



The Republican Caucus

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

Phone: (803) 734-3139 • Fax: (803) 734-9953 • www.schousegop.com • e-mail: info@schousegop.com

Kenneth A. Bingham
Majority Leader

Bruce W. Bannister
Assistant Majority Leader

Charles M. Cannon
Executive Director

Jason C. Zacher
Communications Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information
Majority Leader Kenny Bingham
(803) 734-3139

Rep. Bingham Introduces Immediate ESC Reform Package

COLUMBIA, S.C. – House Majority Leader Kenny Bingham introduced a package of reforms to the State Employment Security Commission today.

This first piece of legislation has common-sense reforms that should be enacted immediately to improve the financial health of the agency and help unemployed workers.

“We are continuing to work on a full ESC reform package, but during our public hearings, there were a number of reforms that were so obvious, it is irresponsible to wait any longer,” said Bingham. “A comprehensive reform and restructuring of the agency is still in the works, but these reforms were so obvious that they required immediate action.”

The reforms included in Wednesday’s legislation include restricting state payments to employees fired for gross misconduct or drug use and restricting claims by employers who cost the system more than they contribute. The ESC is also instructed to work closer with the Budget and Control Board to help unemployed workers and instructed to immediately increase fraud and abuse investigations.

Joining Rep. Bingham on the subcommittee charged with reforming the Employment Security Commission were Republican Reps. Jim Merrill of Charleston, Annette Young of Summerville, and Rex Rice of Easley.

“We need to reform the Employment Security Commission from a check-writing agency to a job placement agency,” said House Speaker Bobby Harrell. “A complete restructuring of the ESC will be a major priority for the House this year, because it is an even bigger priority for our state’s unemployed who need these reforms the most.”

The ESC has been under fire for the last year after an oversight by the agency forced the General Assembly to convene in special session to ensure thousands of South Carolinians would continue to receive federal unemployment assistance.

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