

South Carolina Student Legislature



“Our Freedom, Our Future, Our
Responsibility.”

9 April 2025

Delegates of the South Carolina Student Legislature,

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome each and every one of you to the 2025 Spring Session at Coastal Carolina University. I first want to thank my tremendous Executive Committee for their leadership and guidance as we have planned this session. I would also like to extend my regards to Dr. Wood and the Political Science Department at Coastal Carolina for their assistance this semester. Please thank them if you have the opportunity. I trust that you will all enjoy yourselves and I implore you to reach out to me with any requests or inquiries you may have in order to improve the experience for this session and the next.

For our newest delegates, welcome! Your passions and convictions have guided you to what I believe is truly one of the greatest college organizations in the country. I am certain that you are curious, eager, and anxious to see what exactly it is that session holds. If I could advise you on one thing, it would be this: engage as much as possible. You will be nervous the first time you speak during debate – this is expected. But it is in these moments that we grow as speakers and leaders, and no matter your remarks, your peers will be all the better for having heard your opinion.

For our returning delegates, welcome back! I have been lucky to become acquainted with many of you over the last few years, and I look forward to spending another session with you. I implore you all to uplift and motivate your newest delegates. They will look to you for guidance over the next few days – I trust that you will not let them down.

It is an unfortunate truth that politics has become a dirty and brutal bloodsport. We are jaded and divided as political beings. More Americans are disinterested in their country's future out of frustration and spite for our current political climate than ever before. Knowing this, I congratulate you all on your commitment to prepare yourself with this organization for the real world political landscape that will await you in the years to come. Your country will one day need you to carry the torch of republicanism, democracy, and the rule of law. It is simple enough to get elected – it is a great challenge to govern.

In the words of former District Attorney, Governor of New York, and 1948 presidential candidate Thomas E. Dewey, "We need not be afraid of the future, for the future will be in our own hands."

Dum spiro spero,



JASON WALKER GREEN
Governor of the South Carolina Student Legislature

South Carolina Student Legislature Executive Committee 2025

Governor

Walker Green
Clemson University

Lieutenant Governor

Hannah James
University of South Carolina

Speaker of the House

Peter McLean
Clemson University

President of the Senate

Thomas Willis
Presbyterian College

Speaker Pro Tempore

McKenzie DuBose
University of South Carolina

Comptroller General

Derrick Wargo
University of South Carolina

South Carolina Student Legislature Cabinet and Office of the Governor 2025

Chief Justice

Kaleelah El-Amin
University of South Carolina

Attorney General

Eva Hoagland
Clemson University

Secretary of State

Connor Denny
Francis Marion University

Treasurer

Brooke Kelly
University of South Carolina

Chief of Staff

Sarah Moorshead
Clemson University

South Carolina Student Legislature Delegation Chairs Spring 2025

Bob Jones University
Josiah Gearhart

Charleston Southern University
Evan Rapp

Clemson University
Walker Green

Coastal Carolina University
Connor Mojo

Francis Marion University
Sophie Chambella

Presbyterian College
Ellie Brown

University of South Carolina
Derrick Wargo

Former Governors of South Carolina

Student Legislature

<u>Year</u>	<u>Governor</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Misc.Organizational Meeting</u>
1957	Robert McNair	University of South Carolina	
1958	Robert Fogarty	Wofford College	
1959	Jim Creel	Clemson University	
1960	Jim Creel	Clemson University	
1961	William Scharchte	Clemson University	James Truesdale (USC)
1962	James Truesdale	University of South Carolina	
1963	Mike Daniel	University of South Carolina	
1964	Pete Levintis, III	The Citadel	
1965	William Youngblood	University of South Carolina	
1966	William Yarborough	Furman University	
1967	John Ellenburg	Clemson University	
1968	William McDougall	University of South Carolina	
1969	Huck Nelson	Greenville Technical College	Barney Blackwell (USC)
1970	John Linton	Wofford College	
1971	Edward Woodward	The Citadel	
1972	Polly Span	University of South Carolina	
1973	Gerry Hough	Clemson University	Sharon Davis (Winthrop)
1974	Lee Atwater	Newberry College	
1975	James Hitch	University of South Carolina	
1976	Eugenia Bettis	North Greenville College	
1977	Alvin Roog	Newberry College	
1978	Lemuel Gray	Trident Technical College	Davis Watson (FMU)
1979	Steve Columbia	The Citadel	Wan Hipp (USC)
1980	Laura Harris	University of South Carolina	
1981	Joey Hudson	Winthrop University	
1982	Joey Hudson	Winthrop University	
1983	Ricky Wade	University of South Carolina	
1984	Tony Snell	University of South Carolina	
1985	Tony Snell	University of South Carolina	
1986	Steven Neeves	Coastal Carolina University	
1987	Jody Styron	Erskine College	

