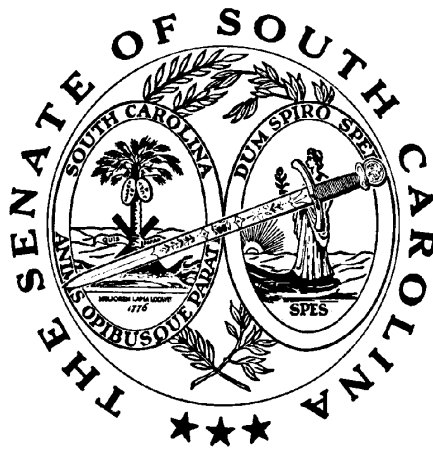


NO. 2

JOURNAL
OF THE
SENATE
OF THE
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



REGULAR SESSION BEGINNING TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2023

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023

Wednesday, January 11, 2023
(Statewide Session)

~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~

Indicates New Matter

The Senate assembled at 10:30 A.M., the hour to which it stood adjourned, and was called to order by the PRESIDENT.

A quorum being present, the proceedings were opened with a devotion by the Chaplain as follows:

Psalm 111:10

The Psalmist reminds us that: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise."

Let us pray: Indeed, dear Lord, this is truly a time for new beginnings here at the State House of South Carolina. During this week of the bold new year of 2023 we find ourselves initiating the first Session of this 125th General Assembly, today our Governor and other State constitutional officers are soon to be sworn in, and this Senate itself stands once more poised to do what hopefully will enhance life for the people of South Carolina. So truly, O God, we fervently call upon You to bestow Your richest blessings upon not only our Governor, but upon all women and men serving in this place, as they do what is required to accomplish good for all. And through it all, O Lord, may the collective efforts of these leaders truly bring You eternal praise. In Your wondrous name we pray, Lord. Amen.

The PRESIDENT called for Petitions, Memorials, Presentments of Grand Juries and such like papers.

RECESS

At 10:45 A.M., on motion of Senator MASSEY, the Senate receded from business for the purpose of attending the Inaugural Ceremony and following the ceremony, the Senate would stand adjourned.

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INAUGURAL PROGRAM

Processional

282nd Army Band, Fort Jackson, Columbia, South Carolina
Chief Warrant Officer Three Kevin I. Pick, *Commander*

Escorts -- Cadets from the Citadel

CEREMONY

The Honorable Thomas C. Alexander,
President of the Senate, Presiding

Welcome	The Honorable Thomas C. Alexander
Invocation	Rabbi Jonathan Case <i>Beth Shalom Synagogue, Columbia</i>
Presentation of the Colors	The Citadel Color Guard
Pledge of Allegiance	Maj. Gen James E. Livingston, MOH, USMC, ret.
Star Spangled Banner	<i>Francis Scott Key and John Stafford Smith</i> Emma Brooke Alley Dr. Valerie MacPhail, <i>Accompanist</i>

"Tshotsholoza"	<i>arr. Jefery Ames</i>
"City Called Heaven"	<i>arr. Josephine Poelinitz</i>
The Hammond School Select Ensemble Steven Hillard, <i>Director</i> Lucinda Shields, <i>Accompanist</i>	

Remarks	The Honorable G. Murrell Smith, Jr. <i>Speaker of the House</i>
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Administration of the Oath to the Office

Lieutenant Governor	Lieutenant Governor Pamela Sue Evette <i>by The Honorable G. Murrell Smith, Jr.</i>
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State Officers

by Lieutenant Governor Pamela Sue Evette

Secretary Of State	The Honorable Mark Hammond
State Treasurer	The Honorable Curtis M. Loftis, Jr.
Attorney General	The Honorable Alan M. Wilson
Comptroller General	The Honorable Richard Eckstrom
Superintendent of Education	The Honorable Molly Spearman
Superintendent of Education Elect	The Honorable Ellen E. Weaver

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Commissioner of Agriculture The Honorable Hugh E. Weathers

“Hallelujah” *arr. Pentatonix*
University of South Carolina Cockappella Group

“Stars I Shall Find” *Victor C. Johnson*
Irmo High School Concert Choir
Frank Turner, *Choral Director*
Alison Hilbish, *Accompanist*

Administration of the Oath to the Governor

The Honorable Henry Dargan McMaster
by Justice John W. Kittredge

Inaugural Address *The Honorable Henry Dargan McMaster*
His Excellency, Governor of South Carolina

Ladies and gentlemen, I am happy to welcome you to your magnificent State House on another beautiful South Carolina day. Your presence expresses your confidence in our bright future. The people of our great State have given me the honor and privilege of serving as your governor for another four years. My family and I thank you.

