

Legislative Updates of interest for Higher Education: Week of Jan. 13 - 17, 2014

(Highlighted & bolded text is linked to source. Bill numbers go to the most recent version on the SC General Assembly website, www.scstatehouse.gov. This report is not intended to be all inclusive. For additional information on the 2014 session, see SC General Assembly website. For information reports on CHE's website, [Click Here](#))

The second year of the General Assembly's two-year continuing session opened on January 14, 2014. The General Assembly meets through June 5, 2014. Legislation from the 2013 Session continues in 2014. In advance of the 2014 Session, bills were prefiled by the House on December 3 and 10 and by the Senate on December 10 and 17. (Information is provided below.) For access to information regarding legislation under consideration, see the General Assembly website [here](#). A CHE report on bills of interest for higher education carried over from 2013 is available [here](#) and a CHE summary report legislation for higher education during the 2013 Session is available [here](#).

In the House –

Prefiled House legislation was introduced and referred to Committee. For a CHE report on pre-filed bills of interest for higher education, [Click Here](#).

Other bills of interest introduced and referred to Committee during the week include:

- [H.4470](#), relating to College and University Board of Trustees, would prohibit elected trustees of public colleges or universities from serving on subsequent board of trustees for a period of one-year (Sponsors: Barfield and Ryhal; Referred to House Education & Public Works)
- [H.4483](#), relating to degree requirements for undergraduates attending public colleges and universities, would add a new provision, §59-101-115, to require for public college or university undergraduates demonstrated proficiency in coursework covering the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Federalist Papers, including the study of and devotion to American institutions and ideals, and to provide for related requirements. The bill amends current code citations regarding this matter for K-12 and higher education (§§59-29-120, 59-29-130, 59-29-140, and 59-29-150) to delete references to colleges and universities. (Sponsor: G.R. Smith; Referred to House Education & Public Works)
- [H.4473](#), the Highly Qualified Subject Educator Certification Act, would add §59-26-45 to provide for requirements for a professional teaching certificate for a person who has substantial teaching experience in the subject for which he is seeking certification and in which he possesses a doctorate or terminal degree and amends §59-26-30 to add a certificate for persons meeting these requirements. (Sponsor: J.E. Smith ; Referred to House Education & Public Works)
- [H.4478](#), relating to the K-12 Education Finance Funding Formula, would amend §59-20-50 concerning teacher salary requirements. (Sponsor: Alexander; Referred to House Ways & Means)
- [H.4515](#), the SC Education Efficiency Act, would provide for restructuring of K-12 administration at the state level. The bill provides for the appointment by the Governor of the Superintendent of Education and for the State Department of Education to become a cabinet agency administered by the appointed Superintendent through all policies and procedures adopted by a reconstituted Education Oversight Committee (EOC). Duties and responsibilities of the former State Board of Education would be devolved to EOC. EOC membership would be amended, including additions of the chairs (or designees) of CHE and the Technical College System boards as non-voting members. Among various added or amended responsibilities of the reconstituted EOC are provisions to require EOC to “develop and implement regulations in collaboration with the Commission on Higher Education that define the postsecondary readiness standards for literacy and mathematics skills and ensure that the academic content and learning skills necessary for postsecondary success are emphasized in the high school curriculum including the provision of postsecondary readiness transitional courses” and “to develop and implement regulations in collaboration with the Commission on Higher Education regarding the collection of public reporting of data that measure the postsecondary success of high school graduates.” The bill also provides for the establishment of an Institute of Reading within the State Department of Education. (Sponsors: Patrick and Lucas; Referred to House Judiciary)

Ways and Means budget subcommittees have begun to hold hearings with many of the subcommittees meeting prior to the start of the session. The Ways and Means Committee Higher Education, Technical and Cultural Resources Budget Subcommittee heard briefings during the week from Clemson University, Francis Marion University, Coastal Carolina University, Winthrop University,

SC State University, Lander University, the Arts Commission and Archives and History. The subcommittee had previously heard from CHE, the State Technical College System, Tuition Grants, the Lottery Commission and Patriots Point on January 8. A copy of CHE's testimony is available [here](#) and a summary of CHE requests is available [here](#). Members of the budget subcommittee for higher education include Representatives [Limehouse](#) (chair), [Skelton](#), [G.R. Smith](#), and [Bales](#).

A special committee of Ways and Means, *K-16 Building Need and Utilization Study Committee*, that was initiated during the 2013 Session met again on January 16. CHE Executive Director Richard Sutton presented to the Committee. The Committee also heard from a panel of Chief Financial Officers from the public colleges and universities including Brett Dalton of Clemson, Ed Walton of USC, Stacie Bowie of Coastal Carolina, Steve Osborne of the College of Charleston, and J.P. McKie of Winthrop. A copy of CHE's presentation is available [here](#). Information about this Committee and its proceedings, including archived meeting materials and videos, is available on the General Assembly website [here](#).

On Tuesday, the first day of the Session, recently elected Representative Russell Ott, House District 93, was sworn in. He holds the seat formerly held by Representative Harry Ott who resigned at the end of the 2013 session. New Committee assignments were announced including the assignment of Sabb to Judiciary, McEachern to Labor Commerce and Industry, Bales to Ways and Means, and Ott to Medical, Military and Municipal Affairs. Information about House Committees and membership is available [here](#).

In the Senate –

Prefiled Senate legislation was introduced and referred to Committee. A prior report on pre-filed bills of interest for higher education is available [here](#).

Other bills of interest introduced during the week include:

- [S.911](#), relating to the Education Capital Improvements Sales and Use Tax (§4-10-410 through §4-10-470), would remove the limitation of §4-10-470 that enables only those counties collecting \$7M or more a year in state accommodations to impose, if approved by referendum, a 1¢ sales tax for education capital purposes. Under the current legislation, higher education projects may also be considered in addition to K-12 if included as part of the referendum and only Horry and Charleston counties qualify for participation. (Sponsor: Peeler; Referred to Senate Finance)
- [S.940](#), also relating to the Education Capital Improvements Sales and Use Tax (see above S.911), would expand authorized participation by enabling all counties to participate provided that the total sales tax does not exceed two percent. (Sponsors: Young, Massey, Setzler, and Peeler; Referred to Senate Finance)

On Tuesday, the first day of the Session, recently elected Senator Marion Kimpson, Senate District 42, was sworn in. He holds the seat formerly held by Senator Robert Ford who resigned during the 2013 Session. New Committee assignments were announced including the Hutto from General, Coleman to Corrections and Penology; Allen from General to Labor, Commerce and Industry; Nicholson from Judiciary to Finance; Johnson from Corrections to Medical Affairs; McElveen from Corrections to Transportation; and Kimpson to Corrections, General, Invitations, Judiciary, and Rules. Information about Senate Committees and membership is available [here](#).

Other News:

The Governor released her 2014-15 Executive Budget Recommendations prior to the start of the session on January 13. For a copy, [Click Here](#). For a CHE staff summary of recommendations of interest for higher education, [Click Here](#).

The Screening Report for candidates under consideration for College and University Boards of Trustees were received in the Senate on Tuesday and in the House on Wednesday. A copy is available [here](#). A Concurrent Resolution ([S.914](#)) was introduced in the Senate setting the date for the board elections on April 2 at noon.

During the week, a number of regulations on a variety of subjects from the State Department of Education were introduced. For information about these and other pending regulations in the General Assembly, please visit [here](#).