1988	Tracy Johnson	Columbia College	
1989	Hamilton Nelson	The Citadel	Janie Randall (CC)
1990	Gardner Jackson	Furman University	
1991	Jeff Fowler	Clemson University	
1992	Keith Melton	Clemson University	
1993	Dan Herran	Furman University	
1994	Melinda Diller	Presbyterian College	
1995	Todd Thayer	Clemson University	James Duke (CCU)
1996	Jennifer Graziano	Bob Jones University	
1997	Stuart Cate	The Citadel	
1998	Bryan Menees	University of South Carolina	
1999	Adrian Scott Frederic	Clemson University	
2000	Frederic Marcinak	The Citadel	
2001	Ashley Walters	Columbia College	
2002	Luke Franks	Bob Jones University	
2003	Joseph Opperman	University of South Carolina	
2004	Mandy Kulcsar	Clemson University	
2005	Ed Sutton	The Citadel	
2006	Timothy Silvester	Bob Jones University	
2007	Phillip Paradise	College of Charleston	
2008	Jade Roy	The Citadel	
2009	Will Freeman	College of Charleston	
2010	Chandler Hudson	Clemson University	
2011	Anderson Rouse	Bob Jones University	
2012	Blair Bolen	Clemson University	
2013	W.R. Simpson, III	Francis Marion University	
2014	Matthew Thomas	Bob Jones University	
2015	James McManus	The Citadel	
2016	Cameron Dominy	Charleston Southern University	
2017	Elliott Kelley	Bob Jones University	
2018 (Spring)	Ben Anderson	Coastal Carolina University	
2018 (Fall)	Bradley Shepard	Bob Jones University	
2019 (Spring)	Kiley Bennett	College of Charleston	
2019 (Fall)	Alexander Leasure	Erskine College	
2020	Robert Cathcart III	University of South Carolina	
2021	Felicity Ropp	University of South Carolina	
2022	Ewan Thompson	University of South Carolina	

2023	Harmony Hendrix	Clemson University
2024	Abigail Bergmann	Bob Jones University
2025	Walker Green	Clemson University

South Carolina Student Legislature Parliamentary Procedure Guide

Overview

Parliamentary Procedure is used in SCSL because it is a time-tested set of rules that allows everyone to be heard and helps the body make decisions efficiently and without confusion.

How it Works

The Chair (person who is presiding over session at the time) will begin by reading the purpose statement of the bill that is in line to be debated. The following table illustrates the activities that take place when a bill is being debated and the time allotted for each activity. Of course, the time limits of any activity can be limited or extended by motion of the body.

Activity	Description	Time Allotted
Speeches	The bill author approaches the well to present his/her bill	3 minutes
Question & Answer	Members of the body may ask the bill author questions	2 minutes
Pro/Con Debate	Members of the body may give speeches in favor or opposition of the bill	5 minutes
Last Rights	The bill author may reserve his/her last rights to address any questions/issues raised	1 minute

Speeches

After reading the purpose statement of the bill up for debate, the Chair will ask if the bill author is present. If it is your bill, you should respond by saying “I am. May I approach the well?” Once the Chair has given you permission, you may approach the well. If you wish to reserve your last rights (ability to speak right before the vote is called), this is the appropriate time to invoke your right. You may do so by saying “I reserve my last rights.” Then you may begin presenting your bill.

