

NO. 18

JOURNAL
OF THE
SENATE
OF THE
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



REGULAR SESSION BEGINNING TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2026

Thursday, February 12, 2026
(Statewide 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 PRESIDENT.

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

Genesis 3:9

We likely recall reading in Genesis how the Lord God, walking through the garden as Adam and Eve hide, calls out to the man saying:

“ ‘Where are you?’ ”

Let us pray: Holy Lord, it is patently clear how that classic question You asked of Adam eons ago is the very one You pose today to each and every one of us, also, where are you? Where are we, indeed. Are we where we need to be here in 2026? Are we where God wants us? Is South Carolina itself where it should be? Is our Nation? As the question keeps on echoing around us, O Lord, we realize how much we all need to be doing to indeed be the women and men we ought to be in Your eyes. Our work is cut out for us, truly. And so we ask today, dear Father, that You will empower all of us afresh to be the laborers You intend for us to be, doing those things that indeed are just and noble and appropriate for us individually and for the people of our State collectively. And may we then one day hear Your resounding answer coming back to us, “Well done, people. Well done.” In Your loving name we humbly pray, Lord. Amen.

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

Call of the Senate

Senator PEELER moved that a Call of the Senate be made. The following Senators answered the Call:

Adams	Alexander	Allen
Bennett	Blackmon	Bright
Campsen	Cash	Chaplin
Climer	Corbin	Cromer
Davis	Devine	Elliott
Gambrell	Garrett	Goldfinch

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Graham	Hembree	Jackson
Johnson	Kennedy	Kimbrell
Leber	Martin	Massey
Matthews	Ott	Peeler
Rankin	Reichenbach	Rice
Sabb	Stubbs	Sutton
Tedder	Turner	Verdin
Williams	Young	

A quorum being present, the Senate resumed.

Doctor of the Day

Senator TURNER introduced Dr. Laurie Theriot of Greenville, S.C., Doctor of the Day.

Leave of Absence

On motion of Senator CROMER, at 11:06 A.M., Senator GROOMS was granted a leave of absence for today.

CO-SPONSORS ADDED

The following co-sponsors were added to the respective Bills:

S. 42 Sen. Allen
S. 716 Sens. Reichenbach, Rice, Goldfinch, Blackmon and Elliott
S. 849 Sen. Bennett
S. 896 Sen. Blackmon
S. 915 Sens. Goldfinch and Elliott
S. 920 Sen. Blackmon

RECALLED

H. 4959 -- Reps. Sanders, Alexander, Anderson, Atkinson, Bailey, Ballentine, Bamberg, Bannister, Bauer, Beach, Bernstein, Bowers, Bradley, Brewer, Brittain, Burns, Bustos, Calhoon, Caskey, Chapman, Chumley, Clyburn, Cobb-Hunter, Collins, Cox, Crawford, Cromer, Davis, Dillard, Duncan, Edgerton, Erickson, Ford, Forrest, Frank, Gagnon, Garvin, Gatch, Gibson, Gilliam, Gilliard, Gilreath, Govan, Grant, Guest, Guffey, Haddon, Hager, Hardee, Harris, Hart, Hartnett, Hartz, Hayes, Henderson-Myers, Herbkersman, Hewitt, Hiott, Hixon, Holman, Hosey, Howard, Huff, J.E. Johnson, J.L. Johnson, Jones, Jordan, Kilmartin, King, Kirby, Landing, Lastinger, Lawson, Ligon, Long, Lowe, Luck, Magnuson, Martin, McCabe, McCravy, McDaniel, McGinnis, C. Mitchell, D. Mitchell, Montgomery, J. Moore, T. Moore,

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Morgan, Moss, Neese, B. Newton, W. Newton, Oremus, Pace, Pedalino, Pope, Rankin, Reese, Rivers, Robbins, Rose, Rutherford, Schuessler, Scott, Sessions, G.M. Smith, M.M. Smith, Spann-Wilder, Stavrinakis, Taylor, Teeple, Terribile, Vaughan, Waters, Weeks, Wetmore, White, Whitmire, Wickensimer, Williams, Willis, Wooten and Yow: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE HEROISM AND SACRIFICE OF PRIVATE CURTIS ADAMS AND THE “WERETH 11,” AND TO DESIGNATE DECEMBER 17 OF EACH YEAR AS “WERETH 11 REMEMBRANCE DAY” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Senator YOUNG asked unanimous consent to make a motion to recall the Concurrent Resolution from the Committee on Family and Veterans' Services.

The Concurrent Resolution was recalled from the Committee on Family and Veterans' Services and ordered placed on the Calendar for consideration tomorrow.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

The following were introduced:

S. 924 -- Senator Goldfinch: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 23-3-555, RELATING TO INTERNET REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND PENALTIES, INFORMATION PROVIDED TO INTERACTIVE COMPUTER SERVICES, AND JUDICIAL LIMITATIONS ON INTERNET USE, SO AS TO REQUIRE, AS A CONDITION OF PROBATION OR PAROLE, A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF A CRIME THAT IS REGISTERED ON THE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY TO USE HIS NAME AS IT APPEARS ON THE REGISTRY WHEN HE IS USING THE INTERNET TO ACCESS SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES, COMMUNICATE WITH OTHER PERSONS OR GROUPS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING SEXUAL RELATIONS, OR WHEN USING DATING APPLICATIONS.

sedu-0036db26.docx

Read the first time and referred to the Committee on Judiciary.

S. 925 -- Banking and Insurance Committee: A JOINT RESOLUTION TO APPROVE REGULATIONS OF THE STATE BOARD OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, RELATING TO NON-

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INTEREST BEARING NEGOTIABLE ORDER OF WITHDRAWAL (NINOW) ACCOUNTS BY STATE-CHARTERED SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATIONS, DESIGNATED AS REGULATION DOCUMENT NUMBER 5393, PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 23, TITLE 1 OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS.

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Read the first time and ordered placed on the Calendar without reference.

S. 926 -- Senator Alexander: A SENATE RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE MARCH 4, 2026, AS "DISABILITY ADVOCACY DAY" IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

sr-0488km-vc26.docx

The Senate Resolution was introduced and referred to the Committee on Family and Veterans' Services.

H. 4755 -- Reps. Gatch, G. M. Smith, W. Newton, Caskey, Jordan, Bailey, Ballentine, Brewer, Brittain, Chapman, Crawford, Cromer, Davis, Duncan, Edgerton, Forrest, Gagnon, Gilliam, Guest, Guffey, Hager, Hardee, Hartz, Herbkersman, Hewitt, Hiott, Hixon, Holman, Huff, Kilmartin, Lawson, Long, Lowe, Magnuson, Martin, McCravy, McGinnis, C. Mitchell, B. Newton, Oremus, Pace, Pedalino, Pope, Rankin, Sanders, Schuessler, Sessions, M. M. Smith, Taylor, Teeple, Terrible, Vaughan, White, Whitmire, Willis, Yow, Erickson, Chumley, Ford, Lastinger, Wickensimer, Bowers, D. Mitchell and Gilreath: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTIONS 2-19-5, 2-19-20, 2-19-30, 2-19-35, 2-19-50, 2-19-60 AND 2-19-70, ALL RELATING TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION SCREENING AND ELECTION OF JUSTICES AND JUDGES, SO AS TO REVISE THE STAFFING AND APPOINTMENT PROCESS OF THE COMMISSION AND TRANSFER THAT AUTHORITY TO THE GOVERNOR, TO PROHIBIT SITTING MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CERTAIN FAMILY MEMBERS FROM SERVING ON THE COMMISSION, TO PROHIBIT THE COMMISSION FROM CONSIDERING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CRITERIA ALONG WITH OTHER SIMILAR CRITERIA, AND TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.

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Read the first time and referred to the Committee on Judiciary.

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Objection

Senator CLIMER asked unanimous consent to place H. 4755 on the Calendar.

Senator SUTTON objected.

H. 5006 -- Reps. B. Newton, Long, Hewitt, M. M. Smith, Gatch, Schuessler, Stavrinakis, Hiott, Pope, Erickson, Hixon, Neese, Wooten, Ligon, Chapman, Forrest, Hartz, Guffey, Ford, Willis, Cox, Sanders, Vaughan, Oremus, Duncan, G. M. Smith, Bowers, Sessions, Bannister, Bailey, Brewer, Weeks, Landing, Moss, Bradley, Lawson, Rankin, Guest, Brittain, Lowe, T. Moore, Ballentine, Robbins, Martin, Caskey, Pedalino, Calhoon, Davis, W. Newton, C. Mitchell, Holman, Hardee, Taylor, Yow, Jordan, Haddon, Wickensimer, Bamberg, King, McDaniel, J. L. Johnson, Cromer, Gilreath and Anderson: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS SO AS TO ENACT THE "STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA SMALL BUSINESS TAX CUT OF 2026"; BY AMENDING SECTION 12-37-220, RELATING TO PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS, SO AS TO EXEMPT THE FIRST TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS OF NET DEPRECIATED VALUE OF BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY OWNED BY A SMALL BUSINESS; BY AMENDING SECTION 12-37-900, RELATING TO PROPERTY TAX RETURNS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT A TAXPAYER IS NOT REQUIRED TO RETURN BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY FOR TAXATION IF THE TAXPAYER HAS LESS THAN TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS OF NET DEPRECIATED VALUE OF BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY; BY ADDING SECTION 12-37-980 SO AS TO REQUIRE THAT ALL BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY REQUIRED TO BE RETURNED FOR TAXATION TO BE RETURNED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE; BY AMENDING SECTION 12-20-50, RELATING TO THE LICENSE TAX ON CORPORATIONS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT, UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, THE FEE DOES NOT APPLY TO ANY PORTION OF THE FIRST FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS OF CERTAIN CAPITAL STOCK AND PAID-IN OR CAPITAL SURPLUS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 33-44-409, RELATING TO STANDARDS OF CONDUCT OF A CORPORATE OFFICER, SO AS TO PROVIDE AN EXCEPTION TO REFRAINING FROM COMPETING.

