

## **Legislative Updates of interest for Higher Education Week of Mar. 23-27, 2009**

### ***Budget Update:***

The full Senate Finance Committee met on Tuesday. The Committee reviewed the House budget recommendations, adopted the deletion of provisos that were being struck because they had been put into permanent legislation, and discussed further the availability of federal stimulus funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Because of the possibility that the General Assembly will not be able to request the federal stimulus funds if the Governor does not, it was determined that two versions of the budget – one including federal stimulus funds and one that does not – would be considered. In the interim, it was also decided that the Chairman of Senate Finance would send a letter to the Governor requesting that he accept the funds. The funds in question are those under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund which provide support for K-12 and higher education as well as other government services. Under the ARRA, if funds are not accepted by a state, they will be redistributed to other states. For additional information regarding the federal stimulus funds and the House budget recommendations, see prior updates for the week of March 16-20 and for the week of March 9-13. It is expected that the full Senate Finance Committee will meet on Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, to begin its deliberations on the budget.

Senate Finance Budget Subcommittees also continued to meet during the week. On Wednesday, the Higher Education Budget Subcommittee met jointly with the full Senate Education Committee and heard presentations from the Commission on Higher Education, Clemson University, the University of South Carolina, and the Medical University of South Carolina. A copy of the Commission's handout is available at [http://www.che.sc.gov/CHE\\_Docs/InfoCntr/Legis/Senate\\_BudgetHearing\\_3-25-09\\_final.pdf](http://www.che.sc.gov/CHE_Docs/InfoCntr/Legis/Senate_BudgetHearing_3-25-09_final.pdf).

### ***In the House –***

During the week, the following bills relating to higher education or the budget were introduced including: [S.19](#), a bill relating to campus security for private colleges and universities; [H.3787](#), a bill relating to amendments of the Venture Capital Investment Act; and [H.3788](#) relating to the South Carolina Research Authority and procedures of the board. [H.3664](#) relating to the higher education revenue bond act was approved and sent to the Senate.

The Budget and Finance Subcommittee of House Ways and Means met on Tuesday and considered [H.3365](#), the Higher Education Administrative Policies Act. The Committee adopted a substitute amendment that provides regulatory reform for the state's public research and four-year comprehensive colleges and universities. The full Ways and Means Committee considered the legislation on Thursday and after adding several amendments voted to pass the bill out of Committee. H.3365 now moves to House for consideration.

### ***In the Senate –***

During the week, [H.3664](#) was received from the House, introduced in the Senate, and referred to Senate Finance. Later in the week H.3664 was recalled from Senate Finance and presently resides on the Senate Calendar. Its companion bill, [S.594](#), received second reading. Also introduced during the week was [S.600](#), a bill that would enable S.C. residents to be considered for merit scholarships at out-of-state institutions. [H.3378](#) relating to flexibility for state agencies in regard to mandatory furlough provisions was returned to the Senate after receiving a favorable report with an amendment from Senate Finance.

*\*\* 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 access at [www.scstatehouse.gov](http://www.scstatehouse.gov) or from links included on CHE's website.*