



SC Legislative News

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This update is prepared and distributed by the South Carolina Department of Mental Health (SCDMH) to keep you informed of state legislative updates that may affect the Agency, mental health, healthcare, budget information, and other issues of interest. This publication is also available to employees on the SCDMH intranet site. Contact Robin Crawford, SCDMH Director of Governmental Affairs, for more information at robin.crawford@scdmh.org.

On Tuesday, SCDMH Acting Director Dr. Robert Bank presented SCDMH's FY 2024-2025 budget request to the House Ways and Means Healthcare Subcommittee. This year, SCDMH's budget request focuses on increasing forensic and inpatient bed capacity and increasing community resources for people with serious mental illness.

On Wednesday, a Senate Medical Affairs subcommittee, chaired by Senator [Tom Davis](#) (R-Beaufort), met to discuss [S.915](#), a bill that restructures the state's healthcare agencies under a newly created *Executive Office of Health and Policy* led by a Gubernatorial appointee in a newly created position of *Secretary of Health and Policy*. The subcommittee voted to move the bill to the full Senate Medical Affairs Committee to continue debating and making improvements to the bill.

Another Senate Medical Affairs subcommittee, chaired by Senator [Billy Garrett](#) (R-McCormick), met Wednesday to discuss [S.408](#), a bill that would require one hour of suicide prevention training as a portion of the total continuing education requirement for counselors. Jennifer Butler, Program Director for the SCDMH Office of Emergency Services which includes the Office of Suicide Prevention, testified to the subcommittee about the importance of suicide prevention training and asked the subcommittee to consider adding the training requirement for licensed social workers. The subcommittee passed the bill with a favorable report and indicated they will consider adding a licensed social worker amendment when the bill is debated by the full Senate Medical Affairs Committee. The Committee has set a meeting next Wednesday morning to consider both [S.915](#) and [S.408](#).

The Senate Family and Veterans' Services Committee met Wednesday morning to consider [S.778](#), a bill that would allow South Carolina to join the [Social Work Licensure Compact](#). The bill would allow social workers who have, or are eligible for, a license in the compact member states where they reside to apply for a multistate license. The Compact will be in effect once seven states enact the member legislation. Legislation has been enacted in Missouri and is pending in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and Washington. The Committee passed the bill to the Senate with a favorable report.

Visit the SC State House [website](#) to read any legislation of interest, [find out who represents you in the SC House and SC Senate](#), or to contact your legislators.