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Read the first time and referred to the Committee on Finance.

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H. 5043 -- Reps. Wetmore and Stavrinakis: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ERECT APPROPRIATE MARKERS OR SIGNS AT THE TRAFFIC CIRCLE LOCATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF CAMP ROAD AND FORT JOHNSON ROAD ON JAMES ISLAND IN CHARLESTON COUNTY THAT CONTAIN THE WORDS "IN MEMORY OF SGT. FIRST CLASS ISAAC GETHERS JR."

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The Concurrent Resolution was introduced and referred to the Committee on Transportation.

H. 5044 -- Reps. Wetmore, Stavrinakis and Teeple: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME THE INTERSECTION OF RIVER ROAD AND MAYBANK HIGHWAY ON JOHNS ISLAND IN CHARLESTON COUNTY "JANIE BLIGEN HUNTER '1984 NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOW' INTERSECTION" AND ERECT APPROPRIATE SIGNS OR MARKERS AT THIS LOCATION CONTAINING THESE WORDS.

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The Concurrent Resolution was introduced and referred to the Committee on Transportation.

H. 5045 -- Rep. King: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME THE PORTION OF SQUIRE ROAD IN THE CITY OF ROCK HILL IN YORK COUNTY FROM ITS INTERSECTION WITH OGDEN ROAD TO ITS INTERSECTION WITH FALLS ROAD "ARCHBISHOP B.R. WILSON MEMORIAL ROAD" AND ERECT APPROPRIATE MARKERS OR SIGNS AT THIS LOCATION CONTAINING THESE WORDS.

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The Concurrent Resolution was introduced and referred to the Committee on Transportation.

H. 5046 -- Rep. Pedalino: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME THE PORTION OF UNITED STATES HIGHWAY 521 IN CLARENDON COUNTY FROM ITS INTERSECTION WITH HILL STREET TRAVELING NORTH TO THE MANNING CITY LIMIT

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"DAVID ARNOLD MCCABE SR. MEMORIAL HIGHWAY" AND ERECT APPROPRIATE SIGNS OR MARKERS AT THIS LOCATION CONTAINING THESE WORDS.

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The Concurrent Resolution was introduced and referred to the Committee on Transportation.

H. 5055 -- Reps. Kirby, Cox, Holman, Davis, M. M. Smith, J. Moore, Anderson and Pace: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME THE PORTION OF HARRISTOWN ROAD FROM ITS INTERSECTION WITH MENDELL RIVERS ROAD TO ITS INTERSECTION WITH HARRIS LANE IN THE TOWN OF ST. STEPHEN IN BERKELEY COUNTY "J.B. HARRIS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY" AND ERECT APPROPRIATE SIGNS OR MARKERS AT THIS LOCATION CONTAINING THESE WORDS.

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The Concurrent Resolution was introduced and referred to the Committee on Transportation.

H. 5086 -- Reps. Robbins, Gatch, Holman, Brewer and Ford: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME THE INTERSECTION OF UNITED STATES HIGHWAY 78 AND MALLARD ROAD IN THE TOWN OF JEDBURG IN DORCHESTER COUNTY "HERMAN ELROY MUCKENFUSS MEMORIAL INTERSECTION" AND ERECT APPROPRIATE SIGNS OR MARKERS AT THIS LOCATION CONTAINING THESE WORDS.

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The Concurrent Resolution was introduced and referred to the Committee on Transportation.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Senator CROMER from the Committee on Banking and Insurance submitted a favorable report on:

S. 619 -- Senators Gambrell and Turner: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 38-27-610, RELATING TO PRIORITY OF DISTRIBUTION FOR CLAIMS, SO AS TO ADD FUNDING AGREEMENTS.

Ordered for consideration tomorrow.

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Senator CROMER from the Committee on Banking and Insurance submitted a favorable with amendment report on:

S. 697 -- Senator Gambrell: A BILL TO TRANSFER THE SOUTH CAROLINA 211 NETWORK TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS; TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 37-6-515 SO AS TO CREATE THE SOUTH CAROLINA 211 NETWORK WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 1-11-770, RELATING TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA 211 NETWORK, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.

Ordered for consideration tomorrow.

Senator CROMER from the Committee on Banking and Insurance submitted a favorable report on:

S. 780 -- Senator Gambrell: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 37-23-20, RELATING TO HIGH-COST AND CONSUMER HOME LOANS DEFINITIONS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE CONVENTIONAL MORTGAGE RATE MEANS THE AVERAGE PRIME OFFER RATE.

Ordered for consideration tomorrow.

Senator CROMER from the Committee on Banking and Insurance submitted a favorable report on:

S. 787 -- Senator Gambrell: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 37-3-110 SO AS TO DEFINE BRIDGE LOANS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 37-3-402, RELATING TO BALLOON PAYMENTS, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO BRIDGE LOANS.

Ordered for consideration tomorrow.

Senator CROMER from the Committee on Banking and Insurance submitted a favorable with amendment report on:

S. 857 -- Senator Turner: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 38-1-20, RELATING TO INSURANCE LAW DEFINITIONS, SO AS TO DEFINE THE TERM "CONTINGENT DEFERRED ANNUITY"; BY AMENDING SECTION 38-69-220, RELATING TO EXCEPTIONS FROM OPERATION OF THE STANDARD NONFORFEITURE LAW FOR INDIVIDUAL DEFERRED ANNUITIES, SO AS TO ADD AN

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EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE STANDARD NONFORFEITURE LAW FOR INDIVIDUAL DEFERRED ANNUITIES, AND TO PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE MAY PROMULGATE REGULATIONS FOR NONFORFEITURE BENEFITS FOR CONTINGENT DEFERRED ANNUITIES IN THE DISCRETION OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 38-44-20, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS IN THE MANAGING GENERAL AGENTS ACT, SO AS TO MAKE A CONFORMING CHANGE.

Ordered for consideration tomorrow.

HOUSE CONCURRENCES

S. 691 -- Senator Martin: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NAME THE INTERSECTION OF WHITESTONE GLENDALE ROAD AND BETHESDA ROAD IN SPARTANBURG COUNTY "CHIEF ROBERT E. BROWN SR. MEMORIAL INTERSECTION" AND ERECT APPROPRIATE MARKERS OR SIGNS AT THIS LOCATION CONTAINING THE DESIGNATION.

Returned with concurrence.

Received as information.

S. 881 -- Senators Alexander and Young: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO WELCOME THE NATIONAL COMMANDER OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, THE HONORABLE DAN K. WILEY, AND TO INVITE HIM TO ADDRESS THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN JOINT SESSION IN THE CHAMBER OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AT 12:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2026.

Returned with concurrence.

Received as information.

S. 921 -- Senators Alexander, Rankin and Hutto: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO FIX ONE O'CLOCK P.M. ON MARCH 4, 2026, AS THE TIME TO ELECT A MEMBER TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION FOR THE FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT FOR A TERM EXPIRING ON JUNE 30, 2028; TO ELECT A MEMBER TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION FOR THE THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT FOR A TERM EXPIRING ON JUNE 30, 2028; TO ELECT A MEMBER TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE

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COMMISSION FOR THE FIFTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT FOR A TERM EXPIRING ON JUNE 30, 2028; AND TO ELECT A MEMBER TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION FOR THE SEVENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT FOR A TERM EXPIRING ON JUNE 30, 2028.

Returned with concurrence.

Received as information.

THE SENATE PROCEEDED TO A CALL OF THE UNCONTESTED LOCAL AND STATEWIDE CALENDAR.

