



News Release

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Attorney General Alan Wilson Statement on House Passage of Domestic Violence Reform Bill

S. 3 toughens penalties and provides for increased domestic violence education

(COLUMBIA, S.C.) Attorney General Alan Wilson released the following statement on third reading/passage in the House of Representatives of the Domestic Violence Reform Package, S. 3.

“This is an important step forward in our statewide effort to combat domestic violence. While not perfect, the House's ability to reach a compromise with the Senate is significant, and in large part is due to the leadership and personal involvement of Speaker Jay Lucas, along with Chairman Greg Delleney, Representatives Shannon Erickson and David Weeks, working in good faith with Senate Judiciary Chairman Larry Martin, Senators Greg Hembree and Brad Hutto, as well as many others in both chambers. This bill provides prosecutors and front line law enforcement with the necessary tools for combatting domestic violence. Hopefully, a ratified bill can reach Gov. Haley's desk before the General Assembly adjourns in two weeks.”

Wilson continued, "Our laws reflect our values, and until now, our values have not been accurately reflected. This battle will not be won by legislation alone; we must also continue the conversations in our communities to change the culture of our state."

The 18th annual Silent Witness ceremony, hosted by the Attorney General's Office, will be held at the State House on October 6, 2015. The ceremony honors those who lost their lives to domestic violence during this previous year. Wilson stated, “There is no better way to honor those who have lost their lives to this tragic crime than passing meaningful reform that could save others.”

For months, law enforcement, prosecution, victims' advocates, and legislative stakeholders have been working on this significant legislation. On Jan. 13, 2015, Attorney General Wilson and various stakeholders filled the State House lobby just minutes before the start of the legislative session to call for meaningful domestic violence reform legislation to be passed this year.

That goal is well within reach in the final days of the legislative session, as S. 3 is now being returned to the Senate for final legislative tweaks.

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