



SOUTH CAROLINA BAPTIST CONVENTION

Medical Marijuana

Medical Marijuana (S 150, _____ the Compassionate Care Act)– has completed the committee process in the Senate and will definitely be debated on the floor in January. The SCBC Public Policy Office will be working with SLED, the SC Medical Association, and conservative grass roots non-profits to hold meetings across South Carolina during this summer and fall to point out the dangers of marijuana use on any level.

Open Carry (H3094)

this bill passed the Senate and is on its way to the Governor for his signature. It will allow concealed weapons permit holders to carry a concealable weapon openly. The law will go into effect in approximately 90 days.



Legislative Session in Review

Thursday, May 13 marked the official end of the 2021 SC Legislative session. SC lawmakers will return to Columbia to wrap up final approval of the budget, deal with any vetoes issued by the Governor, and work through redistricting when the census information is released at the federal level; however, work on bills making their way through the process will be halted until January of 2022. Since 2021 is the first year of a two year legislative session, the adjournment of the 2021 session is often referred to as ‘halftime.’ Bills that are in process can be brought before the legislature for consideration beginning in January of 2022. During the months between now and then, it is likely some standing committees will conduct or complete public hearings so that bills to be considered in January will be ready for a committee vote before being rejected



Save Women's Sports

(S531) This bill would prevent biological men from competing against biological women in both high school and middle school sports. The House version of the bill failed twice to pass through the House Judiciary Committee. The Senate version (S531) received one public hearing in the Senate Education Sub-Committee. There will likely be a second hearing this fall and a vote to the full committee in early January. While men competing against women is not a serious problem in South Carolina at the time of this writing, the culture is definitely moving in this direction. South Carolina, along with the other 30+ states that have either passed or are considering a version of this bill, should pass this and send it to the Governor for his signature. There should be common ground for this common sense protection for women's sports.

or proceeding to the floor.

Bills that were of particular interest this session include Hate Crimes (H3620), Medical Marijuana (also known as the "Compassionate Care Act," S150), the Save Women's Sport Act (S531), the Open Carry with Training Act (H3094), the SC Religious Freedom Act (H3105) and the REACH Act (S38). Let's take a look at where they stand:

Hate Crimes (H3620) – passed the House and has made it through the Senate committee process. Because of the objection of a number of Senators to the addition of sexual orientation as a protected class, the Hate Crimes bill stalled on the Senate floor and will not be considered until January. Amendments to the bill removed many of the objectionable elements including the right of individuals to sue each other with or without a court determined outcome verifying hate as a motivating factor. Also removed was language from the Supreme Court case *Bostock v. Clayton County*, that would have linked hate crimes to employment law, thereby raising the possibility of lawsuits against churches and religious non-profits who hire according to biblical standards. Another amendment removed the Hate Crime designation from stalking and harassment in the SC criminal code. This is important because both stalking and harassment include speech elements that could be used to expand the Hate Crimes bill into a hate speech law. If sexual orientation remains in the bill, many legal experts agree, it will set a precedent for use of the term in future bills that could be used to intimidate the church, Christian schools, non-profits, and individual believers who defend a biblical view of sexuality. State lawmakers are being pressured by the state Chamber of Commerce and major corporations to pass this bill.

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SC Religious Freedom Act (H3105) – protects Houses of Worship from having their services interrupted during a state of emergency by declaring religion and worship to be essential elements of South Carolina life. It is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The REACH Act (S38) – passed the House and the Senate and has been signed into law by the Governor. It requires the teaching of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, and the Federalist Papers as an elective for higher education and as a required course for High School graduation.

PRAY FOR THESE LEGISLATORS



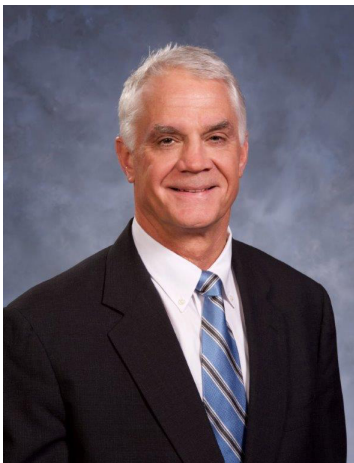
**Rep. William H. Bailey (R)
District 104 (Horry County)**

Columbia Address

420D Blatt Bldg.
Columbia 29201

Business Phone (803) 212-6918

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS: Interstate Cooperation
Judiciary**



**Sen. George E. Chip Campsen III (R)
District 43: Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton**

Business Phone (803) 212-6340

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS: Fish Game, and Forestry
(Chairman), Judiciary, Legislative Oversight, Rules,
Transportation.**

Columbia Address

305 Gressette Bldg.
Columbia 29201