CARRIED OVER

S. 76 -- Senators Hembree, Grooms, Young, Goldfinch, Sabb, Alexander, Kennedy, Cromer, Zell, Williams and Garrett: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 16-8-230, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS, SO AS TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE DEFINITIONS; BY AMENDING SECTION 16-8-240, RELATING TO USE OF OR THREAT OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE BY CRIMINAL GANG MEMBERS AND PENALTIES, SO AS TO ESTABLISH UNLAWFUL CRIMINAL GANG ACTIVITY; BY ADDING SECTION 16-8-245 SO AS TO PROVIDE ADMISSIBILITY OF CRIMINAL GANG AND CRIMINAL GANG ACTIVITY EVIDENCE DURING A TRIAL OR PROCEEDING; BY AMENDING SECTION 16-8-250, RELATING TO PREVENTING WITNESSES OR VICTIMS FROM TESTIFYING AND PENALTIES, SO AS TO PROVIDE A MECHANISM TO ABATE A PUBLIC NUISANCE OF REAL PROPERTY USED BY A CRIMINAL GANG; BY ADDING SECTION 16-8-275 SO AS TO PROVIDE ADMISSIBILITY IN A CRIMINAL PROCEEDING OF THE ACCUSED'S COMMISSION OF CRIMINAL GANG ACTIVITY; BY ADDING SECTION 16-8-520 SO AS TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE DEFINITIONS FOR THE ANTI-RACKETEERING ACT; BY ADDING SECTION 16-8-530 SO AS TO MAKE IT UNLAWFUL FOR ANY PERSON TO ENGAGE IN RACKETEERING ACTIVITY; BY ADDING SECTION 16-8-540 SO AS TO PROVIDE CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR ENGAGING IN RACKETEERING ACTIVITY; BY ADDING SECTION 16-8-550 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE CIRCUIT COURT MAY ENJOIN VIOLATIONS OF THE ANTI-RACKETEERING ACT BY ISSUING APPROPRIATE ORDERS; BY ADDING SECTION 16-8-560 SO AS TO ESTABLISH JURISDICTION FOR RACKETEERING

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ACTIVITY; BY ADDING SECTION 16-8-570 SO AS TO PROVIDE PROTECTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF INFORMANTS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 14-7-1630, RELATING TO JURISDICTION OF JURIES, NOTIFICATION TO IMPANEL JURIES, POWERS AND DUTIES OF IMPANELING AND PRESIDING JUDGES, THE TRANSFER OF INCOMPLETE INVESTIGATIONS, EFFECTIVE DATES AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT TO ORDERS OF JUDGE, AND APPEALS, SO AS TO ADD THE CRIME OF RACKETEERING TO THE JURISDICTION OF THE STATE GRAND JURY.

On motion of Senator HUTTO, the Bill was carried over.

CARRIED OVER

H. 4216 -- Reps. Bannister, Pope, G.M. Smith, B. Newton, Hiott, Murphy, Moss, Crawford, Bradley, Hager, M.M. Smith, Bustos, Landing, Lowe, Lawson, B.J. Cox, Jordan, Brittain, Forrest, Neese, Vaughan, Long, Montgomery, Davis, Sessions, C. Mitchell, Gatch, Herbkersman, Schuessler, Caskey, T. Moore, Hewitt, Erickson, Bowers, Gilliam, Teeple, Guest, Bailey, Guffey, Holman, Yow, Ballentine, Martin, Calhoon, Taylor, Hartnett, Robbins, Willis, B.L. Cox, Ligon, Brewer, Gagnon, Hartz, Hixon and Pedalino: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 12-6-510, RELATING TO INCOME TAX RATES FOR INDIVIDUALS, ESTATES, AND TRUSTS, SO AS TO REDUCE THE INCOME TAX RATE TO A FLAT 3.99 PERCENT AND TO SET FORTH STANDARDS FOR ADDITIONAL REDUCTIONS; BY AMENDING SECTION 12-6-50, RELATING TO INTERNAL REVENUE CODE SECTIONS SPECIFICALLY NOT ADOPTED BY THE STATE, SO AS TO NOT ADOPT THE FEDERAL STANDARD DEDUCTION AND ITEMIZED DEDUCTION; BY AMENDING SECTION 12-6-1140, RELATING TO INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS, SO AS TO ALLOW FOR A SOUTH CAROLINA INCOME ADJUSTED DEDUCTION (SCIAD); BY AMENDING SECTION 12-6-4910, RELATING TO PERSONS REQUIRED TO FILE A TAX RETURN, SO AS TO MAKE A CONFORMING CHANGE TO THE CALCULATION; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 12-6-1720, RELATING TO ADJUSTMENTS TO THE TAXABLE INCOME OF NONRESIDENT INDIVIDUALS, SO AS TO MAKE A CONFORMING CHANGE.

On motion of Senator PEELER, the Bill was carried over.

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CARRIED OVER

S. 718 -- Senator Garrett: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 45-2-65 SO AS TO PROVIDE THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH AN OPERATOR OF ANY RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARK MAY HAVE ANY TRANSIENT GUEST OF THE PARK REMOVED, AND TO PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR REMOVAL OF THE GUEST.

On motion of Senator HUTTO, the Bill was carried over.

READ THE SECOND TIME

S. 453 -- Senator Verdin: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING ARTICLE 5 TO TITLE 40, CHAPTER 15, SO AS TO PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR THE PRACTICE OF TELEDENTISTRY IN THIS STATE, TO OUTLINE UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, AND TO PROVIDE DEFINITIONS RELATED TO TELEDENTISTRY.

The Senate proceeded to a consideration of the Bill.

Senator DAVIS explained the Bill.

The question being the second reading of the Bill.

The "ayes" and "nays" were demanded and taken, resulting as follows:

Ayes 44; Nays 0

AYES

Adams	Alexander	Allen
Bennett	Blackmon	Bright
Campsen	Cash	Chaplin
Climer	Corbin	Cromer
Davis	Devine	Elliott
Gambrell	Garrett	Goldfinch
Graham	Hembree	Hutto
Jackson	Johnson	Kennedy
Kimbrell	Leber	Martin
Massey	Matthews	Ott
Peeler	Rankin	Reichenbach
Rice	Sabb	Stubbs
Sutton	Tedder	Turner
Verdin	Walker	Williams
Young	Zell	

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Total--44

NAYS

Total--0

The Bill was read the second time, passed and ordered to a third reading.

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT ADOPTED
CARRIED OVER**

S. 160 -- Senator Verdin: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS SO AS TO ENACT THE "DIETITIAN LICENSURE COMPACT ACT"; BY ADDING ARTICLE 1 TO CHAPTER 21, TITLE 40, SO AS TO PROVIDE THE PURPOSES, FUNCTIONS, OPERATIONS, AND DEFINITIONS FOR THE COMPACT; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-20-20, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS IN THE DIETETICS LICENSURE ACT, SO AS TO REVISE A DEFINITION; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 40-20-60, RELATING TO APPLICATIONS FOR LICENSURE UNDER THE DIETETICS LICENSURE ACT, SO AS TO REQUIRE CERTAIN CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS OF APPLICANTS.

The Senate proceeded to a consideration of the Bill.

The Committee on Medical Affairs proposed the following amendment (SR-160.KM0001), which was adopted:

Amend the bill, as and if amended, SECTION 2, by striking Section 40-21-140(A)(1) and inserting:

(1) hold a valid current registration that gives the applicant the right to use the term registered dietitian or;

Amend the bill further, SECTION 2, by striking Section 40-21-140(A)(2)(b) and (c) and inserting:

~~(b)~~(iii) a planned, documented, supervised practice experience in dietetics that is programmatically accredited by ACEND, or a dietetics accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education which the compact commission may by rule determine and which involves at least one thousand hours of practice experience under the supervision of a registered dietitian or a licensed dietitian; or

~~(e)~~(iv) successful completion of either the registration examination for dietitians administered by CDR, or a national credentialing examination for dietitians approved by the compact

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commission by rule, such completion being no more than five years prior to the date of the licensee's application for initial licensure and accompanied by a period of continuous licensure thereafter, all of which may be further governed by the rules of the compact commission;

Amend the bill further, SECTION 2, by striking Section 40-21-180(D)(2) and inserting:

(2) The executive committee shall be composed of nine members:

(a) the chair and vice chair of the compact commission, who shall be voting members of the executive committee;

(b) five voting members from the current membership of the compact commission, elected by the compact commission;

(c) one ex officio, nonvoting member from a recognized professional association representing dietitians; and

(d) one ex officio, nonvoting member from a recognized national credentialing organization for dietitians.

Amend the bill further, SECTION 2, by striking Section 40-21-230(B) and inserting:

(B) The provisions of this compact shall be severable if any phrase, clause, sentence, or provision is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be contrary to the constitution of any member state, a state seeking participation in the compact, or of the United States, or the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person, or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, the validity of the remainder of this compact and the applicability thereof to any other government, agency, person, or circumstances shall not be affected.

~~(B)(C) The~~ Notwithstanding the provisions contained in subsection (B), the compact commission may deny a state's participation in the compact or, in accordance with the requirements of Section 40-21-210(B), terminate a member state's participation in the compact, if it determines that a constitutional requirement of a member state is a material departure from the compact. Otherwise, if this compact shall be held to be contrary to the constitution of any member state, the compact shall remain in full force and effect as to the remaining member states and in full force and effect as to the member state affected as to all severable matters.

Amend the bill further, SECTION 4, by striking Section 40-20-60(B) and inserting:

(B) In addition to other requirements established by law, a person applying to be licensed as a dietitian, as defined in Section 40-20-20(2), or for participation in the Dietician Licensure Compact, must undergo a state criminal records check, supported by fingerprints, by the South

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Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED), and a national criminal records check, supported by fingerprints, by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The results of these criminal records checks must be reported to the department. SLED and the FBI are authorized to retain the fingerprints for identification and certification purposes and for notification of the department regarding criminal charges. Costs of conducting a criminal history background check must be borne by the applicant. The department shall keep information received pursuant to this section confidential, except that information relied upon in denying licensure may be disclosed to the board as may be necessary to support the administrative action.

