF THE
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



REGULAR SESSION BEGINNING TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2018

FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 2018

Friday, April 6, 2018
(Local Session)

~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~
Indicates New Matter

The Senate assembled at 11:00 A.M., the hour to which it stood adjourned, and was called to order by the ACTING PRESIDENT, Senator SHEALY. **(This is a Statewide Session day established under the provisions of Senate Rule 1B. Members not having scheduled committee or subcommittee meetings may be in their home districts without effect on their session attendance record.)**

ADDENDUM TO THE JOURNAL

The following remarks by Senator MARTIN were ordered printed in the Journal of March 21, 2018:

Remarks by Senator MARTIN

Thank you Mr. PRESIDENT, members of the Senate. Thank you Senator McELVEEN for coming up and voicing your opinions today as we discuss this local Bill.

In 2016, a few hospital executives illegally seized or privatized a multi-million dollar valued asset, the Greenville Hospital System, and took it from its owners, the tax payers. The tax payers received absolutely nothing in return from the new statewide corporation now running and controlling GHS operations. Currently, GHS is neither locally owned nor locally controlled. I believe that many citizens living in Greenville County, and a lot of doctors, do not understand what has happened here.

I was asked for help by a colleague to file legislation to help stop what they were doing. I have been challenged that I only represent a small portion of Greenville County, and I live in Spartanburg. Anytime there is an issue in Greenville County, Senator HUTTO, I will be at this podium for the 12,381 people in Greenville County that I represent. Because I live in Spartanburg County, does not mean I do not stand up for the citizens and taxpayers that I represent in Greenville County. That is why I am here today.

Two years ago I went to one of the board meetings. I told them that I am an engineer. I am not a doctor. I am not here to make health decisions, but I am here to stand up for the tax payers.

They were meeting behind closed doors, Senator LEATHERMAN -- behind closed doors! It was over a year before we discovered what they were doing. I asked them to be above board, have open meetings, and

FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 2018

come to us with changes in the law. They did not. They thought they had the political muscle to do it, which they apparently are flexing now.

I may have been fine with them becoming a for-profit hospital or becoming a regional hospital. All they had to do is to get into a room and talk to the delegation which grants their authority, and we probably could have worked something out.

When this was taking place, the GHS hospital executives were counting on Obamacare for funding. They were doing everything they could to keep smaller hospitals, Senator McELVEEN, from advancing and to prevent the decentralization because they were taking money out of the big systems. Now here we are.

If everybody remembers, the American Medical Society and the Hospital Association helped Obamacare pass, and that is why they want to keep this model going; because that is how their funding is set up.

Today we have a Bill before us that basically changes the name of Greenville Hospital System to the Greenville Health Authority. It codifies what they have already done illegally. They can now transfer assets, and they can combine with other hospitals with complete autonomy. If this Bill passes today, they will have a blank check going forward. That is what will happen.

I don't want to talk long because Senator CORBIN wants to be heard on the side, against this Bill. The big problem with this Bill being proposed is that it provides no restoration of public control. This new South Carolina Health Company will be completely insulated from public control, including FOIA laws, but will still claim all the benefits of a non-profit: police power, eminent domain, seizure of tax refunds, etc.

I do not believe I was here, Senator LEATHERMAN, but I think you were when the Pension Investment Commission tried to take 25 billion dollars in assets away from this State. I did not know you then, but I heard that you and other Senators realized this would be bad for the tax payer. Senator LEATHERMAN, I use this example because I live in Spartanburg, I represent part of Greenville. You live in another part of the State but you represent the tax payers of this entire State. So where would we be if they had taken that 25 billion dollars away from the tax payer? We might be in a big mess right now. That is happening on a smaller scale and it is coming, Senator McELVEEN. More of this is coming. That is why I wanted to provide that example to you.

Basically, what happens today when this Bill passes, anybody that votes for the passing of this Bill, is voting for amnesty for the illegal

FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 2018

actions of Greenville Hospital System, and what they have taken over the past couple of years, and endorsing the way they have treated other areas like my friend from Sumter. That is what this Bill will accomplish.

I know I do not have the votes. I know this Bill was already taken up, and I want to allow my other friend from Greenville to be heard. I think he has some amendments up. So with that Mr. PRESIDENT, I want to pull this amendment down because I do not have the votes. We all know I do not have the votes.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:04 A.M., on motion of Senator JACKSON, the Senate adjourned to meet Monday, April 9, 2018, at 2:00 P.M.

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