If we were at the famous Darlington raceway, these early days of 2023 would be the moment we hold our breath just before the green flag is dropped. Much history has been made here, and we are about to make some more.

I have in my office a framed drawing of the City of Charleston, dated 1739, accompanied by a report inscribed upon it and addressed to "his Excellency James Glen Esq. Capt. General, Governor and Commander in Chief in and over his Majesty's province of South Carolina, and Vice Admiral within the same" and "humbly inscrib'd by his much Obligated humble Servant B. Roberts." It was "Published according to Act of Parliament by B. Roberts & W.H. Toms, June 9, 1739." It reads, in part: "CHARLES-TOWN the METROPOLIS of the Province of South Carolina is pleasantly situated between Cooper & Ashley Rivers... The Climate of Carolina... is extremely agreeable & wholesome &... may well be looked upon as the most temperate part of the habitable Earth... (I)t is the fairest & most fruitful Province belonging to Great Britain... Its Silk is preferable to any, & its Rice is the best in the world. ... So that it is no wonder of Charles Town... be now a very great and flourishing Town, adorned with handsome & commodious buildings... amongst

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which the Church of St. Phillip, may justly be reckoned the finest structure in America. ... (T)his Town and Province may justly be esteemed the most flourishing of any of His Majesty's Dominions in America."

I believe that Mr. B. Roberts' estimation of the remarkable nature of South Carolina was accurate. It was shared by the French and Spanish explorers and their sovereigns before him, and by the Native Americans before them. And I believe it still is true today, with the notable exception that South Carolina no longer belongs to King George, but to us.

Unmentioned but implicit in the success observed by Mr. B. Roberts is the character, nature and circumstances of the inhabitants of the Province of South Carolina, that is, the people. According to the historian Walter Edgar, our early inhabitants had arrived at different times under a variety of conditions from eight European countries, as many as twenty-five West African cultures, today comprising four countries, and over twenty-five Native American nations, bearing such familiar names as Congaree, Combahee, Kiawah, Catawba, Waccamaw, Pee Dee and Edisto.

Through those years and centuries long ago up to our living memories, our people have seen it all: hurricanes, fires, floods, tornados, earthquakes, piracy, Indian Wars, indentured servitude, slavery, a Revolutionary War, a Civil War, World Wars and all the others. No state has a more fascinating, momentous history than our own. And through it all -- and perhaps because of it -- we have grown, endured and prospered. The greatest asset we have is each other -- the people -- the great, unique people of South Carolina.

Today, when business leaders from around the world measure the assets of our state, they remark on our people -- the character and nature of the people themselves. Visitors do the same. They sense their loyalty, patriotism, kindness and steadfastness. They see the natural paradise in which we work and live. They see the historic confluence of our Judeo-Christian and military traditions. And they like what they see, sometimes more clearly than we do ourselves.

For these reasons and more, our economy is flourishing and opportunities abound. I view our foundations for great prosperity and happiness as resting on three pillars: economic strength, education and our natural environment.

Today our economy is as strong as it has ever been in modern times. South Carolina's booming economy has once again created a record budget surplus. So, it should come as no surprise that 2022 was the most

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successful year for economic development in our state's history. In fact, we broke the record for the largest economic development project announcement -- not once, but twice -- in the same year. State government is in superior fiscal shape, we have the largest rainy day reserve fund balance and lowest amount of debt than at any other time in recent memory.

