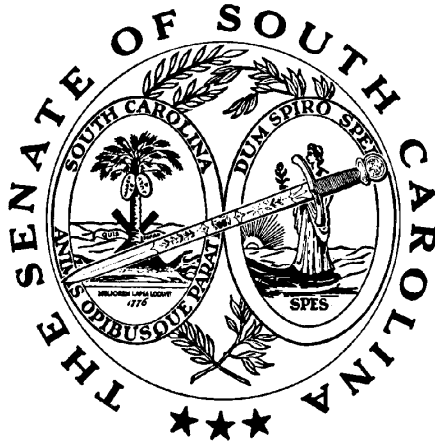


NO. 20

**JOURNAL**  
**OF THE**  
**SENATE**  
**OF THE**  
**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA**



**REGULAR SESSION BEGINNING TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2023**

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**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2024**

**Friday, February 9, 2024**  
**(Local Session)**

~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~

Indicates New Matter

The Senate assembled at 11:00 A.M., the hour to which it stood adjourned, and was called to order by the ACTING PRESIDENT, Senator MASSEY.

**ADDENDUM TO THE JOURNAL**

The following remarks by Senator HUTTO were ordered printed in the Journal of January 31, 2024:

**Remarks by Senator HUTTO**

Over 70% of people in this State believe if you are going to carry a gun on the street you should have training. This Bill does not do that. This Bill says we are going to put guns on the street with no required training.

This legislation criminalizes rather than protects. It provides for enhanced penalties for making a mistake. If you make a mistake, we are going to put you in jail. For example, if you did not see the placard announcing no guns allowed in the store and you walk in with your gun, you then have up to three years in jail. If you drive onto the campus of a school -- did not know your wife had put your gun in your car -- you will be charged with not only a violation but will also be charged an extra penalty. People that make mistakes, must be penalized -- that is exactly what this legislation says.

I am against this Bill. I am not opposed to people carrying a weapon if they have training. A majority of South Carolinians think if you are going to carry a gun on the street, you need to have training. I am not talking about people being in their house with a gun. Everybody has a right to defend their house. I am not talking about hunters. I believe probably everyone in this room owns guns, probably multiple guns. I have about a dozen guns myself. This is not whether you like guns, but it is a question whether you want safe streets. Not only is this Bill saying we want guns on the street, but it is also saying we want guns without training.

This is one of the biggest anti-law enforcement Bills we have passed since I have been here. We used to have protections for officers by requiring that a gun in a vehicle be transported in the glove box, console or trunk. Now, under this Bill, the gun can be right there in your lap and

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ready to fire if you get mad in a road rage situation. When a law enforcement officer walks up and there is a gun right there, it will not go well. Bad things are going to happen.

By passing this legislation, you are telling people that if you commit a crime you better have a gun. If you have a gun, you are not able to be charged for a crime. Why? We put up an amendment that says if you are carrying a gun, that is not grounds for a search. When the officer walks up and sees the gun, that is the best ticket to get your charges suppressed because the officer cannot use the fact that you have a gun to follow up with a search. The officer has no grounds to search your car, cannot make a seizure and cannot do an investigation. A gun will immunize you from half the crimes going on.

We have needs in South Carolina that have gone unmet for years. We have needs for people who battle mental health issues, needs for families and children, and needs for teachers that do not have enough supplies in the classroom. We have needs that could be addressed, but we are going to spend taxpayer's money to the tune of millions of dollars to try and incentivize training that is not required. We are going to pay for free background checks, free use of a gun, free ammunition and free training for those that choose to get trained. Two classes in every forty-six counties -- that will require a total of ninety-two SLED officers on the weekends to teach the training class -- meanwhile small businesses who have traditionally provided concealed weapons permit training will be put out of business. We are putting a hole in the state's budget for no reason, as I submit to you that anyone who wants training already has received it.

The members of the House of Representatives who voted for constitutional carry -- they wanted constitutional carry, not constitutional carry lite. I do not know exactly what to call this, but I want you to be aware that instead of constitutional carry what you are getting is enhanced penalties and coercion to take training you do not want.

