



# SOUTH CAROLINA BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Join us for the Gospel Changes Everything Listening and Information Tour

The SCBC Office of Public Policy and the Palmetto Family Council are teaming up to sponsor a series of meetings across South Carolina for Pastors, staff members, and lay leaders. The meetings will give you the opportunity to hear about important legislation that will be presented during the 2022 SC Legislative Session. It will also be an opportunity for you to ask questions and sound off about the legislative agenda. More dates will be added but the current tour stops are listed below:



## Summer Legislative Update

Don't be surprised if you walk into your neighborhood drug store or supermarket and see people walking around with their firearms strapped openly to their sides. On August 15, South Carolina joined 13 other states that allow the licensed open carry of handguns. South Carolinians who have a concealed weapons permit may now carry their handgun openly in many circumstances and may also display their handgun openly in their vehicle. The Open Carry with Training Act cancels the \$50 fee charged by the state for concealed weapons permits and allows church officials to carry openly on church grounds and on school grounds that are





## The Gospel Changes Everything Tour Dates

Tuesday, October 12 -  
Antioch International  
Church, Fort Mill SC 9:00am  
-12:00noon

Tuesday, October 19, East  
Pickens Baptist Church,  
Pickens, SC  
11:00am-1:00pm.

Tuesday, October 26, First  
Baptist Church Lexington,  
Lexington, SC  
9:00am-12:00noon

Thursday, October 28,  
Florence Baptist Temple,  
Florence, SC 9:00am -  
12:00noon

Tuesday, November 2,  
Brushy Creek Baptist  
Church, Taylors, SC  
11:30am-1:00pm.

Thursday, November 4, First  
Baptist North Spartanburg,  
Spartanburg, SC  
9:00am-12:00noon.

being leased for use by a church during services or other official church activities.

The new law does have several limitations and should not be confused with “constitutional carry,” which would allow anyone to openly carry a handgun. Only licensed CWP holders may carry a handgun either concealed or openly. Business and private property owners are still permitted to prohibit the carrying of firearms, concealed or open, if they display the signage that meets the requirements of the law. Local governments are permitted to a ban the open carrying of firearms on public property during certain events described in the law. The law also contains a provision that bars state and local government agencies from implementing or enforcing any federal law that abridges Second Amendment rights.

Another law that will take effect with the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year is the Reinforcing College Education on America’s Constitutional Heritage or REACH Act. The law, ratified on April 28



of this year, requires all public high schools to give instruction in the essentials of the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the Federalist Papers. In order to graduate from high school, students must pass a satisfactory examination on the provisions and principles contained in the previously listed historical documents. The law requires institutions of higher learning to require each undergraduate student (with the exception of those who complete three semester credit hours or the equivalent of an Advanced Placement course or dual enrollment course in American Government) to complete three semester credit hours and pass a comprehensive examination on the documents included in the legislation.

On June 21, the South Carolina Legislature wrapped up its work on the 2021-2022 fiscal budget. The \$30.1 billion budget includes money for a \$1000 salary increase for teachers and enough additional funds to make sure every school has a resource officer, a nurse, and access to mental health counselors. Other provisions include \$500 million for the state's "rainy day fund," a little over \$21 million for training and raises for law enforcement officers, \$40 million for job training programs and expanded rural broadband access, and approximately \$13 million for outdoor public spaces and parks. Governor McMaster vetoed 226 earmarks totaling just over \$152 million, but the Legislature overwhelmingly overrode all but \$14 million of the Governors vetoes. The budget took effect on July 1 of this year.

In mid-August, the U.S. Census Bureau released the results of the 2020 census. Lawmakers, who until now have been limited in the amount of work they can accomplish on redistricting, will begin working on the process in earnest. The goal will be to complete the process and overcome any anticipated legal actions before the 2022 midterm elections.

Bills to watch for the 2022 session that will begin in January include Hates Crimes (H3620), the Compassionate Care or Medical Marijuana Act (S150), Save Women's Sport (S531) and Senator Josh Kimbrell's Senate Bill that would protect the free speech rights of mental health professionals and counselors. The bill is a response to legislation passed by the City of Columbia banning conversion therapy or any counseling for LGBTQ individuals who wish to exit their lifestyle choice. You can stay informed about these and other important pieces of legislation by downloading the SC Legislature App to your phone or tablet.



## **Pray for Our Legislators**

**Rep. Justin T. Bamberg - District 90- Bamberg, Barnwell, Colleton**

Statehouse Address: 335C Blatt Building, Columbia, SC 29201

Business Phone: 803-212-6907

Committee Assignments: Ethics and Judiciary



**Sen. Wes Climer - District 15 - York County**

Statehouse Address: 404 Gressette Building, Columbia, SC 29201

Business Phone: 803-212-6230

Committee Assignments: Agriculture and Natural Resources (Chairman), Family and Veterans' Services, Judiciary, Labor, Commerce and Industry, Legislative Oversight, Transportation.