



South Carolina House of Representatives

# Legislative Update & Research Reports

Robert J. Sheheen, Speaker of the House

Vol. 5

December 1988

No. 28

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*Results of the 1989 Issues Survey*

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*Automobile Insurance topped the list of issues in this year's membership survey on priority issues for the 1989 session. Environmental issues -- infectious waste disposal, hazardous waste disposal and solid waste management -- also figured heavily in the survey results this year. But far and away, automobile insurance was the foremost issue on the minds of House members responding to the survey.*

*How the survey was conducted*

*This was the third year the House Research Office has conducted an issues survey of the membership prior to the opening of the session. The survey was mailed November 9 to all House members with a final return date of November 29.*

*This year even more House members responded to the survey. Close to 60 percent of the House membership -- 57.7 percent -- returned their survey forms for tabulation. This is up from last year's response rate of 52.4 percent. House members were asked to respond to the survey anonymously.*

*As was done last year, legislators were asked to rank a wide ranging list of issues, 29 in all. The issues listed in the survey were compiled by the House Research Office from information compiled from various sources, including House committee staffs and media reports. A scale of 1 to 5 was used to rank the importance of the issues, with 5 representing the highest priority and 1 representing the lowest.*

*In addition, space was provided for House members to list any priority issue not appearing on the list provided in the survey. Members also were asked to list the three issues the General Assembly should give top priority to during the 1989 session.*

*Once again, it is important to note that the survey results in no way reflect how House members will vote on a particular issue. Rather, the sample is an indication of the priority responding House members would like certain issues to be given during the upcoming legislative debate. The results simply indicate some issues a majority of the legislators think are important to discuss and other issues to be given lesser priority.*

How the issues ranked

Of the 29 issues House members were asked to rank on a 5 to 1 priority scale, here is how the issues fared. Following this list are the details of how each issue was scored.

1. Automobile Insurance
2. Infectious Waste Disposal (tied with)  
Hazardous Waste Disposal
3. Solid Waste Management
4. Catastrophic Health Care
5. School Building Construction
6. Adult Education and Literacy
7. High School Drop Outs
8. Teacher Salaries
9. Local Government Finance  
Children's Services
10. Rural Health
11. School Bus Drivers
12. Beachfront Renourishment
13. Worker's Compensation
14. Lease Purchase
15. Mental Health (tied with)  
Wetlands
16. Teacher Retirement
17. Preschool Handicapped Children
18. Nursing Shortage
19. Programmatic Budgeting
20. Judicial Selection

21. Principal Salaries
22. State Lottery
23. Hunter Education Program
24. Scenic Rivers
25. Outdoor Advertising
26. Saltwater Fishing License

How the 29 issues were ranked

As was done last year, each issue was ranked by computing the number of tallies it received in each of the 1 to 5 priority rankings. With the number of responding House members, the highest possible score was 355; the lowest, 71. For example, the top rated issue, Automobile Insurance, received a total score of 340. This score was arrived at by multiplying by 5 the 61 "five" priority votes the issue received; by 4 the 7 "four" priority votes, and so on. Answers in the "no opinion" column were not used. By computing a score for each issue this way, they could be fairly compared and ranked.

The following chart shows each issue in order of priority ranking and the number of votes it received in each priority category. Since each issue is described only by an abbreviated title, please refer to the extra copy of the survey sent to each House member for a fuller description.

| <i>Potential Issue</i>    | <i>Priority</i> |          |          |          |            | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|--------------|
|                           | <i>High</i>     |          |          |          | <i>Low</i> |              |
|                           | <i>5</i>        | <i>4</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>1</i>   |              |
| Automobile Insurance      | 61              | 7        | 2        | 0        | 1          | 340          |
| Hazardous Waste Disposal  | 35              | 21       | 11       | 2        | 2          | 298          |
| Infectious Waste Disposal | 34              | 24       | 10       | 0        | 2          | 298          |
| Solid Waste Management    | 32              | 25       | 9        | 4        | 1          | 296          |
| Catastrophic Health Care  | 25              | 23       | 20       | 2        | 0          | 281          |