Question & Answer

After the bill author has presented his/her bill, members of the body are free to ask questions of the bill author. Questions should not be argumentative. To obtain the floor, raise your hand and wait to be recognized by the chair. After obtaining the floor, you should stand and state your name, school and one of the three following statements:

“Will the speaker yield to a question?” - When you have a single question

“Will the speaker yield to a possible series?” - When you have an initial question and one (1) to two (2) potential follow up questions

“Will the speaker yield to a series?” - When you have more than one question

A series is a maximum of three (3) questions in a row before the speaker is deemed out of order.

Bill authors have discretion to yield to a full series of questions, a limited number of questions, or none at all, so delegates must wait for the author to yield before beginning their questioning.

Once your question(s) have been answered, please take a seat. After the time period for question and answer has elapsed, we will then move into a time of pro/con debate on the bill. If members of the body still have questions, a member may make a motion to extend the time for question and answer, usually limited by a certain amount of time.

Pro/Con Debate

After question and answer, we move into a period of alternating pro/con debate on the bill, beginning with an affirmative speech. If you wish to give a speech in favor of the bill, you should raise your hand with an open palm and wait to be recognized by the Chair.

Should you wish to give a speech in opposition, you should raise your hand with a closed fist and await recognition from the Chair. After obtaining the floor, please stand and state your name and school and then proceed with your speech in favor/opposition.

There are no time limits on each individual’s speech but please be considerate of others who wish to speak on the matter. If need be, a motion may be made to extend the period of pro/con debate, usually limited by a certain amount of time.

Amendments

If, throughout the course of pro/con debate, the need for an amendment to the bill should arise, amendment forms will be available from the Chair. You should quietly, so as not to disrupt the debate, obtain an amendment form, complete it and return it to the Chair. Once you obtain the floor, you should say, “I believe there is an amendment on the floor.” The Chair will acknowledge the amendment on the floor and read the amendment. From this point, the amendment process runs the same as a bill presentation - speech by author, question & answer, debate, and the vote. Once the amendment has been voted on, debate on the bill, with or without the amendment, will resume.

The Rules

Point of Privilege - pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc.; may interrupt only if necessary

Point of Parliamentary Inquiry - inquires as to the correct motion to accomplish a desired result or raise a point of order

Point of Information - generally applies to information desired from the speaker

Point of Order – points to an infraction of the rules, or improper decorum in speaking; must be raised immediately after the error is made

Division - calls for a standing vote on a bill/motion; must be made before the Chair makes a ruling and the gavel comes down

Amend – to insert or strike out words or paragraphs or to substitute whole paragraphs or resolutions

Extend Debate - applies only to the immediately pending question; extends until a certain time, for a certain time period, or indefinitely

Limit Debate - closes debate at a certain time or limits to a certain period of time

Postpone to a Certain Time – postpones consideration of a bill/motion; mover must state the time that consideration of the motion will be resumed

Object to Consideration – aims to block consideration of an item entirely; objection must be stated before discussion or another motion is stated

Lay on the Table (Table) - temporarily suspends further consideration/action on pending question; may be made after motion to close debate has carried or is pending

Take from the Table (Un-table) - resumes consideration of item previously laid on the table

Reconsider – if agreed upon, allows the body to reconsider a previous vote; motion can only be made by a member on the originally prevailing side

Table Indefinitely - kills the question/resolution for this session, unless a motion to reconsider is successful

Previous Question - closes debate if successful

Appeal Decision of the Chair – appeals the Chair's ruling to the assembly; motion must be made before other business is resumed and is not debatable if it relates to decorum, violation of rules, or order of business

Suspend the Rules - allows a violation of the assembly's own rules (except Constitution); the object of the suspension must be specified

Unanimous Consent Request – if not objected to, allows body to take almost any course of action or make almost any change to its normal rules and procedures

Parliamentary Motions Guide

Based on Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised
(12th edition)

The Motions below are listed in order of precedence.

Any motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

You Want To:	You Say:	Interrupt?	2nd?	Debate?	Amend?	Vote?
§21 Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§20 Take break	I move to recess for	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§19 Register complain	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
§18 Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
§17 Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§16 Close debate	Move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§15 Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
§14 Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§13 Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§12 Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§11 Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
§10 Bring business before assembly (a main motion)	I move that (or "to")...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Incidental Motions - no order of precedence. Arise incidentally and decided immediately.