Renumber sections to conform.

Amend title to conform.

Senator DAVIS explained the amendment.

The question being the adoption of the amendment.

The amendment was adopted.

The question then being the second reading of the Bill.

On motion of Senator DAVIS, the Bill was carried over.

CARRIED OVER

S. 905 -- Fish, Game and Forestry Committee: A JOINT RESOLUTION TO APPROVE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, RELATING TO SHELLFISH PERMIT APPLICATIONS, DESIGNATED AS REGULATION DOCUMENT NUMBER 5439, PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 23, TITLE 1 OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS.

The Senate proceeded to a consideration of the Resolution.

Senator CAMPSSEN explained the Resolution.

On motion of Senator CAMPSSEN, with unanimous consent, the Resolution was carried over until February 25, 2026.

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CARRIED OVER

S. 906 -- Fish, Game and Forestry Committee: A JOINT RESOLUTION TO APPROVE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, RELATING TO WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA REGULATIONS; TURKEY HUNTING RULES AND SEASONS, DESIGNATED AS REGULATION DOCUMENT NUMBER 5441, PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 23, TITLE 1 OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS.

The Senate proceeded to a consideration of the Resolution.

Senator CAMPSSEN explained the Resolution.

On motion of Senator CAMPSSEN, with unanimous consent, the Resolution was carried over until February 25, 2026.

CARRIED OVER

S. 907 -- Fish, Game and Forestry Committee: A JOINT RESOLUTION TO APPROVE REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, RELATING TO VERIFIABLE DOCUMENTATION, DESIGNATED AS REGULATION DOCUMENT NUMBER 5440, PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 23, TITLE 1 OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS.

The Senate proceeded to a consideration of the Resolution.

Senator CAMPSSEN explained the Resolution.

On motion of Senator CAMPSSEN, with unanimous consent, the Resolution was carried over until February 25, 2026.

POINT OF ORDER

S. 70 -- Senator Hembree: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 59-19-710 SO AS TO ENHANCE LOCAL SCHOOL GOVERNANCE; BY ADDING SECTION 59-19-720 SO AS TO PROVIDE DEFINITIONS; BY ADDING SECTION 59-19-730 SO AS TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT AND REVISE AS NECESSARY A MODEL CODE OF ETHICS FOR LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS, AND REQUIRE THAT A LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD SHALL ADOPT A LOCAL CODE OF ETHICS AT A

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REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING AND SUBMIT A COPY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WITHIN THIRTY DAYS OF ADOPTION; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 59-19-45, RELATING TO MANDATORY ORIENTATION FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARDS OF TRUSTEES AND COUNTY BOARDS OF EDUCATION, SO AS TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT A MODEL TRAINING PROGRAM, WHICH MUST INCLUDE A LOCAL TRAINING PROGRAM.

Point of Order

Senator MARTIN raised a Point of Order under Rule 39 that the Bill had not been on the desks of the members at least one day prior to second reading.

The PRESIDENT sustained the Point of Order.

POINT OF ORDER

S. 845 -- Senator Young: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 63-11-1930, RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE CHILD FATALITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SO AS TO ADD THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT; BY AMENDING SECTION 63-11-1930, SO AS TO INCLUDE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT, THE STATE CHILD ADVOCATE, A COUNTY CORONER OR MEDICAL EXAMINER, AND A SOLICITOR AS MEMBERS WHO WILL SERVE EX OFFICIO AND MAY APPOINT A DESIGNEE; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 63-11-1930, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE COMMITTEE MUST BE APPOINTED AND DULY QUALIFIED.

Point of Order

Senator MARTIN raised a Point of Order under Rule 39 that the Bill had not been on the desks of the members at least one day prior to second reading.

The PRESIDENT sustained the Point of Order.

POINT OF ORDER

S. 858 -- Senator Young: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 63-11-700,

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RELATING TO THE DIVISION FOR REVIEW OF THE FOSTER CARE OF CHILDREN'S BOARD, SO AS TO CHANGE THE STANDARDS FOR SERVING ON THE BOARD AND THE PROCEDURE FOR TERMS OF OFFICE; TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY TO ESTABLISH CERTAIN STANDARDS FOR LOCAL REVIEW BOARDS; BY AMENDING SECTION 63-11-710, RELATING TO LOCAL BOARDS FOR REVIEW, SO AS TO GIVE THE DIRECTOR AUTHORIZATION TO APPOINT OR REMOVE A MEMBER OF A LOCAL BOARD; BY AMENDING SECTION 63-11-740, RELATING TO MEETINGS OF LOCAL BOARDS AND STAFFING, SO AS TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO EACH LOCAL BOARD FOR MEETINGS; BY AMENDING SECTION 63-11-760, RELATING TO IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY, SO AS TO CLARIFY THAT TRAINING WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 63-11-770, RELATING TO COOPERATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES, SO AS TO INCLUDE ALL PUBLIC AGENCIES PROVIDING SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE.

Point of Order

Senator MARTIN raised a Point of Order under Rule 39 that the Bill had not been on the desks of the members at least one day prior to second reading.

The PRESIDENT sustained the Point of Order.

POINT OF ORDER

S. 868 -- Senators Elliott, Young, Kimbrell, Verdin, Rice and Stubbs: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 53-3-335 SO AS TO DESIGNATE JUNE FIRST OF EACH YEAR AS "GOLD SHIELD DAY" TO HONOR FIRST RESPONDERS WHO HAVE BEEN KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY AND THE SACRIFICE OF THEIR SURVIVING FAMILIES.

Point of Order

Senator MARTIN raised a Point of Order under Rule 39 that the Bill had not been on the desks of the members at least one day prior to second reading.

The PRESIDENT sustained the Point of Order.

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POINT OF ORDER

H. 3798 -- Reps. Murphy, G.M. Smith, Brewer, T. Moore, Guest, Hager, Yow, C. Mitchell, W. Newton, Lawson, Stavrinakis, Govan, Erickson, Bradley, Weeks, Hart, Williams, Rivers and Gilliard: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 25-1-180 SO AS TO PROVIDE CERTAIN CRITERIA FOR MILITARY CHAPLAINS, AND TO PROVIDE THAT MILITARY CHAPLAINS HAVE THE PRIVILEGE TO REFUSE TO DISCLOSE CERTAIN CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS.

Point of Order

Senator MARTIN raised a Point of Order under Rule 39 that the Bill had not been on the desks of the members at least one day prior to second reading.

The PRESIDENT sustained the Point of Order.

POINT OF ORDER

H. 3974 -- Reps. Calhoun, Bernstein, Erickson, Schuessler, Bauer, Guffey and McGinnis: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING ARTICLE 5 TO CHAPTER 10, TITLE 59 SO AS TO AUTHORIZE EVALUATORS TO EVALUATE PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR HEALTH, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, OR THERAPEUTIC NEEDS, TO AUTHORIZE PRIVATE PROVIDERS TO PROVIDE RELATED SERVICES AT SCHOOLS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY, TO SPECIFY THESE EVALUATIONS AND SERVICES ONLY MAY OCCUR UPON REQUEST OF THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF THE STUDENT, TO PROVIDE SCHOOL DISTRICTS MAY NOT PROHIBIT SUCH EVALUATIONS OR SERVICES IN SCHOOLS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY, TO PROVIDE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL ADOPT A RELATED MODEL POLICY, TO PROVIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MODEL POLICY, TO PROVIDE SCHOOL DISTRICTS SHALL ADOPT RELATED POLICIES, AND TO DEFINE NECESSARY TERMS.

Point of Order

Senator MARTIN raised a Point of Order under Rule 39 that the Bill had not been on the desks of the members at least one day prior to second reading.

The PRESIDENT sustained the Point of Order.

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POINT OF ORDER

H. 4257 -- Reps. J.E. Johnson, Lowe, C. Mitchell, Yow, Brittain, Jordan, B. Newton, Caskey, Gilliam, Rankin, Schuessler, Hayes, Guest, Crawford, Gagnon, McCabe, Pedalino and Hiott: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 59-5-65, RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH A UNIFORM SYSTEM OF COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ENFORCEMENT, SO AS TO PROVIDE THIS SYSTEM MUST REQUIRE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TO APPROVE STUDENT ABSENCES FOR PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED BY THE SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE ACTIVITY IS SANCTIONED BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE OR OTHER INTERSCHOLASTIC SANCTIONING ORGANIZATION; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 59-65-90, RELATING TO RULES AND REGULATIONS THAT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH TO DEFINE LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL ABSENCES UNDER COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE STATUTES, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.

Point of Order

Senator MARTIN raised a Point of Order under Rule 39 that the Bill had not been on the desks of the members at least one day prior to second reading.

The PRESIDENT sustained the Point of Order.

