



## ***LEGISLATIVE UPDATE 2/24/06***

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Legislators chose to override Governor Sanford's veto on a bill that will make it almost impossible for cities and counties to remove outdoor billboards. The new law will require cities and counties to compensate billboard companies if local laws require them to remove their signs. Billboards on Major U.S. Highways are not included.

**S.1159, *Hayes***, this bill would establish a surface water withdrawal permitting program in DHEC. Referred to the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Please contact the SPD Association Office if you would like a copy of the entire bill.

**H.4692, *Davenport***, this bill provides that if a person who after notice violates a DHEC Regulation, permit, permit condition, final determination, or order of DHEC is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$1000.00 a day for each violation. Referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

**H.4715, *Witherspoon***, The SCDOT may acquire real property owned by the state or its entities without compensating the governmental entity. Referred to the House Judiciary Committee. There will be more to come on this bill.

**S.1028, *McConnell***, this bill will enact the "South Carolina Property Tax Assessment Reform Act". The Senate bill uses a growth factor for reassessment and not a tax swap. Voters will decide whether to keep their current reassessment system, or place a 15% maximum cap on how much property tax can increase every five years. At this point, the Senate has decided to hold off on any further discussion of their proposals in order for the House plan to be studied more by a Senate Finance Subcommittee.

**H.4449, *Cotty***, this bill removes all property taxes from owner occupied homes except the portion attributable to bonded indebtedness. The sales tax is increased to 7% and the sales tax on food is completely removed. The state's assessment system is changed so that property is only reassessed at the point of sale or upon significant improvement. The Senate Finance Committee decided to refer the bill to subcommittee for further study.