You Want To:	You Say:	Interrupt?	2nd?	Debate?	Amend?	Vote?
§23 Enforce rules	Point of order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24 Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the Chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§24 Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules which...	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§26 Avoid main motion altogether	I object the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27 Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29 Demand rising vote	I call for a division	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33 Parliamentary Law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None
§33 Request for information	Point of information	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None

Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly - no order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else pending.

You Want To:	You Say:	Interrupt?	2nd?	Debate?	Amend?	Vote?
§23 Take matter from table	I move to take from the table...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§24 Cancel or change previous action	I move to rescind/amend something previously adopted...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or with notice
§24 Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider the vote...	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority

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Bill No.	Bill Author	Delegation	Purpose Statement
19	Avery Kendall	BJU	To expand paid parental leave.
23	JJ Mayes	BJU	To fully close party primaries.
29	Caleb Rose	BJU	To begin government funding for power companies to construct small modular reactors.
31	CJ Spare	BJU	To require businesses to offer paid leave to employees who have a serious family or medical emergency.
33	Christina Bals	CSU	To extend the window of opportunity for the prosecution of spousal sexual battery.
34	Victoria Boskey	CSU	To mandate health and safety inspections on hotels.
35	Ashley Butler	CSU	To make illegal the use of headphones while driving.
37	Kaitlyn Conner	CSU	To increase and maintain the beautification and charm of South Carolina using greenery.
44	Ava Ladd	CSU	To accommodate college students' schedules, allowing them to exercise their civil right and duty to vote.
45	Peter Jackson Link, III	CSU	To allow students in public high schools to have the right to run Free/Libre and Open Source Software on their computers.
46	Samuel Link	CSU	To provide an income tax break for families with children not using public schooling.
47	Seth Nolan and Reagan Fairchild	CSU	To increase the effectiveness of travel in the state of South Carolina.
48	Evan Rapp	CSU	To establish a minimum wage in South Carolina.
50	Macie Thomas	CSU	To provide criteria for the cause of immediate removal of a guardian ad litem.
51	Grayson Alexander	CU	To increase the annual salaries of public school teachers in South Carolina; and for other purposes.
53	Katie Balster	CU	To ensure that school districts provide for the needs of special education students.
55	Elli Berry	CU	To increase the South Carolina state gas tax to generate additional revenue for the maintenance, repair, and improvement of the state's transportation infrastructure.
57	Camille Chu	CU	To amend South Carolina Code Section 61-6-1500, to permit the sale of liquor in grocery stores that meet specific licensing and regulatory requirements, ensuring responsible sales and consumer convenience while maintaining compliance with public safety regulations.

59	William Griffith	CU	To legalize, regulate, and tax sports wagering in the State of South Carolina, and to establish the South Carolina Gaming Commission to oversee its implementation; and for other purposes.
62	Melanie Mae Henderson	CU	To amend South Carolina's Blue Laws to allow for greater flexibility and modernization of alcohol sales, including allowing the sale of alcohol on Sundays before 12:30 p.m. and eliminating restrictions on certain holidays.
64	Eva Hoagland	CU	To raise the minimum legal dropout age in South Carolina to eighteen.
65	Zoe Leaphart	CU	To expand addiction treatment programs and increase access to Narcan for overdose prevention in South Carolina.
67	Sarah Moorshead	CU	To remove barriers to reporting spousal sexual abuse; and for other purposes.
68	Mary Austin Sturkie	CU	To eliminate the time restriction for each felony offense in child custody cases.
70	Ava Urban	CU	To ensure transparency and accountability in cases of in-custody deaths by requiring an independent review of deaths occurring under suspicious circumstances.
73	Olivia Brannen	CCU	To ensure that individuals are not jailed solely because they cannot afford bail, and save taxpayers money by requiring courts to make ability-to-pay determinations when deciding bond amounts.
75	Camille Fortino	CCU	To decrease domestic violence related homicides by prohibiting and limiting the possession of firearms of those convicted of domestic abuse.
77	Franceska Guerrero	CCU	To increase opportunity by prohibiting legacy admissions by public higher education institutions in South Carolina.
78	Brian Hughes	CCU	To grant school districts in South Carolina increased flexibility over their academic calendars, allowing them to accommodate the unique needs of their communities and improve student success.
80	Kennedy Kovach	CCU	To alter South Carolina's definition of domestic violence to include emotional and economic abuse to allow for additional victims to be protected by law.
82	Daniel Lala	CCU	To decrease the financial constraint of divorce by removing the requirement of separation.
84	Matthew McCall	CCU	To combat opioid addiction in South Carolina by implementing stricter regulations on prescriptions.
85	Connor Mojo	CCU	To secure the future of economically disadvantaged South Carolina undergraduates by creating an assurance fund if FAFSA grants and loans fail to be distributed on time.
88	Robert Nese	CCU	To deter and prevent deliberate animal fighting by requiring mandatory jail time.