POINT OF ORDER

H. 4902 -- Reps. Hiott, G.M. Smith, Bannister, Rutherford, Brittain, Guest, Stavrinakis, Erickson, Caskey, Pope, Collins, B. Newton, Davis, Herbkersman, Hixon, Willis, Reese and Gilliard: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 59-158-50, RELATING TO AN EXEMPTION OF AN INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETE'S NAME, IMAGE, AND LIKENESS COMPENSATION CONTRACT DOCUMENTATION MAINTAINED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING FROM PUBLIC DISCLOSURE UNDER THE SOUTH CAROLINA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT, SO AS TO REMOVE AN EXCEPTION TO THE EXEMPTION, AND TO PROVIDE THAT RECORDS OF AGGREGATE REVENUE FUNDS

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EXPENDED FOR INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS REVENUE-SHARING PROGRAMS BY A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING EACH FISCAL YEAR ARE SUBJECT TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT SUBJECT TO EXCEPTIONS FROM SUCH DISCLOSURE FOR INDIVIDUAL ATHLETE PAYMENTS, SPORT-SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS, AND NEGOTIATION RECORDS.

Point of Order

Senator MARTIN raised a Point of Order under Rule 39 that the Bill had not been on the desks of the members at least one day prior to second reading.

The PRESIDENT sustained the Point of Order.

ADOPTED

H. 4121 -- Reps. Wooten, Caskey, Calhoun, Kilmartin, White and Forrest: A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PLACE APPROPRIATE MARKERS OR SIGNS FROM THE 220TH BLOCK TO THE 460TH BLOCK OF CEDARCREST DRIVE IN LEXINGTON COUNTY CONTAINING THE WORDS "DEDICATED IN THE HONOR OF THE VETERANS OF LEXINGTON COUNTY."

The Resolution was adopted, ordered returned to the House.

THE CALL OF THE UNCONTESTED CALENDAR HAVING BEEN COMPLETED, THE SENATE PROCEEDED TO THE MOTION PERIOD.

MOTION ADOPTED

At 12:16 P.M., on motion of Senator MASSEY, the Senate agreed to dispense with the balance of the Motion Period.

THE SENATE PROCEEDED TO THE INTERRUPTED DEBATE.

DEBATE INTERRUPTED

S. 768 -- Senators Peeler, Alexander, Kimbrell, Verdin, Massey, Hembree, Turner, Williams, Rice, Stubbs, Davis, Garrett, Campsen, Martin, Leber and Zell: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 12-37-250, RELATING TO THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION, SO AS TO INCREASE THE EXEMPTION TO ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND

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DOLLARS AND TO REDUCE THE AGE ELIGIBILITY TO SIXTY; BY AMENDING SECTION 12-37-266, RELATING TO THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION, SO AS TO MAKE A CONFORMING CHANGE; BY AMENDING SECTION 12-37-280, RELATING TO THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION, SO AS TO MAKE A CONFORMING CHANGE; BY AMENDING SECTION 12-37-290, RELATING TO THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION, SO AS TO MAKE A CONFORMING CHANGE; BY AMENDING SECTION 12-37-220, RELATING TO GENERAL EXEMPTION FROM TAXES, SO AS TO MAKE A CONFORMING CHANGE; BY AMENDING SECTION 11-11-150, RELATING TO DEDUCTIONS FOR THE TRUST FUND FOR TAX RELIEF, SO AS TO MAKE A CONFORMING CHANGE; AND BY REPEALING SECTION 12-37-245 RELATING TO THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION.

The Senate proceeded to a consideration of the Bill, the question being the second reading of the Bill.

Amendment No. 3

Senator BENNETT proposed the following amendment (SR-768.KM0001S), which was withdrawn:

Amend the bill, as and if amended, SECTION 1, by striking Section 12-37-253(A) and (B) and inserting:

(A) Any eligible person may claim an exemption from county, municipal, school and special assessment real property equal to one hundred ~~fifty~~ thousand dollars of the fair market value on the person's dwelling place. ~~A person may not claim this exemption and the exemption set forth in Section 12-37-250 and a person must be eligible for this exemption to claim the exemption set forth in Section 12-37-250.~~ For purposes of ~~eligibility~~, application, and reimbursement, this exemption must be administered in the same manner as the exemption allowed pursuant to Section 12-37-250, including the application of other laws affecting the exemption allowed pursuant to Section 12-37-250, mutatis mutandis. ~~For a person eligible for this exemption pursuant to subsection (B)(1), the previous application for the exemption allowed pursuant to Section 12-37-250 must be considered the application for this exemption.~~

(B) A person becomes eligible for this ~~additional~~ exemption if the person has been a resident of this State for at least one year and is between eighteen and thirty years old.

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~~(1) if the person was eligible to claim the exemption pursuant to Section 12-37-250 in property tax year 2025 and remains eligible thereafter; or~~

~~(2)(a) when the person meets the requirements of Section 12-37-250(A)(1)(i), (ii), or (iii); and~~

~~(b) when the person has been a resident of this State for the entire five property tax years immediately preceding the application.~~

~~Amend~~ the bill further, by striking SECTION 2 and inserting:

SECTION X. Section 12-37-250(A)(1) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

(A)(1)(a) The first ~~fifty one hundred~~ thousand dollars of the fair market value of the dwelling place of a person is exempt from county, municipal, school, and special assessment real estate property taxes when the person:

(i) has been a resident of this State for at least ~~one year~~ five years and has reached the age of sixty-five years on or before December thirty-first;

(ii) has been classified as totally and permanently disabled by a state or federal agency having the function of classifying persons; ~~or~~

(iii) is legally blind as defined in Section 43-25-20, preceding the tax year in which the exemption is claimed and holds complete fee simple title or a life estate to the dwelling place. A person claiming to be totally and permanently disabled, but who has not been classified by one of the agencies, may apply to the state agency of Vocational Rehabilitation. The agency shall make an evaluation of the person using its own standards; ~~or~~

(iv) the person was eligible to claim the exemption provided in this section in property tax year 2025 and remains eligible thereafter.

(b) By ordinance, a governing body of a county may increase the exemption allowed by this section, however, any taxes not collected as a result of the increase in the exemption are not eligible for reimbursement.

SECTION X. Section 12-37-3140 of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

Section 12-37-3140. (A)(1) For property tax years beginning after ~~2006~~ 2025 , the fair market value of real property is its fair market value applicable for the later of:

(a) the base year, as defined in subsection ~~(C)~~ (B) of this section;

(b) December thirty-first of the year in which an assessable transfer of interest has occurred;

(c) as determined on appeal; or

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(d) as it may be adjusted as determined in a countywide reassessment program conducted pursuant to Section 12-43-217, but limited to increases in such value as provided in ~~subsection (B)~~ [Article 27](#) of this ~~section~~ [chapter](#).

(2) To the fair market value of real property as determined at the time provided in item (1) of this subsection, there must be added the fair market value of subsequent improvements and additions to the property.

~~—(B) Any increase in the fair market value of real property attributable to the periodic countywide appraisal and equalization program implemented pursuant to Section 12-43-217 is limited to fifteen percent within a five-year period to the otherwise applicable fair market value. This limit must be calculated on the land and improvements as a whole. However, this limit does not apply to the fair market value of additions or improvements to real property in the year those additions or improvements are first subject to property tax, nor do they apply to the fair market value of real property when an assessable transfer of interest occurred in the year that the transfer value is first subject to tax.~~

~~(C)~~ [\(B\)](#) For purposes of determining a “base year” fair market value pursuant to this section, the fair market value of real property is its appraised value applicable for property tax year 2007.

~~(D)~~ [\(C\)](#) Real property valued by the unit valuation concept is excluded from the limits provided pursuant to subsection (B) of this section.

~~(E)~~ [\(D\)](#) Value attributable to additions and improvements, and changes in value resulting from assessable transfers of interest occurring in a property tax year are first subject to property tax in the following tax year except as provided pursuant to Section 12-37-670(B).

SECTION X. Chapter 37, Title 12 of the S.C. Code is amended by adding:

__Article 27

__Taxpayer Transparency and Infrastructure Accountability

Section 12-37-3310. For the purposes of this article, “eligible new growth” means the fair market value of all new construction, improvements, and property subject to an assessable transfer of interest during the preceding year.

Section 12-37-3320. (A) In conjunction with the quadrennial reassessment, the county auditor in each county shall calculate a certified revenue-neutral rate for each taxing entity with the county. The rate shall be the millage required to generate the same total property tax revenue as the preceding year based solely on the assessed value of preexisting property. The county auditor shall exclude the value of all eligible new growth from the calculation’s denominator.

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(B) Taxing entities may apply the current millage rate to eligible new growth to capture incremental revenue, which shall be prioritized for infrastructure and emergency services necessitated by the new growth.

Section 12-37-3330. (A) If a taxing entity proposes a millage exceeding the certified revenue-neutral rate, the taxing entity must provide direct-mail notice to every affected property owner. The notice must include a bill-to-bill comparison of the property owner's taxes at the neutral rate to the proposed rate.

(B) A proposed millage exceeding the certified revenue-neutral rate may not be imposed by a taxing entity without a public, recorded vote following a separate public hearing concerning the proposed rate.

(C) At least thirty days prior to voting to impose a proposed millage in excess of the certified revenue-neutral rate, the taxing entity proposing the excess millage shall hold a public hearing concerning the proposed millage. The date, time, and location of the public hearing must be included in the direct-mail notice required pursuant to subsection (A) and must be posted in a prominent place on the taxing entity's website.

