

Legislative Updates of interest for Higher Education: Week of May 25-29, 2015

(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 2015 session, see SC General Assembly website. For information reports on CHE's website, [Click Here](#))

As of the end of this week, there are 3 session days left with the 2015 Session scheduled to adjourn sine die on June 4. A sine die resolution, [H.4274](#), was introduced on Tuesday and adopted by the House and Senate by the end of the week. Under the resolution, the 2015 Session will end sine die on June 4 with members returning June 16-18. The Resolution provides for the terms of return and outlines items that may be considered after June 4 which include any budget/appropriations bills among other items.

Budget Update: On Thursday, the House took up the Senate amendments to the FY 2015-16 General Appropriations Bill ([H.3701](#)), and acted to amend the bill by returning it to the House version and then adopting additional amendments. The Senate received the bill on Thursday and non-concurred with the House amendments. As a result, H.3701 will now go to conference committee so that differences may be resolved before H.3701 is adopted and sent to the Governor. House and Senate conferees have not yet been named. (Information about the House amendments is available in the [House Journal for May 28](#). Past weekly updates on the House budget adopted earlier as well as reports on the Senate budget are [Here](#).)

The Capital Reserve Fund Bill ([H.3702](#)), which provides for appropriations of available funds from the Capital Reserve, remains on the Senate Calendar. The Senate is currently debating the bill with Senator Davis continuing to hold the floor.

[S.657](#), a bond bill introduced from Senate Finance after being deleted from the Finance Committee's recommendations for H.3702, remains on the Senate calendar awaiting consideration.

On Friday, the state's Board of Economic Advisors certified additional state funds available for appropriation. In anticipation of these additional funds becoming available, a supplemental appropriations bill, [H.4230](#), sponsored by Ways and Means Chair Brian White, was introduced earlier in the week and referred to the House Ways and Means Committee. The House Ways and Means Committee is scheduled to meet on Monday, June 1, to develop its recommendations for the identified additional funds.

[H.4266](#), a continuing resolution for state appropriations, was introduced in the House during the week, adopted by the House, and on Friday, was returned to the Senate for consideration. The resolution provides for continuing authority at the FY 2014-15 appropriation levels in the event the FY 2015-16 budget is not enacted by July 1.

In the House

- On Wednesday, a special ad hoc committee, Higher Education Governance Ad Hoc Committee, of the House Education and Public Works Committee, held its organizational session. The committee is chaired by House Education and Public Works Higher Education Subcommittee Chairman, Bill Taylor. Joining Chairman Taylor on the committee are Representatives Bradley, Brown, Clary, Felder, George, Johnson, Mitchell, and Wells. The committee is considering [H.3249](#), a bill to create a board of regents system, as a vehicle for delving into and making recommendations regarding higher education governance in South Carolina. Chairwoman Allison addressed the Committee to discuss its charge. It is anticipated that the Committee, which is expected to have a report by the beginning of 2016 Session in January, will work during the interim with meetings to commence in September or early fall.
- [H.4145](#), which creates a Coordinating Council for Workforce Development and provides for related workforce training and education planning, programs and initiatives, remained on the House calendar awaiting consideration. The bill had been returned to the House Calendar after the Ways and Means Committee amended the bill with a strike and insert amendment and passed the bill out of committee favorably in the prior week. (The link to the bill provides the Committee amendment.)

In the Senate

- On Wednesday, Senate Education met to consider appointments and legislation. Among bills considered was [H.3353](#), relating to a program to establish camps for completion of the high school equivalency diploma. The full Committee reported the bill out favorably for consideration of the full Senate.

Other

- On Wednesday, the House and Senate met in joint session for the purpose of elections of judges and also college and university trustees for Coastal Carolina University, Lander University, and Winthrop University. The Honorable Costa M. Pleicones was elected SC Chief Justice succeeding current Chief

Justice Jean Toal who has served for fifteen years. ([Click Here](#) for a news report.) For information about the other races for college and university trustees, [Click Here](#) for Wednesday's House Journal.

- [S.47](#), relating to the use of body cameras by SC law enforcement officers, was sent to conference committee after the Senate non-concurred with the House amendments. Conferees were named and include Representatives Pope, Gilliard, and Tallon and Senators Hembree, Malloy, and Young.
- [S.261](#), relating to an amendment to provisions for free tuition for those 60 years and over so as to remove the requirement that participants may not be full-time employed, was adopted by the House as recommended by the Senate. The bill was enrolled for ratification after which it will be sent to the Governor for consideration.
- [S.437](#), James B. Edwards Civics Education Initiative, which adds provisions to requirements for K-12 students with respect to taking the examination used by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and also includes provisions that were added by the Senate during the floor debate relating to the use of the examination by higher education institutions in complying with §59-29-120. The bill was amended by the House to exclude the higher education provisions and returned to the Senate. The Senate agreed with the House amendments and the bill was enrolled for ratification after which it will be sent to the Governor for consideration.
- [H.3847](#), a Joint Resolution to provide for a temporary exemption for applicants for licensure as a speech-language pathologist assistant from the requirement of having a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution, was ratified on Thursday and sent to the Governor for consideration. The Governor has five days, excepting Sundays, to act (i.e., sign into law, veto, or let the legislation become law without signature) before the bill becomes law.
- [H.4135](#), relating to the makeup and provisions for the Greenville Technical College Area Commission was approved by the end of the week and enrolled for ratification after which it will be sent to the Governor for consideration.