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| <i>Potential Issue</i>       | <i>Priority</i> |    |    |    |            | <i>Total</i> |
|------------------------------|-----------------|----|----|----|------------|--------------|
|                              | <i>High</i>     |    |    |    | <i>Low</i> |              |
|                              | 5               | 4  | 3  | 2  | 1          |              |
| School Building Construction | 23              | 26 | 18 | 3  | 1          | 280          |
| Adult Education              | 20              | 24 | 19 | 5  | 1          | 264          |
| Student Drop Outs            | 18              | 24 | 22 | 3  | 2          | 260          |
| Teacher Salaries             | 15              | 26 | 23 | 4  | 3          | 259          |
| Local Government Finance     | 24              | 16 | 18 | 6  | 7          | 257          |
| Children's Services          | 12              | 31 | 22 | 3  | 1          | 257          |
| Rural Health                 | 13              | 20 | 27 | 10 | 1          | 247          |
| School Bus Drivers           | 15              | 19 | 24 | 10 | 2          | 245          |
| Beachfront Renourishment     | 11              | 25 | 23 | 7  | 4          | 242          |
| Worker's Compensation        | 15              | 18 | 22 | 12 | 3          | 240          |
| Lease Purchase               | 13              | 22 | 22 | 8  | 3          | 238          |
| Mental Health                | 6               | 27 | 25 | 11 | 0          | 235          |
| Wetlands                     | 16              | 12 | 27 | 10 | 6          | 235          |
| Teacher Retirement           | 14              | 21 | 16 | 7  | 12         | 228          |
| Preschool Handicap Children  | 6               | 21 | 28 | 10 | 4          | 222          |
| Nursing Shortage             | 4               | 16 | 33 | 17 | 1          | 218          |
| Programmatic Budgeting       | 16              | 12 | 23 | 8  | 5          | 214          |
| Judicial Selection           | 11              | 6  | 20 | 18 | 15         | 190          |
| Principal Salaries           | 2               | 5  | 29 | 18 | 16         | 169          |
| Statewide Lottery            | 8               | 6  | 14 | 14 | 27         | 161          |
| Hunter Education Program     | 3               | 3  | 24 | 22 | 14         | 157          |
| Scenic Rivers                | 4               | 2  | 24 | 18 | 18         | 154          |
| Outdoor Advertising          | 1               | 5  | 16 | 22 | 24         | 141          |
| Saltwater Fishing License    | 1               | 4  | 10 | 20 | 32         | 123          |

Other issues

The survey list of 29 issues didn't cover all the bases for some House members. At the end of the survey, the membership was given the chance to add any issue not listed in the survey. Under this heading, a number of House members added still more potential priority issues.

Here is a list of those issues added by responding House members. The issues are listed in no particular order.

- Recall of Elected/Public Officials
- Medical Cost Containment
- Taxpayers Bill of Rights
- Legislative Ethics
- Infrastructure Pool
- Highway Construction Funds
- Master Teaching Program
- Reduction of Duplication in Higher Education
- Change Bingo Procedures
- Governor using state employees to campaign at the taxpayers' expense
- State taking over the expense of party primaries
- Parental Consent for Abortion
- Tougher DUI Laws
- Videotaping DUI Suspects
- Strengthen Motor Vehicle Road Violations of Current Laws
- Relieving the Tax Burden on the Elderly
- Affordable Housing
- Medical Needs of the Elderly
- Drugs
- Regulating Hospital Charges
- Regulating Doctor Charges
- "Zero Base" Budget Reform
- Overhaul Sentencing, Parole Laws
- Freeze agency budgets to require line item rather than lump sum yearly requests

Naming the top three priorities

Finally, House members were asked to list in order of importance the top three issues to be addressed by the General Assembly during the upcoming session. Not all the members responding to the survey answered this question.

Of the House members who did responded to this portion of the survey, Automobile Insurance outdistanced all others as one of the top three issues of the 1989 session.

