

## **Legislative Updates of interest for Higher Education Week of Feb. 16-20, 2009**

**Budget Update:** The House Ways and Means Committee approved its budget recommendations by Thursday. The budget adopted by Ways and Means incorporated spending of anticipated federal funds South Carolina may receive under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) which was signed into law by President Obama on February 17<sup>th</sup>. Additional information about this legislation which has been described as “*an unprecedented effort to jumpstart our economy, create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century*” is available on the website [www.recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov) .

For higher education institutions, the Ways and Means budget recommendations included base funding level with the current year as of the latest reductions received in December. Additionally, \$119,673,400 in federal ARRA funds expected from Title XIV, State Fiscal Stabilization Funds, were spread across institutions relative to their reductions since the end of FY 2007-08 which have totaled just over \$169 million. Administrative budgets of the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) and S.C. Tuition Grants Commission were further reduced by \$24,415 for CHE and \$1,746 for Tuition Grants. Funding was continued for lottery programs currently being funded. The budget is expected to reach the House by the first week of March with debate on the budget expected the following week (week of March 9).

### ***In the House –***

A concurrent resolution, [H.3554](#), relating to the acceptance of ARRA federal funds by the General Assembly should the Governor not accept the funds was introduced. Legislation, [H.3551](#), to create the Spartanburg Community College Enterprise Campus Authority was introduced and placed on the calendar without reference. By the end of the week H.3551 had been approved by the House and was sent to the Senate. Also, during the week, CHE Regulations relating to the National Guard College Tuition Assistance Program ([Document # 3196](#)) were withdrawn and resubmitted. The amended effective date of automatic approval of these regulations as a result of the resubmission is March 9<sup>th</sup>.

### ***In the Senate –***

Bills from the House were introduced and sent to committee including [H.3378](#) relating to flexibility for state agencies in regard to mandatory furloughs and [H.3551](#) relating to the Spartanburg Community College Enterprise Campus Authority. H.3378 was referred to Senate Finance and H.3551 was referred to Senate Education.

*\*\* Bill numbers are linked to the SC General Assembly page. The link should go to the most recent version of the bill.*

**Reminder:** *The above report is not intended to be all inclusive. For additional information on legislation referenced above and other legislation relating to higher education, see CHE's website at <http://www.che.sc.gov/Home/CHELegislativeUpdates/LegislativeSession2009.aspx> . Detailed information on the 2009 Session of the General Assembly may be accessed at [www.scstatehouse.gov](http://www.scstatehouse.gov) or from links included on CHE's website.*