SECTION X. Section 11-11-150(A)(1) and (2) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

(A) In calculating estimated state individual and corporate income tax revenues for a fiscal year the Board of Economic Advisors shall deduct amounts sufficient to pay the reimbursement required pursuant to:

(1) ~~Reserved~~ [Section 12-37-270 for the homestead exemption for persons between the ages of eighteen and thirty, but not including the portion attributable to school operating millage pursuant to Section 12-37-253;](#)

(2) Section 12-37-270 for the homestead exemption for persons over age sixty-five or disabled, but not including the portion attributable to school operating millage [pursuant to Section 12-37-250;](#)

SECTION X. Section 12-37-270(A) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

(A) As provided in Section 11-11-150, there must be credited to the Trust Fund for Tax Relief in a fiscal year an amount sufficient to pay the reimbursement provided by this section. From the trust fund, the department annually shall pay to the county treasurer of the county in which the dwelling is situate for the account of each county, school district, or special district in it a sum equal to the amount of taxes that was not collected for the county, school district, or special district by reason of the exemption provided for in Section 12-37-250 [and Section 12-37-253 for the property tax year beginning after 2025. Thereafter, the reimbursement rate shall decrease by ten percentage points each property](#)

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tax year, calculated from the initial reimbursement rate of one hundred percent, until the reimbursement rate equals fifty percent. The department also annually, from the trust fund, shall pay to the governing body of the municipality in which the dwelling is situate a sum equal to the amount of taxes that was not collected for the municipality by reason of the exemption provided for in Section 12-37-250 and Section 12-37-253 property tax years beginning after 2025. Thereafter, the reimbursement rate shall decrease by ten percentage points each property tax year, calculated from the initial reimbursement rate of one hundred percent, until the reimbursement rate equals fifty percent. However, no reimbursement must be paid pursuant to this section for revenue for school operations not collected because of the exemption allowed pursuant to Section 12-37-250. The county treasurer and municipal governing body shall furnish the department on or before April first following the tax year, or during an extension authorized by the department not to exceed sixty days, an accounting or statement as prescribed by the department that reflects the amount of county, municipal, school district, or special district taxes that was not collected because of the exemption. Funds paid by the department as the result of an erroneous or improper application must be returned to the department for deposit in the general fund of the State.

Renumber sections to conform.

Amend title to conform.

Senator BENNETT explained the amendment.

On motion of Senator BENNETT, with unanimous consent, Amendment No. 3 was withdrawn.

Debate was interrupted by adjournment.

REPORT

State Regulation of Public Utilities Review Committee

Sen. Thomas C. Alexander, Chairman

Rep. William G. Herbkersman, Vice Chairman

Rep. Gil Gatch

Sen. C. Bradley Hutto

Regina Lewis

Floyd Nicholson

Sen. Luke A. Rankin, Sr.

Rep. J. Todd Rutherford

Regina Lewis



Breeden John

Committee Counsel

Bryan Triplett

Committee Counsel

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2026

Post Office Box 142
Columbia, South Carolina 29202
(803) 212-6216

February 11, 2026

Members of the South Carolina General Assembly
Columbia, South Carolina

Dear Fellow Members:

Enclosed is the State Regulation of Public Utilities Review Committee's Report as to Qualifications of Candidates for Seats 1, 3, 5 and 7 of the Public Service Commission (Commission). The report is designed to provide you with information on the candidates found qualified and nominated by the Review Committee. The Review Committee is charged with nominating up to three candidates for each seat on the Commission. In accordance with this mandate, the Review Committee thoroughly investigated each candidate with respect to his or her suitability for service on the Commission.

The Review Committee held public hearings on December 9, 2025, to question the candidates and consider the qualifications of each candidate. The Review Committee held an additional public hearing on February 3, 2026, to further question a candidate. A transcript of the oral examination of the candidates, as well as each candidate's edited Personal Data Questionnaire, is available for review on the Review Committee's website at:

<https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/PublicUtilitiesReviewComm/2025PublicServiceCommissionScreeningInfo.php>

The Review Committee found a total of ten candidates qualified and nominated for consideration by the General Assembly. The Review Committee's finding that a candidate is qualified and nominated means that the candidate satisfies the constitutional and statutory criteria for service on the Commission and the Review Committee's evaluative criteria.

Candidates are prohibited from asking for your commitment until Friday, February 13, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. Members of the General Assembly are not permitted to issue letters of introduction,

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announcements of candidacy, or statements detailing a candidate's qualifications on behalf of a candidate, and are not permitted to offer a pledge to vote for a candidate until 12:00 p.m. on Friday, February 13, 2026.

If you find a candidate violating the pledging prohibitions or if you have questions about this report, please contact Breeden John at (803) 212-6216 or Bryan Triplett at (803) 734-3015.

Sincerely,
Thomas C. Alexander

**REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT AS TO THE QUALIFICATIONS
OF CANDIDATES FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION,
SEATS 1, 3, 5, AND 7**

INTRODUCTION

Section 58-3-530(1)(a) of the South Carolina Code of Laws charges the State Regulation of Public Utilities Review Committee ("Review Committee") with the duty to nominate candidates for membership on the South Carolina Public Service Commission ("Commission"). The terms for Commission Seats 1, 3, 5, and 7 expired on June 30, 2024.

The Review Committee began the screening process on October 1, 2025, with press releases regarding the positions. A total of eleven candidates submitted applications by the application deadline of October 24, 2025. One of these candidates withdrew from consideration following the Review Committee's public hearings on December 9, 2025. After the public hearings concluded, the Review Committee found a total of ten candidates qualified and nominated for consideration by the General Assembly.

The Review Committee conducted background investigations of each candidate, including credit, driver's license, and law enforcement checks. It gave a written examination to determine the level of knowledge that each candidate has with respect to substantive public utility issues, ethical constraints applicable to the Commission, and the operations of the Commission. During the public hearings, each candidate was questioned and given an opportunity to make statements as to his or her qualifications and desire to serve as a Commissioner.

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Each candidate was also questioned and given an opportunity to discuss matters from his or her background check; matters of a private or confidential nature were discussed in executive session.

LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS

Pursuant to Section 58-3-20(A), members of the Commission must have the following qualifications:

- (1) a baccalaureate or more advanced degree; and
- (2) a background of substantial duration and an expertise in at least one of the following areas:
 - (a) energy;
 - (b) telecommunications;
 - (c) consumer protection and advocacy;
 - (d) water and wastewater;
 - (e) finance, economics, and statistics;
 - (f) accounting;
 - (g) engineering; or
 - (h) law.

The Review Committee is also required to consider: “(1) the ability, dedication, compassion, common sense, and integrity of the candidates; and (2) the race and gender of the candidates and other demographic factors to assure nondiscrimination to the greatest extent possible of all segments of the population of the State.” S.C. Code Ann. §58-3-560. The determination of legal qualifications includes a determination of the candidate’s residence in the appropriate Public Service Commission district as established by Section 58-3-20, the candidate’s eligibility for election as determined by Section 58-3-24, and the candidate’s compliance with constitutional provisions limiting election to those persons eligible to be electors of this State.

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §58-3-530, the annual performance review of Commissioners seeking reelection must be made a part of the Commissioner’s record for consideration if the Commissioner seeks reelection. These performance evaluations are attached to this report as exhibits.

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

To determine fitness beyond mere legal qualifications, the Review Committee considered each candidate’s experience, temperament,

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compliance with and knowledge of legal and ethical constraints on public service, knowledge of Commission operations, demonstrated or potential aptitude for meaningful leadership and/or service at the Commission, and demonstrated integrity, including the handling of personal financial affairs. The Review Committee considered each candidate as a whole in making a determination of qualified and nominated.

Experience

Section 58-3-20 requires that Commissioners have a background of substantial duration and an expertise in energy; telecommunications; consumer protection and advocacy; water and wastewater; finance, economics, and statistics; accounting; engineering; or law. The Review Committee considered not only whether a candidate has succeeded in one of these fields but also whether the candidate has the capability of transferring this success and knowledge to the operations of the Commission. The Review Committee's transcript contains each applicant's background and employment history.

Temperament

The Review Committee sought to determine whether a candidate's sense of the role he or she is to fill on the Commission is such that his or her work will be productive, proactive, and protective of the interests of all South Carolinians.

Compliance with and Knowledge of Legal and Ethical Constraints

Section 58-3-30 requires that Commissioners adhere to the State Ethics Act and the Judicial Code of Conduct. The Review Committee believes that not only must the candidates be aware of the legal and ethical constraints, they must have conducted and comported themselves with the highest regard for ethics in their actions.

Potential Aptitude for Meaningful Leadership and/or Service at the Public Service Commission

The Review Committee believes that the Commission should have strong leadership, work toward common goals, have a positive influence on employees, and ensure that parties and persons appearing before the Commission are treated fairly and impartially. The Review Committee therefore sought to gauge each candidate's potential aptitude to serve as a leader and/or as a Commissioner supporting the goals and mission of the agency.

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Integrity

Candidates must assure the Review Committee that their word is their bond. The Code of Judicial Conduct requires, among other factors, that Commissioners and candidates handle their finances in a responsible manner. The Review Committee therefore considered the way each candidate has managed his or her financial affairs.