Here is a list of the issues thought to be the top three priorities of the 1989 session by members responding to the survey. They are listed here in the order of frequency they were cited by House members

- Automobile Insurance
- Hazardous Waste Disposal
- Local Government Finance
- Education
- State Budget
- Fully Funded Education Programs
- Catastrophic Health Care
- Worker's Compensation
- Rural Health
- Adult Education
- Infectious Waste
- Beachfront Renourishment
- Teacher Retirement
- School Building Construction
- Medical Help for the Elderly
- Tax Reform
- Teacher Salaries
- Children's Services
- Mental Health
- Blue Ribbon Panel to Review the Budget process
- Beachfront Management
- Lease Purchases
- Highways
- Judicial Selection
- School Bus Drivers
- Statewide Lottery
- Protection of the Environment
- School Drop Outs
- Solid Waste Disposal
- Attracting New Industry

## The Top Ten Issues

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*To help House members with upcoming speeches, newsletters, newspaper columns or constituent questions, here is a rundown of the top 10 issues from this year's survey with a brief explanation of each. Thanks to the House standing committee staffs for their assistance with background information.*

### 1. Automobile Insurance

With most of the provisions of Act 166 going into effect this summer, further ways of reducing automobile insurance are expected to be placed before the General Assembly for consideration during the new session. The approaches will vary widely -- from the re-introduction of Governor Campbell's "Automobile Insurance Affordability Act" to a greater emphasis on safety and enforcement, capitalizing on the January implementation of the Highway Safety Act.

### 2. Infectious Waste Disposal (tied with) Hazardous Waste Disposal

The issue of infectious waste deals with the regulation of the treatment and disposal of biomedical infectious waste. This issue received considerable public attention this summer when medical wastes were found washed up on the state's beaches. However, this issue has received public attention before as some communities expressed concern about infectious waste incinerators located in their areas.

An infectious waste bill was considered by the House last session. This bill, originally introduced as H.2863, emerged from the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee as committee bill H.4139, basically requiring infectious waste to be handled as hazardous waste. H.4139 died on the contested calendar.

Like infectious waste disposal, hazardous waste disposal is an issue that has been before the public for a number of years. Public attention has intensified in recent weeks due to action taken by the board of the state Department of Health and Environmental Control.

In October, the DHEC Board adopted emergency regulations requiring all existing waste facilities in South Carolina, and any proposed facilities, to demonstrate the need for additional capacity. The board required that only South Carolina waste can be used to determine need.



This provision was aimed at the most controversial aspect of the hazardous waste issue: the proliferation of hazardous waste from 33 states disposed of in South Carolina. The emergency regulations stay in effect 90 days and can be renewed for another 90 days.

On Nov. 18, the DHEC board approved a proposal to prohibit the disposal of hazardous waste in landfills after Jan. 1, 1992. Further, the board also endorsed a proposal to open a state-run hazardous waste disposal facility by Jan. 1, 1993. Controlling the state-run disposal site would be a newly created South Carolina Hazardous Waste Authority, an agency separate from DHEC. Both proposals must have legislative approval.

A number of hazardous waste bills were introduced during the past two sessions. H.2344, set for special order, came before the House early last session. This bill required that a commercial hazardous waste facility could not increase its tonnage or the length of time to operate except by DHEC regulation, approved by the Legislature. The House voted to recommit H.2344 to the Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee.

### 3. Solid Waste Management

Rapidly filling landfills, as well as new EPA regulations, have made solid waste disposal an issue of concern among the House members surveyed. The new EPA regulations currently under review will require more stringent handling of solid waste disposal.

In addition, a 17-member Legislative Task Force to Study Alternatives to Landfill Disposition of Solid Waste has been named, with Sen. Thomas Moore, D-Aiken, as chairman. Under the concurrent resolution, the task force will review alternative methods of solid waste disposal that do not include landfill use, such as using waste to produce energy, recycling, and reducing the amount of waste generated. Hazardous waste disposal is not a part of the study. The task force must report back to the General Assembly by March 31.

