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Legislative Update Week 3

Jan. 29, 2022

Top 3 Things to Know

1 Vouchers - Your voice is making a difference in the Senate voucher fight. Read more below and [don't forget to take action!](#) In the House, [H.4879](#), a dangerous new voucher bill was introduced in the House and referred to committee on Thursday, Jan. 27. Check out the Jeers for more!

2 Unencumbered Time - The Full Senate Education Committee made [several The SCEA recommended amendments](#) to [S.946](#), a bill for unencumbered time for teachers, before voting to give a favorable report to the Senate. More information to come as this bill progresses towards becoming law!

3 Honesty in Education - Several bills that seek to pit parents against educators were discussed in the House Education & Public Works Committee. H.4325, H.4343, H.4392, H.4605, and H.4799 on their surface claim to focus on banning "Critical Race Theory" but in actuality **impose top-down censorship policies**. The public will be able to make comment at a hearing on these bills on the afternoon of Feb. 8 after the House adjourns. To put your name on the list to make comment, contact Executive Assistant Ginger Lee [by email at GingerLee@schouse.gov](mailto:GingerLee@schouse.gov) or call 803-734-3053.

Keep it up: Your voice is making a difference on vouchers!

👍 Cheers - Engaged members like you. Your voice is making a difference in the fight against harmful voucher bill. Based on the list of bill sponsors reducing from 22, to 21, and now 20 that Senator [Gustafson](#) (R, Kershaw) dropped sponsorship of [S.935](#), as well as several comments about constituent emails and calls in the Senate Education

Subcommittee discussion on **S.935** this week indicate that hearing from constituents is making a difference! **Keep it up!**

Eight Nine Republican Senators—[Talley](#) (Spartanburg)*, [Shealy](#) (Lexington), [Young](#) (Aiken), [Senn](#) (Charleston), [Martin](#) (Spartanburg), [Johnson](#) (York), [Alexander](#) (Oconee), [Cromer](#) (Newberry) and [Gustafson](#) (Kershaw)—are **not** sponsors of the harmful voucher bill **S.935**. If one of these Senators is your state Senator, click on their name to send an email thanking them for not sponsoring S.935 and urging them not to support the bill. *Senator [Talley](#) is on the Education Subcommittee considering **S.935**. ([Not sure who your Senator is? Use this link!](#))

👊 Jeers - ~~Twenty-one~~ Twenty out of 29 Republican Senators are sponsoring **S.935 Education Scholarship Account Vouchers**.

If one of these ~~24~~ 20 Republican Senators is your state Senator, click on their name below to send an email to let them know you are disappointed in their support for **S.935**, a bill that harms public schools. ([Not sure who your Senator is? Use this link!](#))

[Grooms](#) (Berkeley), [Loftis](#) (Greenville), [Goldfinch](#) (Georgetown), [Verdin](#) (Laurens), [Rice](#) (Pickens)*, [Cash](#) (Anderson), [Adams](#) (Berkeley), [Climer](#) (York), [Peeler](#) (Cherokee), [Garrett](#) (McCormick), [Kimbrell](#) (Spartanburg), [Davis](#) (Beaufort), [Campsen](#) (Charleston), [Hembree](#) (Horry), [Turner](#) (Greenville), [Corbin](#) (Greenville), [Bennett](#) (Dorchester), [Massey](#) (Edgefield)*, [Gambrell](#) (Anderson), and [Rankin](#) (Horry), and [Jackson](#) (D, Richland)*

*Note that Senators including **Senators Rice** (R, Pickens), **Massey** (R, Edgefield), and **Jackson** (D, Richland) are on the Education Subcommittee considering **S.935**.

Four Representatives—[Smith](#) (R, Sumter), [Lucas](#) (R, Darlington), [Simrill](#) (R, York), and [Erickson](#) (R, Beaufort) introduced **H.4879**, another harmful voucher bill with many similarities to **S.935** on Thursday, Jan. 27.

At this point in the process, all House members need to hear from you. Send your Representative an email to let them know you do not support private school vouchers and not to support **H.4879**. ([Not sure who your Representative is? Use this link!](#))





Above: Team The SCEA stops for a quick picture with Senator Mike Fanning and fellow educators at the discussion of **S.935**.

During the third discussion of S.935, no public comment was taken. However, there were members of the public wishing to speaking present, including members of The SCEA. **The Subcommittee, however, carried over the discussion to a fourth meeting (not scheduled yet).**

Testimony is not the only way to make your voice heard on this important issue.

You can help get the word out about this harmful legislation and the severe consequences it could have for public schools by [sharing on social media](#) and, most importantly, [writing to the members of the Senate Education Subcommittee now](#).

Click below to send your email to all five Senators on the Subcommittee!

[Email the Senate Education Subcommittee Now!](#)

Legislators & Educators

Education has been at the forefront this week beginning with a House Ways and Means Education budget subcommittee when the State Department of Education presented their budget request. Superintendent Molly Spearman included a request to raise the minimum teacher salary to \$40,000. While this is more than the Governor's Executive Budget proposal which also calls for teacher raise, it still does not meet [The SCEA's recommended increase for the starting teacher salary and salaries for all educators and school staff](#).

Meanwhile a Senate Education Committee also met this week to discuss [H.3590](#) a bill that would allow non-certified teachers that are subject-matter experts to fill up to 25% of teaching positions when a certified teacher is unavailable. The Senate Education Committee advanced the amended bill that calls for a five-year pilot program that certain districts can participate in.

Other proposals covered this week include a bill aimed to incentivize education majors in SC colleges by offering a \$7,500 bonus upon graduation.



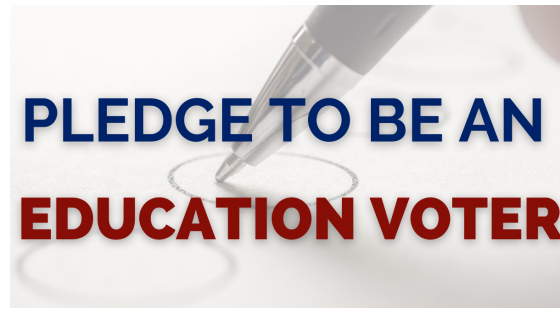
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The Week Ahead

[Click here for a look at the meetings scheduled for next week](#) on bills of interest to education.



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