89	Samuel Rau	CCU	To decrease the number of hazing incidents across the state by increasing the potential punishment for hazing to a felony.
91	Ahmad Brown	FMU	To change punishments for possession of Marijuana.
94	Sophie Chambella	FMU	To encourage sibling preservation through the adoptive process.
96	Connor Denny	FMU	To allow divorce due to emotional abuse under South Carolina law.
98	Daiveon Glover	FMU	To reduce government involvement in bedroom affairs.
100	Zachary Lingerman	FMU	To produce revenue to support and improve road infrastructure in South Carolina.
102	Charity Turner	FMU	To require elementary to high school students to learn about the danger of binge drinking.
103	Ellie Brown	PC	To better protect the children of South Carolina.
104	Braylen Dixon	PC	To create Section 44-20-530 in order to legalize and regulate sports betting in the state of South Carolina.
106	Jacob Kerwin	PC	To amend SECTION 61-6-110. and SECTION 61-4-50. to lower the legal drinking age to from 21 to 18 and create a 13% tax on all alcoholic beverages for those between the ages of 18-21.
111	Alexandra McAllister	PC	To make sexual/reproductive education more effective, educational, and inclusive, and therefore improve the understanding and wellbeing of students.
114	Kaitlyn McAllister	PC	To revise 16-3-615 (A) and 16-3-615 (B), to amend the legislation and expand the scope of legal reportability regarding spousal sexual battery.
115	Alex Melgar	PC	To raise the fine for impersonating a state or local official, employee, or law enforcement officer.
116	Barrett Moody	PC	To aid Title 46 the Unified Aquaculture Certification Program in South Carolina, in further development and investment of the SC aquaculture sector.
119	Ladson Porter	PC	To amend SECTION 44-34-100. of the South Carolina laws so that it is lawful for a tattoo artist to tattoo any part of the head, face, or neck of another person.
121	Dakota Price	PC	To revise Section 61-4-120 (A), to allow all alcohol on Sundays and to strike Section 61-4-140.
123	Amelia Rhyne	PC	To strike out 44-20-210 in order to disband South Carolina Commission on Disabilities and Special Needs and replace it with an appointed secretary by the governor in order to add the department to the governor's cabinet.
125	Andy Robertson	PC	To amend Section 16-8-290 of the Code of Laws to require that law enforcement agencies notify the relevant parties of