We are hamstringing law enforcement on the one side and creating danger for law enforcement officers on the other side. We are doing nothing for everybody who came in here at the beginning of this debate who stated they would only vote in favor of a Bill that requires training. If you vote for this Bill, you caved. For those of you who said I only want constitutional carry and nothing else, you caved too.

This is awful. This is probably the worst piece of legislation we have debated in some time. It unnecessarily spends taxpayer money. It puts guns on the street without required training. It handcuffs law

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enforcement and endangers their lives. It empowers criminals and creates a “get out of jail free” card for criminals. And it puts small business people, who now teach training classes, out of business. This is a flawed law and should not be passed.

On motion of Senator SABB, with unanimous consent, the remarks of Senator HUTTO were ordered printed in the Journal.

**ADDENDUM TO THE JOURNAL**

The following remarks by Senator McLEOD were ordered printed in the Journal of February 1, 2024:

**Remarks by Senator McLEOD**

Thank you, Mr. PRESIDENT. Well, we knew this day was coming -- still doesn't make it any easier. I think what we are doing today is going to turn our State into the wild, wild west -- no license, no training and inadequate background checks. We can assume the average gun owner will have no knowledge of current gun laws since CWPs and the training that comes with it are optional. We can also assume that gun owners will have very little, if any knowledge or understanding about where they can and cannot carry.

There is no language that expressly prohibits racial profiling, although I fought to have that language included yesterday. That is going to be a problem. It is going to be a problem for citizens of our State, for law enforcement as well as citizen vigilantes. I think about what happened in Georgia to Ahmaud Arbery. There will be no gun liability insurance that will require gun owners to assume some semblance of responsibility for properly and safely handling and storing their gun. Yet we talk about everybody practically being a responsible gun owner. There is no protection or consideration for law enforcement officers who, in most cases, won't be able to tell the good guys from the bad guys.

We just debated an amendment that proposed sending between five and twenty million dollars to the South Carolina law enforcement division to help cover the costs of CWPs and to launch a statewide permitless carry campaign. Meanwhile at SLED, rape kits of South Carolina women and girls sit and continue to sit -- some for years, some for decades -- they will continue to sit in our cold case files while our women and girls get no justice because their rape kits are unprocessed, not investigated, forgotten. Five to twenty million dollars to SLED is what we took all that time discussing and debating. While many of the

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proponents of this Bill are co-signing and celebrating denying our state's most vulnerable children food during the summer months -- five to twenty million dollars for SLED. I couldn't believe it!

When we consistently dismantle public education as we frantically try to find skilled, educated workers to fill the high-paying jobs at Boeing, BMW and now Scout Motors in my area -- five to twenty million dollars for SLED. We actually spent a lot of time on that yesterday. At the same time, we have consistently refused to expand Medicaid in this State. We intentionally make working people poorer by paying them wages we know they can't live on. Yet even as we debate this Bill we are also attempting, some are attempting, to cut unemployment pay for those who need and deserve every penny of it. We have listened to colleagues proposed enhanced penalty amendments to this Bill while some of our colleagues continue to block us from even debating the Bill that would enhance penalties for those who would commit hate crimes in the State.

I'm going to close by just reminding all of you, not that you need to be reminded, that this Bill is anti-law enforcement. I think that Senator STEPHENS said it best last night. It is very much anti-law enforcement -- anti-law abiding citizens, especially law-abiding citizens of color. When my son moved back, when my baby boy graduated from Colorado State University and came home for a while -- just long enough for me to get used to him being here -- but told me last year that he just can't stay here. I hated to see him go but today I'm so glad he went because this Bill will make it extremely dangerous for him to live here. It will give law-abiding citizens and ruthless criminals equal access to guns without a license or training especially at a time when gun violence is already wreaking havoc across our State and Nation -- is senseless, reckless and quite frankly the beginning of the end of any decent quality of life we once knew and enjoyed here in South Carolina. For those reasons, and many others, I will definitely be voting against this Bill. Thank you, Mr. PRESIDENT.

On motion of Senator TEDDER, with unanimous consent, the remarks of Senator McLEOD were ordered printed in the Journal.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 11:05 A.M., on motion of Senator McELVEEN, the Senate adjourned to meet next Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 12:00 P.M.

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