### 4. Catastrophic Health Care

The expansion of Medicaid coverage by the federal government under the new Catastrophic Health Care program is expected to cost South Carolina an additional \$10 million the first year of implementation. By 1992, it is anticipated, 42,000 additional residents will be eligible for Medicaid in South Carolina under the new program. Currently, there are no firm estimates of what this new program will cost the state in future years.

## 5. School Building Construction

The construction needs of the state's public schools was the top rated issue in last year's survey, and it again appears in the top five issues for the 1989 session.

A 1987 survey by the State Department of Education found that funds from all capital funding sources available to school districts would fall more than \$929 million short of the need for school facilities over the five year period from 1987 to 1992. The State Supreme Court recently held that lease purchase agreements do not constitute general obligation debt, which must be authorized by the voters in a referendum.

Efforts may be made during the new session to provide additional state support for school building construction and to develop and expand methods of funding school construction.

## 6. Adult Education

According to the 1980 census, almost 20 percent of South Carolina's population age 25 and over completed less than eight grades of school. This issue may lead to efforts to initiate, expand and coordinate adult education services. The State Board of Education has requested an increase of nearly \$7 million for adult education. The governor has proposed a \$3 million increase in adult education programs.

## 7. School Drop Outs

About one-third of South Carolina's 9th graders fail to graduate four years later. This issue would address methods of drop out prevention, changes to the compulsory attendance laws, among others. One proposal is the \$300,000 for pilot projects in school districts to create innovative programs for dealing with at-risk youth advanced by the governor's office.

## 8. Teacher Salaries

During the interim, preliminary projections indicated that the amount of new funds necessary to maintain the average teacher salary at the southeastern average exceeds the amount of growth in the Education Improvement Act fund. This situation may prompt a closer look at how we fund teacher salaries, how we compute the southeastern average, and how we distribute EIA funds, among others.

9 Local Government Finance (tied with) Children's Services

Several legislative leaders have indicated that finding alternative sources of funding for local governments to ease their dependence on ad valorem taxes will come up for discussion again in the General Assembly. No formal proposal has yet been introduced.

A joint legislative task force currently is looking into the possibility of changing the structure of the various agencies that serve children in South Carolina. A report is expect in mid-March.

10. Rural Health

The availability of rural health care is an issue that is growing on a number of fronts: the financial crisis confronting rural hospitals as patient admissions decline, the recruitment of doctors and other health professionals, and the availability of emergency medical services in isolated, rural areas. Recommendations are anticipated shortly from the Joint Legislative Health Care Planning and Oversight Committee.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STAFF

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|                        |                          |                    |          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Speaker                | Hon. Robert J. Sheheen   | 508 Blatt          | 734-3125 |
| Asst. to the Speaker   | Shirley Cockfield        | 508 Blatt          | 734-3125 |
| Spkr. Pro Tempore      | Hon. John I. Rogers, III | 508 Blatt          | 734-3125 |
| Executive Secretary    | Gail Kinard              | 508 Blatt          | 734-3125 |
| Chaplain               | The Rev. Alton C. Clark  | 319 Blatt          | 734-2966 |
| Reading Clerk          | Sidney F. Varn           | House Chamber      | 734-2010 |
| Sergeant-At-Arms       | Richard E. Padgett       | 2nd Fl., St. House | 734-2402 |
| Asst. Sergeant-At-Arms | Leroy Cain               | 2nd Fl., St. House | 734-2402 |
| Asst. Director         |                          |                    |          |
| House Security         | Mitchell Dormon          | 2nd Fl., St. House | 734-2402 |
| Chief Amendment Clerk  | Magdalene Rigby          | 508 Blatt          | 734-3125 |
| Porter                 | Ronald Benjamin          | 2nd Fl., St. House | 734-2402 |
| Porter                 | J. D. Williams           | 2nd Fl., St. House | 734-2402 |
| Medical Technician     | James Walters            | 2nd Fl., St. House | 734-2422 |
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HOUSE RESEARCH AND PERSONNEL