			the release of a criminal gang member within ten days of the release and establish penalties for failure to comply.
126	Katelynn Ryan	PC	To give eligible high school students the opportunity to register to vote before graduation.
127	Ava Westhart	PC	To amend Title 31, Chapter 13 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to create a statewide affordable housing tax credit program that incentivizes developers to build affordable housing in South Carolina's underserved communities.
129	Thomas Willis	PC	To Provide Further Tax Grants For Companies Who Convert Abandoned Properties into Affordable Housing Units.
131	Taylor McKenzie Wooten	PC	To phase out the use of private prisons in South Carolina by prohibiting new contracts, gradually terminating existing agreements, and redirecting resources to public correctional facilities and rehabilitation programs that focus on reducing recidivism and reintegrating individuals into society.
134	Damien Barber	USC	To require all 46 county sheriffs to opt-in to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency's 287(g) program of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
137	Andrew Boswell	USC	To lower homeowner's insurance costs for South Carolina homeowners.
138	Max Brabham	USC	To improve the overall health of South Carolinian citizens.
139	Nailah Brown	USC	To expand Affordable housing around the state of South Carolina.
145	Eric Center	USC	To promote South Carolina's diverse cultural and linguistic heritage.
148	Allison DeHart	USC	To promote the use of renewable energy in the state by creating an income tax credit for the installation of energy storage systems.
150	Kaleelah El-Amin	USC	To reform and expand criminal record expungement access.
152	Zackery Haddon	USC	To modernize the South Carolina education system by enhancing core academic curricula, integrating life skills education, and improving teacher compensation.
156	Brooke Kelly	USC	To create a premium security plan to protect the citizens of South Carolina through healthcare reinsurance.
162	Chance Kirby	USC	To require press releases in the event of incarcerated individuals' death behind bars.
164	Sam Maloney	USC	To construct a regulatory framework for the legalization of sports betting and other addictive substances and services while drastically minimizing the risk of addiction.
166	Zach McClure	USC	To expand the right to vote in South Carolina.
169	Maddi Nagel	USC	To protect South Carolinians from predatory tipping practices.

170	Matthew Peiser	USC	To reduce automobile-related fatalities and injuries in South Carolina.
173	Reagan Quast	USC	To rephrase South Carolina law to be more sensitive and inclusive to those living with mental illness.
176	Derrick Wargo	USC	To expand access for NIL compensation to high school athletes in South Carolina.
178	Ryan Young	USC	To allow for same day voter registration in the state of South Carolina.

A Bill
Presented by Avery Kendall
Bob Jones University

- Purpose:** To expand paid parental leave.
- Whereas,** There are 57,000 children born in South Carolina every year; and,
- Whereas,** Seventy percent of households with children report both parents go to work; and,
- Whereas,** Taking four weeks of leave can cost a person almost \$3,000 of income; and,
- Whereas,** Unpaid leave causes parents to return to work too quickly, impacting both their health and their family dynamic; and,
- Whereas,** The financial strain of unpaid leave has impacts on the mental health of the parents which can damage the connection with the child; and,
- Whereas,** Parental connection with children is essential for healthy childhood development and prevention of later issues; and,
- Whereas,** Paid parental leave enables parents to create the essential bond between parent and child.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: For the purpose of this bill, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (1) “Child” means a newborn biological child or foster child in state custody and under the age of eighteen. No child can have more than two parents eligible for paid parental leave.
- (2) “Eligible employee” means an individual who has been employed by an employer
- (3) “Paid parental leave” means six weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of an employee’s base pay or three weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of an employee’s base pay.
- (4) “Private business” means any business that has more than forty employees or has an annual revenue greater than seven hundred fifty thousand dollars.

Section II: Chapter 1, Title 41, of the South Carolina Code of Laws is amended by adding Section 41-1-27, which shall read:

(A) For the purposes of this section, the following terms are defined as follows:

(1) “Child” means a newborn biological child or foster child in state custody and under the age of eighteen. No child can have more than two parents eligible for paid parental leave.

(2) “Eligible employee” means an individual who has been employed by an employer for twenty-four weeks.

(3) “Paid parental leave” means six weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of an employee’s base pay or three weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of an employee’s base pay.

(4) “Private business” means any business that has more than forty employees or has an annual revenue greater than seven hundred fifty thousand dollars.

(B) Private businesses shall be required to provide paid parental leave for eligible employees following the birth of a child or upon the placement of a foster child in their home

(1) Eligible female employees who have given birth to a child are entitled to receive six weeks of paid parental leave. Other eligible employees who do not give birth are entitled to receive three weeks of paid parental leave.

(C) Paid parental leave usage includes the following:

(1) Paid parental leave must be taken consecutively, within a twelve-month period upon the arrival of the child. If the leave is not taken within the twelve-month period, the offer of paid parental leave expires.

(2) If both parents are eligible employees of the same private business, they make take their leave concurrently, consecutively, or at a different time as the other eligible employee.

(3) Legal holidays as listed in Section 53-5-10 shall not count against paid parental leave.

