



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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information:
Rep. Phil Owens
(803) 734-3237

House Republicans Increase Access to Quality Classes

COLUMBIA – Members of the House Republican Caucus led the fight today and approved a bill expanding the state’s online courses – a move needed to extend a quality education to every school-age child.

The bill extends a pilot program to allow about 3,000 students a semester to earn school credit through online coursework.

Republican Phil Owens of Easley fought efforts from the school bureaucracy to effectively shut out private and home-school students from the courses, despite the fact that they pay state income and sales taxes that fund most of the program. He led efforts to ensure a portion of the 3,000 slots would be reserved for any student in South Carolina, not just public school students.

“Every child should have the opportunity to enroll in these courses,” said Rep. Owens. “This program is a great option for all students in our state to receive access to high-quality coursework to which they might not already have access.”

Parents private or public school students do not have to pay for the courses.

Expanding the program will offer students in small, rural schools a chance to take quality courses not offered by their school districts, and will also provide students other options to receive class credits toward graduation.

“This shows, once again, that the House Republicans are pursuing new paths to improve education in South Carolina,” said Majority Leader Jim Merrill. “We will continue to think of new ways to offer our children access to a quality education no matter where they live.”