



South  
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State Senate  
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Senate  
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# This week in the Senate

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This week, the Senate passed the general appropriations bill, [H. 3720](#), and the capital reserve fund, [H. 3721](#). The budget is highlighted by several priority items, including funds to help shore up the state's pension system, the addition of about \$60 million for the state's Education Finance Act and \$55 million for repairs at schools in low-income areas of the state. The plan puts \$150 million into improving the financial health of the state pension system, following the passage of [H. 3726](#), which increased employers' rates over the next six years. It also provides \$68 million for Hurricane Matthew cleanup costs.

Appointees to the state's Ethics Commission were also confirmed by the Senate this week. The new Ethics Commission is accepting complaints against legislators following changes to state ethics laws last session.

Additionally, Richard Cash was sworn in as the new senator for District 3. He was elected in a special election on May 30 to fulfill the unexpired term of Kevin Bryant, who became lieutenant governor.

## **Conference reports adopted by the Senate this week:**

[S. 179](#) - Sponsored by Senators Hutto and Hembree: Creates limited immunity for individuals who call to seek medical assistance when someone they are with is having an overdose. The bill is aimed at curbing issues related to opioids.

[S. 289](#) - Sponsored by Senators Shealy, Rankin, McElveen, Sheheen, Hutto and McLeod: Aims to consolidate victim services by creating the South Carolina Crime Victim Services Division within the Office of the Attorney General. The goal of the division is to ensure that victims throughout the state have access to the same services, regardless of where they reside

[H. 3969](#) - Revises school performance ratings in order to establish a single public education accountability system that meets state and federal requirements.

## **Look ahead to next week and beyond:**

Governor Henry McMaster has five days, excluding Tuesday and Sunday to consider the state budget. He can accept the budget, choose to veto the bill in its entirety or by single item. Lawmakers would need to return for a session to work through any vetoes.