



## ***LEGISLATIVE UPDATE 1/13/06***

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The second regular session of the 116<sup>th</sup> South Carolina General Assembly opened Tuesday. The start of the annual session also dawned a new era. Bobby Harrell of Charleston, donned the purple robe and presided over the House of Representatives as the new speaker. Also, Senator Harvey Peeler started his new job of Senate Majority Leader.

Five key issues will dominate this year's legislative agenda: Property Tax Reform, Unemployment, Changes in Education, How the state will spend the estimated \$300 million in additional revenue, and the school funding lawsuit that found South Carolina doesn't provide quality education for early childhood.

**S.1028, *McConnell***, this bill will enact the "South Carolina Property Tax Assessment Reform Act" to provide for a point of sale valuation of real property for purposes of property tax and provide alternate methods in counties for valuation of real property. The bill was committed to subcommittee for further discussion. The subcommittee will hold a meeting to discuss the bill on Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, at 2:30 pm, in room 105 of the Gressette Building. **S. 960, S.969, S.970** are bills that would allow changes in the State Constitution and allow this bill to pass.

**S.961, *McConnell***, this bill would provide that an area seeking to incorporate could demonstrate that it meets a minimum level of law enforcement services by describing how the area will provide law enforcement services in equal or greater levels to the area's existing law enforcement coverage prior to seeking incorporation. The bill has been referred to subcommittee. H. 4337, is the companion bill.

**H.4404, *LCI Committee***, this bill would provide a safety net program for Electric and Natural gas customers 65 or older, disabled, or seriously ill with limited income. Natural gas utilities would either adopt the guidelines specified in the bill or design and submit their own for approval by the Office of Regulatory Staff. The bill is on the House calendar awaiting second reading.

**H.4385, *Chalk***, this bill would allow the Hilton Head No. 1 PSD to extend the terms of the commissioners currently serving by one year in order to have their election in even-numbered years. Hilton Head No. 1 PSD is aware of this legislation and supports it. The bill has been referred to the Beaufort Delegation.

If you have additional questions please contact the Association Office at (800) 344-4518 or via e-mail at [kellysmith@as-irmo.com](mailto:kellysmith@as-irmo.com) or [chrissmith@as-irmo.com](mailto:chrissmith@as-irmo.com).