



## South Carolina college students learn state government up close

BY JESSICA BARFIELD,  
THE CAROLINA REPORTER

Student delegates from South Carolina colleges and universities recently had the chance to introduce and debate their own bills in the same chambers where the state's laws are made.

The 43rd meeting of delegates to the S.C. Student Legislature, held in the Senate and House chambers of the Statehouse from Nov. 3 to 6, included about 70 bills written by students from the University of South Carolina, Clemson University, Newberry College, The Citadel, Bob Jones University, Columbia College, Furman University and Presbyterian College, among others.

Although a bill to legalize and regulate prostitution was introduced, the mock legislation did see its fair share of legitimate bills.

Bills proposed during the conference involved increasing voter registration among college students, creating a state scholarship by placing a 1-cent tax on all fast-food items and setting stiffer penalties for underage drinkers.

Delegates from Presbyterian College proposed a bill to have welfare recipients give back to their communities by performing community service.

A Newberry College student introduced a bill to require high school students to complete 100 hours of community service upon graduation to teach them respect for their communities.

In addition to the fall mock legislation, the S.C. Student Legislature, founded in 1956 by Douglas Carlisle, meets each spring in a members' conference. Carlisle said there are many reasons for bringing together students interested in politics.

"There needed to be some place where students could express their opinions

freely and not feel intimidated in doing so," Carlisle said.

"They needed a place to learn about government and about the parliamentary procedure," he said.

The rules of the student legislature are designed much like those of the state legislature in an effort to guide students through the lawmaking process.

During the student legislature, once bills have passed with a majority vote in both the Senate and the House, they're compiled and put into a journal, Carlisle said.

Then, the bills passed by student delegates in the fall are presented to state legislators for consideration during South



JESSICA BARFIELD THE CAROLINA REPORTER  
**William Mier, a student senator from Furman University, prepares to debate a bill for the annual South Carolina Student Legislature in Columbia.**

Carolina's legislative session.

Bills written and passed by members of the SCSL have even become state laws, proving that the fall gatherings of student delegates aren't simply fun and games.

State laws requiring drivers to turn on their cars' headlights when driving in the rain and to make legal right turns at red lights that aren't marked otherwise, both originated with South Carolina's student legislators.

SCSL Miscellaneous Committee Chairman Nick Pizzuti said he found out about the organization when friends of his from around the state became involved. A member of SCSL since the spring, the USC business junior joined SCSL because of a desire to be in politics later in his career.

Pizzuti said the best bill to come from this year's session is one that might help raise the test scores of South Carolina's public school students by providing school choice.

"The voucher bill, which came from a combination of four different schools, lets kids of all ages choose the schools they will go to, public or private," Pizzuti said.

"The voucher would help pay for low-income students to go to the schools they choose," he said.

Members of the SCSL have a high success rate, according to Carlisle. Former members include state Sen. Donald Holland and Lee Atwater.

Atwater, a student legislature governor from 1973-74, went on to become chairman of the Republican Party and is credited with helping George Bush become president.

"They're everywhere," Carlisle said of former SCSL members.

"They have a pretty good chance at success, whether they served in office or not," he said.

## Hurricane bills await legislators in new year

BY ANN KENNEDY  
THE CAROLINA REPORTER

Thirty-one bills already have been filed for the South Carolina Legislature to consider when it reconvenes in January.

Sen. Glenn Reese, D-Spartanburg, called many of the bills "send-the-message bills."

"Most are missions, to do things for specific constituents," Reese said. "Sometimes, they just need people to talk to if they've had a problem come up. They'll talk to you and tell you to get a law passed, and I try to screen them, but I like to try to take care of them, too."

Several bills are results of Hurricane Floyd and the problems that resulted from the massive evacuation of the coast.

Sens. Larry Grooms, R-Berkeley, and Glenn Reese, D-Spartanburg, were the first to propose a hurricane-related bill, S.919, which would use all lanes of major roads from the coast for evacuation immediately after the governor issues an emergency evacuation. Several other senators have also proposed an interstate lane-reversal plan.

School and work days missed because of emergency conditions won't have to be made up if bills S.824, S.925, S.929 and S.932 are passed.

One of the bills recommends that the Department of Education exempt school days canceled because of emergency conditions. The others are joint resolutions to provide that students or government workers who missed Sept. 14 to 17 don't have to make up that time.

Sens. Darrell Jackson, D-Richland; Kay Patterson, D-Richland; and Ralph

Anderson, D-Greenville, have sponsored a resolution to require the Confederate Battle Flag to be removed from the Senate chambers and only be displayed on special days in Confederate history.

Reese and Billy O'Dell, D-Abbeville, have filed S.922, a bill that would prohibit the distribution of credit card applications on college campuses.

All prefiled bills are listed on the legislative home page, [www.lpittr.state.sc.us](http://www.lpittr.state.sc.us).

### Get in touch

Here's how to reach the senators from Richland County.