Until recently, South Carolina had the highest personal income tax rate in the southeast and the 12th highest in the nation. No more. Last year, I was honored to sign into law the largest income tax cut in state history. We have made -- and will continue to make -- transformative investments in our State's infrastructure. From widening interstates, repairing, and replacing roads, bridges, and highways -- to over a billion and a half dollars for new water, sewer and stormwater in our rural communities -- we are setting our State on an accelerated path to compete globally for new jobs and future investment. We dredged our Charleston Harbor to fifty-two feet, the deepest on the Atlantic coast and able to handle the biggest ships "any day, any time, any tide."

We relied on common sense and the Constitution during the pandemic, and while other states faltered, we flew, with some of our businesses having their best years ever.

So, what is our plan? As once all roads led to Rome, today all quests for prosperity lead to education. Education has been described as a footrace in which the baton of knowledge is passed from one generation to the next. The historian Barbara Tuchman wrote, "Books are the carriers of civilization. Without books, history is silent, literature dumb, science crippled, thought and speculation at a standstill. Without books, the development of civilization would have been impossible."

We must do whatever it takes to see that every child in our State has the opportunity to receive an excellent education. Albert Einstein said, "A problem can never be solved by thinking on the same level that produced it." He was right; we must think big and be bold, and we will. Standing here four years ago I said, "Being perceived as weak in education is not good. But, being perceived as not committed to fixing it is disastrous."

Six years ago, the minimum starting salary of a teacher in South Carolina was \$30,113. Today, it is \$40,000. My goal by 2026 is that we have a minimum starting salary of at least \$50,000. Until last year, South Carolina's system for funding K-12 education was archaic and confusing, a piecemeal system consisting of 29 separate line-item appropriations. Now, a consolidated formula makes sure that funding follows the child and provides transparency for parents.

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To increase the percentage of children who enter our public schools ready to learn, we expanded full day four-year-old kindergarten to all at-risk children in the State. Today, we are serving 16,103 children in the program, which is an all-time high. And we have placed an armed, certified school resource officer -- an SRO -- in 90% of our State's public schools. We will not stop until there is an officer in every school, in every county, all day, every day.

We know that access to an affordable degree or skilled trade certificate is essential to ensure that our State has the trained and educated workforce to compete for jobs and investment in the future. To that end, we have frozen college tuition for four straight years and provided a record amount of financial aid and scholarships to students in need. To address the historic labor shortage, our workforce scholarships have allowed over 10,000 South Carolinians to earn an industry credential in high demand careers like manufacturing, healthcare, computer science, information technology, transportation, logistics and construction.

Remember -- major businesses in the United States and abroad have clearly demonstrated their desire to bring their fortunes and facilities to South Carolina and to employ our people. They are "putting their money where our people are." What we must do now is double down. We must continue investing in our people to ensure that they are prepared to reap the benefits of our future prosperity.

This brings us to the third pillar of our prosperity: our natural and cultural heritage. Few states, if any, can match the natural beauty, bounty and variety of South Carolina, from the mountains to the sea. And few can match the elegance and craftsmanship of the historic homes, churches, synagogues and other structures found in our land, including Beaufort, Charleston, Georgetown and Camden, built during the times when Mother Nature herself was the fount of our prosperity. I truly believe that if we cannot find peace and comfort in the pine forests and tidal creeks of South Carolina, we'll just have to wait until we get to Heaven.

Numerous scholars recognize that the Revolutionary War was won here, with over two hundred battles and skirmishes in Britain's unsuccessful southern campaign, notably the Battles of Kings Mountain and Cowpens. Many historical sites still need markers today, including the camp of General Francis Marion and his patriots in the Pee Dee swamps; the British could not find it and neither can we. Our Gullah-Geechee culture in the low country survives as a living link to our past. Our magnificent live oaks have seen more history than any of us. This natural and cultural heritage is an integral part of our quality of life.

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It is why we stay here, and why others come, many as tourists, some as investors. And with them comes money, sometimes millions, even billions, and from that come jobs and careers which, in turn produce funds for schools and educations, which in turn produce a deep appreciation of our natural and cultural heritage. As so the cycle goes, 'round and 'round, up and up.

We recently created a new cabinet agency, the Office of Resilience, which adopted findings of our Floodwater Commission. Its purposes include measuring our strengths and weaknesses concerning flooding, erosion and the conditions of our rivers, coast and barrier islands; and to mitigate, accommodate and respond to flooding; and also to coordinate efforts of economic and natural resilience with governmental and non-governmental entities.