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| Executive Secretary | Cynthia L. Wade        | 324 Blatt | 734-3230 |

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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|---------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| Research Director   | William V. Hegler | 411 Blatt | 734-3022 |
| Research Assistant  | Michael W. Fields | 411 Blatt | 734-3022 |
| Executive Secretary | June H. New       | 411 Blatt | 734-3022 |

EDUCATION & PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

|                     |                    |           |          |
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| Executive Secretary | Donna G. Tinsley   | 429 Blatt | 734-3053 |

ETHICS COMMITTEE

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INTERSTATE COOPERATION COMMITTEE

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| Executive Secretary | Sophia B. Floyd | 518 Blatt | 734-3108 |
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INVITATIONS AND MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

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JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

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| Executive Secretary | Dottie N. Nidiffer   | 407 Blatt | 734-3015 |

MEDICAL, MILITARY, PUBLIC AND MUNICIPAL  
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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| Research Director   | J. Michael Witkowski | 425 Blatt | 734-3046 |
| Research Assistant  | Virgie Lee Randolph  | 425 Blatt | 734-3046 |
| Executive Secretary | Francine C. Jones    | 425 Blatt | 734-3046 |

OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

|                     |                     |           |          |
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| Executive Secretary | Phyllis L. Thompson | 534 Blatt | 734-3141 |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------|----------|

RULES COMMITTEE

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| Executive Secretary | Ruth D. Muldrow | 519 Blatt | 734-3113 |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

|                      |                      |           |          |
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| Research Assistant   | Charles M. Case      | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |
| Research Assistant   | Mary Denis Cauthen   | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |
| Research Assistant   | Rosalyn W. Frierson  | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |
| Research Assistant   | Frank W. Fusco       | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |
| Research Assistant   | David S. Hegler      | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |
| Research Assistant   | Timothy M. Rogers    | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |
| Research Assistant   | Ricky C. Wade        | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |
| Administrative Asst. | Martha F. Craig      | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |
| Executive Secretary  | Pamela P. Rogers     | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |
| Secretary            | Dijuana B. Wilson    | 525 Blatt | 734-3144 |

CLERK'S STAFF

|                               |                      |                     |          |
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| Calendar &<br>Gen. Desk Clerk | Betty Amick          | House Chamber       | 734-2010 |
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| Staff Assistant               | Shirley Garrick      | House Chamber       | 734-2010 |
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| Act & General Clerk           | Carol W. Caskey      | 1st. Fl., St. House | 734-2056 |

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|                                     |                    |                     |          |
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| Accts. Clerk                        | Louise G. Gause    | 1st. Fl., St. House | 734-2053 |
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| Chief Mail<br>& Supply Clerk        | Linda Y. Foster    | 120 Blatt           | 734-2913 |

BLATT BUILDING MANAGERS AND RECEPTIONIST

|   |                    |                |          |
|---|--------------------|----------------|----------|
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| Asst. Blatt Bldg Mgr.                       | C. Lem Harper, Jr. | 508 Blatt      | 734-3125 |
| Receptionist                                | Ruth Chambers      | 301 Blatt      | 734-2931 |
| Receptionist                                | Earlene Deadmon    | 3rd Fl., Blatt | 734-3000 |
| Receptionist                                | Ella Redd          | 2nd Fl., Blatt | 734-3281 |
| Receptionist                                | Paulette Young     | 4th Fl., Blatt | 734-3070 |

WORD PROCESSING

|                       |                         |           |          |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------|----------|
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| Asst. Supervisor      | Mildred (Mibbie) Rogers | 305 Blatt | 734-2938 |
| Word Processing Clerk | Martha G. Best          | 305 Blatt | 734-2938 |
| Word Processing Clerk | Anna E. Boggs           | 305 Blatt | 734-2938 |
| Word Processing Clerk | Colette R. Murray       | 305 Blatt | 734-2938 |
| Word Processing Clerk | Rebecca W. Rush         | 305 Blatt | 734-2938 |
| Dictation Dial-In     |                         |           | 734-3250 |