

Legislative Updates of interest for Higher Education Week of Mar. 24 – Mar. 28, 2008

Budget Update –

Senate Finance Budget subcommittees continued to meet during the week. The Senate Finance Higher Education Budget Subcommittee met on Tuesday and heard testimony from the MUSC, AHEC, and College of Charleston. They met again on Wednesday and heard from Clemson, Coastal Carolina, Lander, and Winthrop.

The subcommittee also reviewed budget provisos on Wednesday. Among the changes to provisos to be reported favorably by the subcommittee are four requests by CHE including: 1) the addition of a new proviso that was included in the House budget that will enable a change in the allocation of funds appropriated for the Need-Based grant program for public institutions, 2) a technical amendment to an existing proviso related the Critical Needs Nursing Initiative, 3) a change to conform the reporting date of the Higher Education Study Committee with a recent joint resolution that was passed earlier in the session, and 4) the deletion of a proviso that was codified with the enactment this session of [H.3379 \(Act 178 of 2008\)](#). The subcommittee also considered two new provisos that were requested by other Senators, relating to the establishment of a loan repayment program for doctors of chiropractic medicine and to a residency exception for the payment of tuition and fees for certain non-resident independent students who move to SC but work full-time in a bordering county in NC or GA. These provisos were carried over, and the chair requested that permanent legislation be filed for consideration instead. As noted below, bills relating to these issues were introduced during the week and referred to Senate Education Committee.

The full Senate Finance Committee will meet on Monday, March 31, to discuss the budget bills. The full Senate is expected to debate the budget during the week of April 14. Once the Senate approves a budget, it will be returned to the House for further amendments and then sent to Conference Committee to work out any differences between the House and Senate. From there, any Governor's vetoes, if applicable, must be considered before the budget becomes final.

In the House –

During the week, several bills relating to higher education were introduced including: [H.4883](#), the Education Capital Improvements Sales and Use Tax Act, [H.4869](#) relating to Tri-County Technical College and the ability to enter into ground lease arrangements with private entities, and [H.4905](#) relating the composition of the SC State's Board of Trustees. On Tuesday, the higher education subcommittee of House Education and Public Works met and took up [H.4539](#) relating to the SC State's Board of Trustees. The subcommittee adjourned debate on the bill. The full House Education and Public Works committee met on Wednesday and considered several bills relating to motor vehicles and K-12 and also a number of regulations. Among the regulations considered were three by the Commission on Higher Education including: [H.3129](#) relating to licensing criteria and accrediting in-state nonpublic institutions, [H.3143](#) relating to free tuition for residents 60 years of age, and [H.3170](#) relating to relating to licensing criteria nonpublic postsecondary institutions and the use of surety bonds. The Committee voted to approve the CHE regulations which will now be sent to the House for consideration.

In the Senate –

During the week, several bills relating to higher education were introduced including: [S.1224](#) relating Francis Marion Athletic Bonds, [S.1225](#) relating to revenue bonds for USC Columbia to provide funds for a new business school, [S.1232](#), the Education Capital Improvements Sales and Use Tax Act, [S.1233](#) relating to the provision of a residency exception for tuition and fee purposes, and [S.1239](#) relating to the creation of a loan repayment program for doctors of chiropractic medicine. Senate Finance Committee budget subcommittees continued to meet during the week. On Tuesday, Senate Finance met and considered several pieces of legislation including [S.1022](#) which would enact again the Critical Need Nursing Initiative Fund. This bill was reported out favorably with an amendment to clarify provisions in the Act are to be funded at the discretion of the General Assembly. Also on Tuesday, a subcommittee of the Finance Committee met and took up S.1225 (see above) and voted to report it out favorably to the full committee. On Thursday, the Senate confirmed several appointments including the appointment of Mr. Kenneth Jackson to the Commission on Higher Education. Mr. Jackson joins the

Commission as the four-year comprehensive university representative.

Reminder: The above report is not intended to be all inclusive. Bill numbers are linked to the SC General Assembly page. The link should go to the most recent version of the bill. For additional information on legislation referenced above and other legislation relating to higher education, see http://www.che.sc.gov/CHE_Docs/InfoCntr/Legisl/HigherEd_Legis_List.xls. Detailed information on the 2008 Session of the General Assembly may be access at www.scstatehouse.net or from links included on CHE's website at <http://www.che.sc.gov/Home/CHELegislativeUpdates/LegislativeSession2008.aspx>