Substantive Knowledge of Commission Operations

The Review Committee believes that every candidate, whether incumbent or non-incumbent, must demonstrate some basic understanding of the role of the Commission and its operations. It would be unfair, however, to require non-incumbents to have accumulated a wealth of knowledge about Commission operations specifically, or regulated utilities generally. Unlike incumbent Commissioners, challengers have not had the benefit of a compensated opportunity to educate themselves in hearings or through conversations with Commission staff. The Review Committee expects incumbents and others who have substantial experience appearing before the Commission to be able to discuss these matters with a greater fluency than those persons who have, to date, committed themselves to other employment. The Review Committee emphasizes that the substantive knowledge findings contained in this report are a measure of a candidate's knowledge at the time of his or her candidacy. The findings are not necessarily indicative of a candidate's ability to subsequently master Commission operations and the multitude of issues relating thereto.

FINDINGS AS TO QUALIFICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

The Review Committee screened a total of eleven candidates for Seats 1, 3, 5, and 7 on December 9, 2025. In accordance with Section 58-3-530(1)(a), the Review Committee may nominate up to three candidates per seat to be elected by the General Assembly. The Review Committee found the following ten candidates qualified and nominated them for election to the South Carolina Public Service Commission:

**SEAT 1 Eugene Hennelly
Carolyn L. "Carolee" Williams**

**SEAT 3 Bjorn J. Brooks
Stephen "Mike" Caston**

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**SEAT 5 James C. “Jim” Reno
Headen B. Thomas
Swain E. Whitfield**

**SEAT 7 Clint A. Elliott
Kenneth R. Moss
Delton W. Powers, Jr.**

This report provides a summary of qualifications for the candidates found qualified and nominated. More detailed information about each candidate can be found in the screening transcripts at: <https://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/PublicUtilitiesReviewComm/2025PublicServiceCommissionScreeningInfo.php>

EXHIBIT 1

**CANDIDATES FOUND
QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED**

**EUGENE HENNELLY
SEAT 1**

Review Committee Finding: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED

Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work Experience:

Mr. Hennelly earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration (Finance, Economics) from the University of South Carolina in 2008.

Mr. Hennelly co-founded Nebula Energy / Orion Digital Infrastructure in January 2023, where he currently works as Vice President of Investments. He previously worked for Schonfield Strategic Advisors as an Investment Analyst (2020-2022); Millenium Management / Fifth Set Capital as an Investment Analyst (2019-2020); Balyasny Asset Management as an Investment Analyst (2018-2019); Guggenheim Partners as Vice President of Power and Utilities Equity Research (2015-2018); and Consolidated Edison, Inc., as a Management Associate before being promoted to Senior Analyst of Strategic Planning (2008-2015).

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Test Score: 72

CAROLYN L. "CAROLEE" WILLIAMS
SEAT 1

Review Committee Finding: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED

Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work Experience:

Mrs. Williams earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Wake Forest University in 1979 and a Master's degree in Urban and Environmental Planning from the University of Virginia in 1982.

Mrs. Williams is the current Commissioner for District 1 on the South Carolina Public Service Commission. She was first elected in 2020 and her current term expired June 30, 2024. She was an unsuccessful candidate for District 1 on the Public Service Commission in 2013 and 2016. The Public Utilities Review Committee found Mrs. Williams qualified and nominated for consideration by the General Assembly in both 2013 and 2016.

Mrs. Williams's career began in 1982 working as a Planner for the Department of Planning and Urban Development for the City of Charleston, SC until 1985. She then worked as a Planner for the City Planning Department for the City of Cincinnati, OH (1985-1986); Planning Administrator for the Department of Planning and Urban Development for the City of Charleston, SC (1986-1992); Project Manager for the Department of Planning, Preservation and Sustainability for the City of Charleston, SC (1992-2017); and Lowcountry Field Director and Land and Water Program Director for the Conservation Voters of South Carolina (2017-2019).

Mrs. Williams is a member of the American Planning Association, South Carolina Planning Association, American Institute of Certified Planners, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, and the Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.

Mrs. Williams also has recently been a member of the Metanoia Circle, Providence Baptist Church, Leadership South Carolina, the Riley Institute as a Diversity Leadership Fellow, Habitat for Humanity, American Red Cross, Charleston Waterkeeper, and the Old Windermere

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Neighborhood Association Council. She also works part-time as House Manager for Spoleto Festival USA (2015-present).

Test Score: 82

BJORN J. BROOKS

SEAT 3

Review Committee Findings: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED
Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work
Experience:

Mr. Brooks earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Iowa State University in 2000. He also earned a Master of Science degree in Paleobiology from the University of Bristol in 2002 and earned a PhD in Geology from Iowa State University in 2009.

Mr. Brooks works for Carbon Solutions, LLC as a Research Scientist, where since 2023 he has led data/software analyses for decarbonization, supporting utilities and regulators on reliability, affordability, and emissions by translating technical results into actionable energy planning. He previously worked as a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2009-2011); Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Illinois (2011-2013); Research Fellow for the USDA Forest Service (2014-2020); Research Associate at NC State University/North Carolina Institute for Climate Studies; and as a Data Scientist for Living Carbon (2021-2023).

Mr. Brooks volunteers with BabyRead, an infant education and reading program in Oconee County, SC, and as a volunteer scientist at the Clemson University Science Outreach Center.

Test Score: 57

STEPHEN “MIKE” CASTON

SEAT 3

Review Committee Findings: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED

Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work
Experience:

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Mr. Caston earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from Clemson University in 1978. Mr. Caston also completed 6 hours of graduate courses in Reinforced Concrete Design and Prestressed Concrete Design at Clemson University in 1979. Mr. Caston later earned a Master of Public Administration in 2004 from the Clemson University/University of South Carolina Joint Master Program.

Mr. Caston is the current Commissioner for District 3 on the South Carolina Public Service Commission. He was first elected in 2020 and his current term expired June 30, 2024. Mr. Caston also currently operates Mike Caston Consulting, LLC (2019-present) on a part-time basis.

Mr. Caston's career began in 1978 as an Engineer for James T. Triplet and L.R. Ryan Bridge Contractors. He then worked as a Design Engineer and Contract Construction Manager for Enwright Associates (1978-1988); Project Engineer for Black & Veatch (1988-1991); District Engineer for SJWD Water District (1991-1997) before becoming SJWD Water District's General Manager and CEO (1997-2019).

Mr. Caston is a member of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, and is a Life Member of the Water Environment Association of South Carolina. He is also a member of NewSpring Church (Clemson Campus), the Clemson Fellowship Club, and Tiger Lettermen.

Test Score: 77

JAMES C. "JIM" RENO
SEAT 5

Review Committee Findings: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED

Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work Experience:

Mr. Reno earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management (Finance) from the University of Tennessee in 1985. He earned a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1988.

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Mr. Reno has been employed by First Citizens Bank and Trust Company in Rock Hill, SC as Vice President and Business Banker since 2021. In his banking career, Mr. Reno previously worked for PNC Bank as Vice-President and SBA Business Development Officer (2018-2021); Park Sterling Bank/Provident Community Bank as Vice-President/Senior Vice-President and Business Banker (2007-2017); Clover Community Bank as Vice President and Commercial Loan Officer (2006-2007); and First Citizens Bank and Trust Company of S.C. as Assistant Vice-President and Commercial Loan Officer (2003-2006).

Mr. Reno's legal career included employment with Harper Peterson Rogers & Reno, P.A. as Partner (1996-2003); Robinson Bradshaw & Hinson P.A. as an Associate Attorney (1991-1996); and Roddey, Carpenter & White P.A. as an Associate Attorney (1988-1991).

Mr. Reno is a member of Rock Hill City Council where he has served since 1997. His current term ends January 2026.

Mr. Reno is a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church where he serves as an Elder and on the Session Leadership Team. He currently serves on the Rock Hill Economic Development Corporation as a Board Member and is a member of the Executive Council. Mr. Reno also is a Voting Member on the Rock Hill Fort Mill Area Transportation Committee and the Winthrop University Small Business Development Council Advisory Board. He also served on the Early Learning Partnership of York County Advisory Board (2022-2024).

Test Score: 70

HEADEN B. THOMAS
SEAT 5

Review Committee Findings: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED

Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work Experience:

Mr. Thomas earned a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Wofford College in 1973 and a Master of Business Administration from Winthrop College in 1979.

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Mr. Thomas is the current Commissioner for District 5 on the South Carolina Public Service Commission. He was first elected in 2020 and his current term expired June 30, 2024.

Mr. Thomas was a candidate for the Public Service Commission, District 5 in 2012 and 2013 and was found qualified but withdrew from consideration prior to the election by the General Assembly.

Prior to serving on the Commission, Mr. Thomas worked for Manufacturer's Supply Company (1973-1977); Moore, Glover, Pierce and Harrell, CPA's (1978-1979); Deloitte Haskins & Sells (1979-1982); Piedmont Natural Gas Company (1983-2006); Heritage Bluff Preserve, LLC (2007-2021 (part-time)); Moore & Moore CPA's, P.A (2009-2022 (part-time)); and Edisto Heritage Development, Inc. (2010-2021 (part time)). .