(4) Paid parental leave must run concurrently with leave taken pursuant to the Family Medical and Leave Act and any other unpaid leave to which the eligible employee may be entitled as a result of the arrival of the child. However, leave granted under this section is with pay and is not annual leave or sick leave and therefore does not deduct from the eligible employee's accrued leave balance. An eligible employee does not have to exhaust all other forms of leave before being eligible to take leave granted

under this section. Eligible employees shall accrue annual and sick leave at the normal rate while on this leave, if applicable.

(D) A private business found in violation of subsection (B) shall incur a fine no less than the amount owed to the eligible employee during the period of their leave and no greater than 15% of their annual salary. This fine shall be enforced on all businesses licensed by the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.

(E) The Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation shall promulgate regulations, guidance, and procedures to implement this section.

Section III: To amend Section 8-11-150 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read:

(A) For the purposes of this section:

(1) "Child" means a newborn biological child or foster of a child in state custody and under the age of eighteen. No child can have more than two parents eligible for paid parental leave.

(2) "Eligible state employee" means an employee occupying any percentage of a full-time equivalent position.

(3) "Paid parental leave" means ~~six~~ *ten* weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of the eligible state employee's base pay or ~~two~~ four weeks of paid leave at one hundred percent of the eligible state employee's base pay. Leave for part-time eligible state employees must be on a prorated basis corresponding to the percentage of hours they are normally scheduled to work.

(4) "Qualifying event" means the birth of a newborn biological child to an eligible state employee or after a co-parent's birth of a newborn child or fostering a child in state custody.

(B) Eligible *female* state employees who are employed by this State, its departments, agencies, or institutions and who give birth are entitled to receive ~~six~~ *ten* weeks of paid parental leave. Other eligible state employees who do not give birth are entitled to receive ~~two~~ *four* weeks of paid parental leave.

(C) Paid parental leave usage includes the following:

(1) The entitlement to leave pursuant to subsection (B) expires at the end of the twelve-month period beginning on the date of such birth or initial legal

placement. An eligible state employee shall receive no more than one occurrence of ~~six~~ *ten* or ~~two~~ *four* weeks of paid parental leave for any twelve-month period, even if more than one qualifying event occurs. However, nothing in this item prohibits a foster parent from requesting and receiving approval for parental leave in nonconsecutive one-week time periods.

Section IV: This bill will go into effect July 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by JJ Mayes
Bob Jones University

- Purpose:** To fully close party primaries.
- Whereas,** The current open primary system is highly susceptible to majority and minority party manipulation; and,
- Whereas,** Closed primaries ensure protection for minority party primaries against an overzealous and manipulating majority; and,
- Whereas,** To ensure democratic principles are upheld, the nominee of a political party should represent the members of that party and not the members of another; and,
- Whereas,** Political candidates should not be allowed to engage or enable others in manipulation of the primary system; and,
- Whereas,** Closed primaries ensure the confidence of members of political parties in their party's nominee; and,
- Whereas,** Closed primaries strengthen the political participation of South Carolina citizens in their local political party, leading to a more politically informed and involved populace.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** For the purpose of this bill, the following terms are defined as follows:
- (1) "Primary" means a party primary election held by a political party.
 - (2) "Political party" means a political party, organization, or association certified by the State Election Commission.
 - (3) "Voter," "registered voter," "elector," "registered elector," "qualified elector," or "qualified registered elector" means a person whose name is contained on the active roster of voters maintained by the State Election Commission and whose name has not been removed from the roster for any of the reasons named in Section 7-3-20(D)(5) and who possesses a valid registration certificate.

(4) "Electoral board" or "county board" means the board or other authority empowered to hold a general or special election.

Section II: Section 7-5-110 of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

"Section 7-5-110. (A) ~~No~~ A person shall be allowed to may not vote at any in a partisan primary election or a partisan advisory referendum unless he shall be is registered as herein a member of that political party as required by the provisions of this chapter.

(B) The State Election Commission shall assist the county boards charged by law with registering electors with capturing the data and maintaining a list of all electors registered by party affiliation. To expedite the registration of electors, the county boards shall allow electors to register by party, if they wish, at all partisan primary elections conducted before June 1, 2028.

