



South Carolina House Democratic Caucus

Harry L. Ott
Minority Leader

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House Republicans Give in to Democratic Pressure over Cuts to Local Government

Laurie S. Funderburk
Treasurer

GOP indicates their intention to reduce cuts after Democratic resistance

Christopher R. Hart
Secretary

Columbia, SC – In an effort to kill legislation proposed by House Republicans that would cut funding to local governments by \$122 million in this year's budget, Democrats in the House blasted the proposal for nearly four hours on Thursday.

Walt J. McLeod
Parliamentarian

Democrats took a stand against the Republican proposal that would force local governments to either raise property taxes or cut basic services in communities across South Carolina. Dozens of House Democrats spoke out against the tax hike proposal on the house floor, proposing amendments exempting all 46 counties from being subject to the cuts.

Carl L. Anderson
Chaplain

Tyler M. Jones
Executive Director

"House Democrats refuse to force local governments to raise taxes on their citizens simply because Republicans cannot provide solutions for the problems they created", said Rep. James Smith (D-Columbia). "These cuts would cripple local governments to the point that they could no longer operate and provide basic services like fire, police, and EMS".

Jessica B. Painter
Communications Director

Smith concluded that these were the most irresponsible cuts he's seen proposed in his twelve years in the House.

Press reports indicate that the Democratic opposition to this bill had forced Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Cooper (R-Anderson) to reconsider the magnitude of the cuts. He told the Greenville News on Friday that he thinks it is a strong possibility that the committee could reduce the cuts from \$122 million to \$50 million.

"We're pleased with the reduction in the cuts, but it's not enough. We won't stay quiet while our colleagues across the aisle attempt to pass the buck of responsibility", said Democratic Leader Harry Ott (D-St. Matthews), who also serves on the Ways and Means Committee.

House Democrats will continue to fight for jobs, public education, and healthcare during budget week slated to begin Monday morning.