Mr. Thomas is a member of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and the Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners. He is also a member of Saint Johns United Methodist Church (Rock Hill, SC) and Cotillion Club (Rock Hill, SC).

Test Score: 80

SWAIN E. WHITFIELD
SEAT 5

Review Committee Findings: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED

Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work Experience:

Mr. Whitfield attended Erskine College for one year before transferring to Kennesaw College in 1982. He remained there for one year before transferring to the University of Georgia in 1983, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Geography in 1986.

Mr. Whitfield was elected to the Public Service Commission in 2008 and was reelected in 2013 and 2016, serving as Chairman from 2016 to 2018. Mr. Whitfield was found unqualified by the Public Utilities Review Committee in 2020 and he was not nominated for consideration by the General Assembly.

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Mr. Whitfield is currently employed as an independent utility regulatory consultant with Swain Whitfield Consulting, which he founded in November 2021. Mr. Whitfield's career began in 1986 with Laidlaw Carriers, Inc. Mr. Whitfield then worked as Operations Manager for Youmans Transportation, Inc. (1987-1990); Senn Trucking Company (1990-1991); and founded Whitfield Transportation, Inc., which he operated from 1991-2008. Following his service on the Public Service Commission, Mr. Whitfield worked as Director of Business Development for Alliance Consulting Engineers, Inc. (November 2020-November 2021) before starting his consulting business. He also is the owner of Heritage Wateree, LLC.

Mr. Whitfield has served on Winnsboro City Council (1995-1999); Fairfield County Substance Abuse Commission (1994-1996); and John De La Howe School Board of Trustees (2006-2008). He was an unsuccessful candidate for SC House of Representatives Seat 41 (1992) and SC House of Representatives Seat 77 (2004).

Mr. Whitfield is a member of Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce, Association of American Geographers (former member), Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, Gas Technology Institute, and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.

Mr. Whitfield also has recently been a member of Centennial Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church as an elder, Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce, Blackstock Young Farmers, and Phi Kappa Tau Fraternity.

Test Score: 90

CLINT A. ELLIOTT
SEAT 7

Review Committee Findings: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED

Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work Experience:

Mr. Elliott earned a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology from Clemson University in 1993.

Mr. Elliott currently works as a Lab Superintendent at Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority where he has been employed since 2006. Mr.

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Elliott previously worked as a Chemist and Lab Supervisor for the City of Myrtle Beach Surface Water Treatment Facility (1998-2006). He has also worked at DHEC as a Microbiologist in the Analytical Services Division of Environmental Microbiology (1995-1998), and as a Microbiologist in the Newborn Screening Section Division of Analytical Chemistry (1994-1995). While attending college, Mr. Elliott worked as a Computer Technical Services Student Supervisor in the Consulting and Technical Services Department at Clemson University.

Mr. Elliott was an unsuccessful candidate for Seat 7 on the South Carolina Public Service Commission in 2020. The Public Utilities Review Committee found Mr. Elliott Qualified and Nominated for consideration by the General Assembly.

Mr. Elliott was elected to Georgetown County Council in January 2023 where he has served as Chair since January 2025. He was also appointed to the State Drought Response Committee representing the Northeast Drought Management Area for the Municipalities in 2020.

Mr. Elliott is a Board Member of the Waccamaw Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association. As an employee of Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority, Mr. Elliott is considered a member of the following organizations (individual membership not obtained): American Water Works Association; Water Environment Association of South Carolina; Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies; American Water Works Association of South Carolina; South Carolina Association of Special Purpose Districts; and the South Carolina Water Quality Association.

Test Score: 71

KENNETH R. MOSS
SEAT 7

Review Committee Findings: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED

Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work Experience:

Mr. Moss earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from N.C. State University in 1989. He earned a Master of Engineering in Electrical Engineering from the University of South Carolina in 1997

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and a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1997.

Mr. Moss is the Managing Partner for Wright, Worley, Pope, Ekster & Moss, PLLC f/k/a The McGougan Law Firm, LLC where he has been employed since 2001. He is also General Counsel to Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc. (2019-present) where he is a registered lobbyist.

Mr. Moss's career began as an Associate Engineer in Power Supply Planning for Santee Cooper (1991-1997). He has also worked as Deputy County Attorney for Horry County (1997-1999); Associate Attorney for Jeffcoat, Pike, and Napier, LLC (1999-2001); Town Attorney for the Town of Surfside Beach (2010-2019); City Attorney for the City of Loris (2019-2024).

Mr. Moss is the owner and President of Kenneth R. Moss, PC and is the sole member of North-South Title Agency, LLC, both of which are affiliated with Wright, Worley, Pope, Ekster & Moss, PLLC. He is also the sole member of Gurganus Feed & Grain, LLC and the sole member of Antioch Farms, LLC and its related limited liability companies McNabb Shortcutt, LLC, Edgefield, LLC, and Magnolia Ridge, LLC. He is also a Manager Member of B&M Properties of the Carolinas, LLC.

Mr. Moss currently serves as a Trustee on the Southeastern Community College Foundation Board of Trustees.

Test Score: 74

DELTON W. POWERS, JR.
SEAT 7

Review Committee Findings: QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED

Personal Information, Educational Background, and Work Experience:

Mr. Powers earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance and Banking from the University of South Carolina in 1974. He earned a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1977.

Mr. Powers is the current Commissioner for District 7 on the South Carolina Public Service Commission. He was first elected in 2020 and

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his current term expired June 30, 2024. He has served as Chairman of the Commission since 2024.

Prior to serving on the Commission, Mr. Powers was the owner of Powers Law Firm, PC (1994-2020). From 2002 through 2008, he combined his firm with another to create Joye, Locklair, and Powers, and he handled civil, criminal, and Family Court matters. He was a mediator and handled mediations in Horry and Florence Counties. From 1992 through 1998, he was a Special Prosecutor for the Fourth Circuit and was responsible for Marlboro County criminal cases. He also served as a DSS contract attorney.

From 1984 to 1992 he was a partner in Rogers and Powers, PA, and practiced criminal, civil, and family law. From 1982 to 1984, Mr. Powers was the Executive Director of Legal Services of the Fourth Circuit. From 1980 to 1982, he was an associate attorney with John I. Rogers, III, in Bennettsville, SC, and from 1978 to 1980, Mr. Powers was an Assistant Solicitor in the Fourth Circuit.

Mr. Powers currently serves on the Supreme Court Commission on Lawyer Conduct as appointed by the SC Supreme Court in 2007. He has previously served on the SC Bar Lawyer Fee Dispute Committee, as a Hearing Officer for the Department of Revenue on Alcoholic Beverage applications, and was appointed to serve as Magistrate in Marlboro County (2018-2019). Mr. Powers was elected by the General Assembly to serve on the South Carolina Coastal Council (1985-1993) and its successor agency, the Office of Coastal Resource Management (1997-2005).

Mr. Powers is a member of the South Carolina Bar Association, the Pee Dee Inn of Court, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners Board of Directors, the Southeastern Board of Utility Regulatory Commissioners, and the New Mexico State University School of Utility Finance.

Mr. Powers was an unsuccessful candidate for Family Court Judgeship in 2017. He was found qualified and nominated by the Judicial Merit Selection Commission for consideration by the General Assembly.

Test Score: 82

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Motion Adopted

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

MOTION ADOPTED

On motion of Senator ALEXANDER, with unanimous consent, the Senate stood adjourned out of respect to the memory of Mr. George U. Bennett of Clemson, S.C. George was a graduate of Clemson University where he was very involved in campus life. He and his father donated the cannon that is still fired after each touchdown. George served two years in the United States Army before beginning a career with Exxon which took him all over the country. He decided to return to Clemson to become the Alumni Field Representative and later the Executive Director of IPTAY. George was an active member of First Baptist Church and enjoyed attending sporting events and spending time with his family. George was a loving husband, devoted father and doting grandfather who will be dearly missed.

and

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MOTION ADOPTED

On motion of Senator ALEXANDER, with unanimous consent, the Senate stood adjourned out of respect to the memory of Mrs. Nancy Lea Moser Bennett of Clemson, S.C. Nancy was the beloved wife of George Bennett and passed away six days after her husband. Nancy was a graduate of Lenoir Rhyne College and received her master's degree from Clemson University. She taught elementary school before leading the gifted and talented program for the Oconee County school district. Nancy also worked for the Clemson University Alumni Association and the Furman University Continuing Education Department. She was involved in many organizations including Clemson University Women's Club, Clemson Garden Club and Tea & Talk book club. Nancy volunteered at Clemson Community Care and for Clemson Downs retirement community. She served twelve years on Clemson City Council and served on the board of directors at the People's National Bank and Palmetto Health Easley Baptist Foundation as well as serving in various capacities at Clemson First Baptist Church. Nancy was an avid bridge player, insatiable reader and faithful supporter of Clemson. Nancy was a loving wife, devoted mother and doting grandmother who will be dearly missed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 1:15 P.M., on motion of Senator MASSEY, the Senate adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11:00 A.M. under the provisions of Rule 1 for the purpose of taking up local matters and uncontested matters which have previously received unanimous consent to be taken up.

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