



The Republican Caucus

PRESS OFFICE

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

James H. Merrill
Majority Leader

J. Adam Taylor
Assistant Majority Leader

Alan D. Clemmons
Secretary-Treasurer

Charles M. Cannon
Executive Director

Jason C. Zacher
Communications Director

April 22, 2008
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information:
Majority Leader Merrill
(803) 734-3139

House Completes Second Leg of Government Restructuring

Majority Leader calls on Senate to take action before June 5th

COLUMBIA – The House of Representatives approved legislation Tuesday that will create a new Department of Administration – making five state agencies accountable directly to the governor.

“This is a major first step to creating a state government system that is more accountable for the decisions they make,” said House Majority Leader Jim Merrill. “Approval of this legislation is the result of work by conservatives in the House to ensure our state is using taxpayer dollars wisely.”

The legislation moves five divisions of the Budget and Control Board to the new department: general services, human resources, the CIO’s office, procurement services, and the state energy office. These offices provide administrative services, rather than providing services directly to the people of South Carolina.

The bill approved Tuesday is the second piece of a two-part restructuring effort this year by House Republicans. Last month, the House approved a bill that will allow the governor to appoint the secretary of state and the state superintendent of education positions, as well as allow the governor and the lieutenant governor to run on the same ticket. If approved by the Senate, the voters will get the chance to decide on each position in this November’s election.

Both bills are now awaiting consideration by the South Carolina Senate.

Critics of the bill argued that the Department of Administration will actually cost taxpayers more money, but findings by a commission released earlier this year show that the cost savings through new efficiencies will more than make up the cost of any new staff required by the governor’s office. Our previous experience of moving the Department of Motor Vehicles, Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and the Department of Transportation shows that restructuring agencies makes them work better.

“The House Republican Caucus urges the Senate – particularly those who support the status quo – to debate and approve these bills before the end of session,” said Merrill. “The voters deserve to have a chance to decide on appointing the constitutional officers, and every taxpayer in South Carolina deserves the efficiencies we will realize in the new Department of Administration.”