Vigorous economic growth and the preservation of our shared natural heritage and environment are not opposing objectives which must be balanced as in a competition, one against the other. Instead, they are complementary, intertwined, and inseparable, each dependent on the other. Each can be accomplished to the fullest if we plan now and be bold.

The question today is will anyone recognize South Carolina in 100 years? Will we allow our State's culturally and environmentally significant structures, monuments, lands, islands, and waterways to be lost forever to over-development, mismanagement, flooding, erosion or from storm damage? Or will we preserve and protect our history and our environment, and the public's access to them? This is our moment to act, while we still can. And of course, to preserve these great resources and to realize our full economic and educational potentials, the first duty of government is to keep South Carolinians safe. To do that we must maintain a robust law enforcement presence -- and properly "fund the police" -- while closing the revolving door for career criminals -- keeping them behind bars and not out on bail. And this includes stronger laws to keep illegal guns out of the hands of criminals and juveniles.

We must also ensure that the public has confidence in whom and how all our judges are selected -- by making the processes more transparent and accountable; so that every South Carolinian, born and unborn, may enjoy life, liberty and happiness.

In closing, to the members of the General Assembly: The State of South Carolina is richly blessed with a hardworking and talented people. I have faith in our people, and I have faith in those whom they have elected to represent them in this State House. Let us continue our successful partnership, one that has been based on communication,

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collaboration, and cooperation, and let us set our State on a course that will provide the opportunity for prosperity, success, and happiness for generations of South Carolinians. The best is yet to come. May God continue to bless America, and our Great State of South Carolina.

“The Rain is Over and Gone” *Paul Halley*
South Carolina Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities Choir
Dr. Elliott Smith, *Conductor*
Tom Taylor, *Accompanist*

Benediction CH(BG) Norris D. Darden, ret.

Recessional

“America The Beautiful” *arr. Warren Baker*
South Carolina Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities Choir
The Hammond Select Ensemble
Irmo High Concert Choir
282nd Army Band
Dr. Elliott Smith, *Conductor*
Audience invited to participate as directed

Statement by Senator YOUNG

I am not attending session today because I am assisting with my father who is ill in the hospital in Augusta.

Motion Adopted

On motion of Senator MASSEY, the Senate adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11:00 A.M. under the provisions of Rule 1B for the purpose of taking up local matters and uncontested matters which have previously received unanimous consent to be taken up.

Motion Adopted

On motion of Senator MASSEY, the Senate agreed to stand adjourned.

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MOTION ADOPTED

On motion of Senator HUTTO, with unanimous consent, the Senate stood adjourned out of respect to the memory of Reverend George F. Manigo, Jr. of Bamberg, S.C. George earned a master of divinity degree from Gammon in Atlanta, Georgia. Rev. Manigo's service included appointments in Cheraw, Seneca, Camden and Orangeburg. He also served as a district superintendent of Walterboro for six years, was a member of the board at Claflin University, Methodist Oaks and the Mental Health Board of Bamberg, Orangeburg and Calhoun Counties. Reverend Manigo was deeply loved and will be dearly missed.

and

MOTION ADOPTED

On motion of Senator SETZLER, with unanimous consent, the Senate stood adjourned out of respect to the memory of Mr. Joe E. Taylor of Columbia, S.C. Joe began his career after graduating from Wofford as chief executive of precut log building with Southland Log Homes. He served as state commerce secretary under Governor Mark Sanford and was instrumental in bringing Boeing to South Carolina. In 2021, he was elected to Columbia City Council where he chaired the council's Economic and Community Development Committee. Joe was a loving husband and devoted father who will be dearly missed.

and

MOTION ADOPTED

On motion of Senator STEPHENS, with unanimous consent, the Senate stood adjourned out of respect to the memory of Mr. Lavel Davis, Jr. of Ridgeville, S.C. Lavel was academically gifted and an extraordinary athlete who played football at the University of Virginia. Lavel was a loving son and brother who will be dearly missed.

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ADJOURNMENT

At 1:05 P.M., on motion of Senator MASSEY, the Senate adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11:00 A.M., under the provisions of Rule 1B.

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