

Legislative Updates of interest for Higher Education: Week of May 4-8, 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](#))

In the House

- On Wednesday, the Higher Education Subcommittee of House Education and Public Works met and considered two bills, [H.3373](#) (Manufacturing Career Pathway Act) and [H.3774](#) (Construction Career Pathway Act). The subcommittee adjourned debate with the bills staying in subcommittee.
- [H.3151](#) relating to the teaching of foundation documents by public colleges and universities was amended, given third reading on Thursday, and sent to the Senate.
- [S.11](#) relating to FOIA and open meeting requirements will be sent to conference committee after the House non-concurred with the Senate amendments.
- [S.47](#) relating to the use of body cameras by SC law enforcement officers which had been received in the prior week from the Senate and placed on the calendar without reference, remained on the House Calendar awaiting debate.
- [H.4135](#) relating to the makeup and provisions for the Greenville Technical College Area Commission was given third reading and sent to the Senate on Thursday.

Introduced in the House:

- [H.4144](#) to add section 59-101-440 to provide for an exemption of out-of-state tuition and eligibility for state-sponsored scholarships and grants and to outline requirements, for a student, other than a nonimmigrant alien within the meaning of Section 101(a)(15) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. Section 1101(a)(15), if the student has 1) attended high school in SC for three or more years; 2) attended high school in this State for three or more years; graduated from a high school in this State or received the equivalent of a high school diploma in this State; (3) registers as an entering student or is currently enrolled in a public institution of higher education not earlier than the fall semester of the 2015-2016 academic year; and in the case of a person without lawful immigration status, and 4) files an affidavit with the institution of higher education stating that the student has filed an application to legalize his immigration status or will file an application as soon as he is eligible to do so. (Sponsor: Rep. Rutherford and G.M. Smith. Referred to: House Ways and Means Committee)
- [H.4145](#) to provide for planning and programs for workforce development in South Carolina including: the creation of a Coordinating Council for Workforce Development; the development by the Council of a comprehensive plan for workforce training and education; the development and implementation of a Career Pathways for Success initiative by the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, the Department of Education, the Department of Employment and Workforce, and the Department of Commerce; the establishment various related programs to provide career training and placement assistance including a workforce scholarships and grants program; and the establishment of a career pathways tax credit. (Sponsor: Rep. White, Clemmons, Goldfinch, Yow, McCleod, and others. Referred to: House Education and Public Works Committee)

In the Senate

Budget Update: The Senate continued to debate the FY 2015-16 General Appropriations Bill ([H.3701](#)) during the week. On Thursday, the Senate concluded its work on H.3701 after giving the bill third reading and sending it to the House. ([Click Here to access the bill as passed by the Senate.](#)) The Capital Reserve Fund Bill ([H.3702](#)) which includes provisions for the expenditure of available Capital Reserve Funds and also includes provisions for a Bond Bill remains on the Senate Calendar and has not yet been taken up.

H3701: For higher education, there were not significant changes to recommendations as reported previously. The following are items approved or amended by the Senate and included in H.3701 for higher education. For the earlier report on Senate Finance Committee recommendations, [CHE weekly update of April 20-24](#). For a direct link to the text of referenced below for Part 1B provisos as included in the Senate budget, [Click Here](#).

- the adoption of a new Part 1B proviso, 11.41 (CHE: Technical College Study), requiring CHE to “examine the viability of a program that allows a student who graduate from a high school in this state or who attained the state educational equivalency of a high school diploma to attend a state technical college without paying tuition and fees at the institution for a specified period” and submit a report of findings to the General Assembly by January 31, 2016.

- adoption of an amended Part 1B proviso 117.127 (GP: Comprehensive Workforce Coordination Initiative) that requires the State Tech Board, Commerce, State Department of Education, and DEW to survey workforce development needs and determine educational programs needed in order to produce a qualified workforce.
- an amendment to the new Part 1B proviso 11.4o (CHE: Higher Education Safe Campus Task Force) to exclude a provision included in the proviso as adopted by Senate Finance for examination by the study committee that is to be established. The provision excluded read as follows: "student behavior or misconduct indicative of beliefs that might reasonably be construed to lead to discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, and sexual orientation."
- Inclusion in Part 1B proviso 118.14 (SR: Nonrecurring Revenue) funding that is found in the Senate Finance Committee recommendations for the Capital Reserve Fund Bill (H.3702) for readySC and for each technical college for STEM, Manufacturing and Allied Health Programs and Critical Equipment. These items are funded in H.3701 as part of a list of items to be funded with anticipated FY14-15 surplus above the BEA certified estimate.

Also of note:

- The Senate added \$23.5M to be funded with anticipated FY14-15 surplus above the BEA certified estimate to provide an employee pay bonus of \$800 for those earning less than \$100,000. (The budget does not otherwise include a pay increase for state employees.)
- A new Part 1B proviso, 117.133 (GP: Capital Bond Study Committee), was adopted to provide for a study committee composed of 3 members from the Senate, 3 from the House, and three appointed by the Governor and tasked with studying the capital needs of the state's higher education institutions, including the technical college system and report findings and recommendations, including proposed legislation, to JBRC by December 31, 2015.

Other Senate Legislation during the week.

- [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 reported out of Senate Medical Affairs favorably with an amendment. The legislation is on the Senate Calendar awaiting further consideration.

Other

- [H.3663](#) relating to the removal and replacement of the SC State Board of Trustees was ratified on Thursday (May 7) after both the House and Senate gave free conference powers and adopted the conference committee report. The joint resolution was signed into law by the Governor on Thursday and the Governor also announced her appointment to the interim board. Under the enacted legislation, those with appointments to the board (i.e., Governor, State Treasurer, House Ways & Means Chair, Senate Finance Chair, Superintendent of Education, House Ways and Means Higher Education and Technical Colleges Subcommittee Chair, and Senate Finance Higher Education Subcommittee Chair) must name the appointee within seven days of the enactment of the legislation. The president of the SC State University National Alumni Association and the president of the SC State University Student Government Association will each serve as an ex officio and nonvoting member.
- [S.391](#) relating to in-state tuition for nonresident military veterans was ratified on Thursday and signed into law by the Governor.