

Legislative Updates of interest for Higher Education – Weeks of Jan. 27 and Feb. 3

(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](#))

Week of Jan. 27 – Feb. 1, 2014: Due to inclement weather, the House and Senate canceled session and did not meet during the week.

Week of Feb. 3 – 7, 2014:

In the House –

Bills of interest in introduced during the week include:

- **[H.4632](#)** would create Charleston University through the merger of the College of Charleston and the Medical University of South Carolina. (Sponsors: Stavrinakis, Merrill, McCoy, Daning, Crosby, Murphy, Sottile, Gilliard, R.L. Brown, Mack and Harrell; Referred to House Ways & Means)
- **[H.4602](#)** amends the existing 'Education Capital Improvements Sales and Use Tax Act' to provide that the tax may be imposed to defray debt obligations of the school district and thereby reducing property taxes, to allow the referendum to include a separate question on the authorization of general obligation bonds pursuant to the constitutional exemption, to provide the form of the question, and to change the timing of a reimposition referendum to no earlier than within the calendar year which is two years before the calendar year in which the tax is scheduled to terminate. (Sponsors: Stavrinakis, Gilliard, R.L. Brown, Sottile and Mack; Referred to House Education & Public Works)
- **[H.4609](#)** requires schools to be closed on Veterans Day and exempts higher education institutions from the provision. (Sponsors: Williams, Alexander, Jefferson, Hosey, Anderson, Funderburk and J.E. Smith; Referred to House Education and Public Works)
- **[H.4613](#)** provides for zero-base budgeting process for the state and procedures for enacting such a process by FY 2015-16. (Sponsor: Atwater; Referred to House Ways & Means)

Other Legislation considered during the week:

- House Education and Public Works K-12 Subcommittee met and considered several bills. Of interest for higher education, **[H.3994](#)**, Read to Succeed Act, which has implications for teacher education programs, was reported out to the full committee favorably with amendments.

Ways and Means budget subcommittees continued to hold hearings during the week. The subcommittee for higher education heard testimony from the Medical University of South Carolina, AHEC, and the College of Charleston. Consultants from Deloitte made a presentation to the subcommittee on conducting an efficiency study of South Carolina's public institutions. The Higher Education, Cultural and Technical subcommittee also considered provisos and heard testimony from the State Library, Arts Commission, and Archives and History, as well as from non-state agencies including proposals for funding of an artisan center in Walterboro and concerning a proposed Medal of Honor Museum in Charleston.

In the Senate –

Bills of interest in introduced during the week include:

- **[S.984](#)** would amend state law to expand allowable programs at technical colleges from two-year to three-year programs. (Sponsors: Hembree, Turner, Shealy, Young, Thurmond and Bennett; Referred to Senate Education.)

Other Legislation considered during the week:

- **[S.940](#)**, relating to amendments to the Education Capital Improvements Sales and Use Tax, continued to advance and was reported out of Senate Finance favorably as amended by the subcommittee. This bill amends current restrictions imposed on counties that may participate in providing by referendum the addition of a penny sales tax for education projects including public schools and colleges and universities.
- The K-12 Committee of Senate Education heard testimony relating to Common Core. A video archive of the meeting is available **[HERE](#)**.

Other News:

On Wednesday, Chief Justice Jean Toal was re-elected by the General Assembly to serve another term.

The House and Senate received notification of an anticipated year-end budget deficit of SC State (**[HJ, February 4](#)**)