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SOURCE: S.C. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CARA PELLATT THE CAROLINA REPORTER

### City parks

Columbia City Parks have something for visitors of all ages. For more information, call 733-8331.

### Marionette theater

The Columbia Marionette Theatre, 401 Laurel St., features year-round performances at 3 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday. For more information, call 252-7366.

### Sterling Chamber Players to perform

The Sterling Chamber Players will perform at 8 p.m. today at the Sterling Chamber Players Center and offer chamber music in an intimate garden setting. Casual dress. For more information and prices, call 252-2001.

### 'The Living' comes to USC

"The Living" will play through Nov. 21 at the Longstreet Theatre at USC. Performance are at 8 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and 3 p.m. Sundays. For more information and prices, call 777-2551.

### Riverbanks Zoo holds Bonsai Show

The Riverbanks Zoo and Garden will hold a Bonsai Show from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Bonsai experts will perform the ancient art and show their wares. Free. For more information, call 779-8717.

### Gaelic concert features 'Titanic' band

The Gaelic Storm Concert will be held at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Historic Haynes Auditorium in Batesburg-Leesville. The concert will feature the "party band" from the movie "Titanic." Reservations required. For more information, call 532-2388.

### Homes for the Holidays begins

Tickets go on sale Wednesday for Homes for the Holidays. Sponsored by the Hollywood-Rosehill Neighborhood Association and Shandon Neighborhood Council, the event will open seven homes to the public from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Dec. 5. Admission is \$10; proceeds go to neighborhood and school projects.

### Vista lights

The Vista lights, a candlelight tour of historic businesses, will be held Thursday in the Congaree Vista. Free. For more information, call 738-1499.

## PRWEEK

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## IMPEACHMENT

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"Senators who voted to adjourn the senate meeting really aren't representing their constituents because they do not want to discuss whatever's going on and do not want stay past a certain time," Lentini said.

"That's not right. If you are here to do business, you are there to do business. You're not there to leave," she said.

But Dawkins said the move was necessary.

"We need the opinion of the attorney general at this point," he said. "We need to ask his opinion."

Dawkins also reiterated his opposition to Brown's serving as parliamentarian while the issue makes its way through senate.

"I think that his position is one of objectivity, and he cannot be objective at this point," Dawkins said.

Ballentine said she wouldn't comment on whether Brown had a conflict of interest. But she did say she didn't think he could be asked to step aside.

"You can't ask him to step down," she said. "He has to be impeached."

According to Ballentine, some senators are "very adamant" that a recommendation come to senate.

However, Ballentine said she wouldn't attempt to force the charges onto the floor. "As far as me making a motion to bring it to the floor, that's not going to happen," she said.

Fordham said that the senate should move on and that the senators' attempt to reopen the matter shows the charges are a personal attack.

"It clarifies that it's a personal attack if they can't just drop it," Fordham said. "I think they should ... just drop it. Senate's spent enough time on this."

"I think it's time for senate to just pick up, move on and focus on the future. We have more important things to focus on."

But Dawkins said he didn't think senators could bring the charges to the floor after the court dismissed them, adding that he thought the court could dismiss the charges.

"I think we did what was in our power to do," he said.

Because the charges would normally die if the court doesn't make a recommendation to the senate within 30 days, the senate would have to consider the charges by Nov. 24. Dawkins said he thought the deadline would still ap-

ply. However, the senate doesn't meet that day, so its Nov. 17 meeting would be the last opportunity to consider the charges, Dawkins said.

"I'm ready for this to be over with because I'm ready for the senate to do what we were elected to do," he said.

The senate meeting ended while arguments continued concerning the tabling of a resolution that would've created a USC World Hunger Awareness Day.

The senate tabled, for technical reasons, a resolution sponsored by Sen. Dentavious Barber and SG Director of Marketing Norm Jones that would have declared Nov. 17 USC World Hunger Awareness Day.

Senators said that Jones couldn't sponsor a bill and that the bill wasn't written in the correct format.

"After the cloud of impeachment, student senate had a chance to shine a light of redemption on the legislative process," Jones said. "But they failed to set differences aside for a resolution to encourage students to fight hunger in South Carolina and worldwide."

Jones said he hoped that the senate didn't table the bill because of his proposal, filed with the Judicial Council almost two weeks ago. The proposal would declare the entire segment of the SG Constitution concerning impeachment unconstitutional under the U.S. and S.C. constitutions.

"I would say, in the back of my mind, that's always a possibility, but in this scenario, I don't think that was the prime consideration or main factor," he said.

He said Student Body President Malik Husser was expected to sign a copy of the resolution as an executive order by the end of the week.

The resolution could come up again at next week's meeting. However, Jones pointed out, that means the senate couldn't pass the bill until the day was almost over.

In related news, Judicial Council Chief Justice Camber Cauthen said she and Judicial Affairs Director Scott Lewis had initially rejected Jones' impeachment proposal before showing it to the entire board.

"Upon first look, we found problems in his argument," Cauthen said.

However, she said Jones discussed the matter with her and would rewrite and resubmit the proposal.

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