(C) After the first primary is conducted under the provisions of this section, the entity charged by law with registering qualified electors shall contact the qualified electors of that county, by whatever method it determines to be appropriate, informing them of partisan primary voting procedures as provided in this section.

(D) The State Election Commission shall provide a format for absentee voting registration to comply with the provisions of this section."

Section III: Chapter 5, Title 7 of the S.C. Code is amended by adding:

"Section 7-5-115.

(A) Only an elector registered as a member of a certified political party may vote in a partisan primary election or partisan advisory referendum of the certified political party with which that elector is registered. In no event may an elector registered as a member of a certified political party vote in the partisan primary election or partisan advisory referendum of a certified political party with which that elector is not registered.

(B) The State Election Commission shall assist the county entities charged by law with registering electors with creating and maintaining a list of all electors registered by party affiliation. The State Election Commission shall indicate in the

state voter file what selection an elector makes. To expedite the registration of electors, the county boards of voter registration and elections shall allow electors to register by party, if they wish, at all partisan primary elections conducted before June 1, 2028, by having an elector sign the following statement before an election official overseeing the conduct of the partisan primary election: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a resident of South Carolina and a registered voter in this precinct. I further swear (or affirm) that I hereby choose to register as a member of a certified political party, specifically the _____ Party." The form to be signed by the elector may specifically list all of the certified political parties from which the elector may choose. This form shall be provided through regular voter registration channels with both physical and online options.

(C) The county boards of voter registration and elections shall contact the qualified electors of that county, by whatever method it determines to be appropriate, informing them of partisan primary voting procedures as provided in this section."

Section IV: Section 7-5-170 of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

"Section 7-5-170.

~~(1) (A) Written application required.~~ A person may not be registered to vote except upon written application or electronic application pursuant to Section 7-5-185. ~~That application shall become~~ ~~which shall become~~ a part of the permanent records of the board to which it is presented and must be open to public inspection. However, the social security number contained in the application must not be open to public inspection.

~~(2) (B) Form of application.~~ - The application must be on a form prescribed and provided by the executive director and shall contain the following information: name, sex, race, social security number, date of birth, residence address, mailing address, telephone number of the applicant, *political party affiliation, if any*, and location of prior voter registration. The applicant ~~must~~ *shall* affirm that he is not under a court order declaring him mentally incompetent, confined in any public prison, has never been convicted of a felony or offense against the election laws, or if previously convicted that he has served his entire sentence, including probation and parole time, or has received a pardon for the conviction. Additionally, the applicant ~~must~~ *shall* take the

following oath: "I, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a citizen of the United States and that on the date of the next ensuing election, I will have attained the age of eighteen years and am a resident of South Carolina, this county, and of my precinct. I further swear (or affirm) that the present residence address listed ~~herein~~ *on my application* is my sole legal place of residence, that I claim no other place as my legal residence, and that, to my knowledge, I am neither registered nor intend to register to vote in another state or county. *I further swear (or affirm) that I hereby choose to register as a member of a certified political party, specifically the _____ Party.*" ~~Any~~ An applicant convicted of fraudulently applying for registration is guilty of perjury and is subject to the penalty for that offense.

~~(3) (D) Date stamp voter registration applications.~~ - The county board of voter registration and elections shall date stamp all voter registration applications delivered in person, electronically, or by mail as of the date received.

~~(4) (E) The form to be signed by the elector may specifically list all of the certified political parties from which the elector may choose.~~

~~(F) Administration of oaths.~~ - Any member of the county board of voter registration and elections, deputy registrar, or any registration clerk must be qualified to administer oaths in connection with the application.

~~(5) (G) Decisions on applications.~~ - ~~Any~~ A member of the county board of voter registration and elections, deputy registrar, or registration clerk may pass on the qualifications of the prospective voter. In case of a question of an applicant being refused registration, at least one member of the board shall pass on the qualifications of the voter. A concise statement of the reasons for the refusal must be written on the application."

Section V: Section 7-9-20 of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

"Section 7-9-20.

~~(A) The qualifications To qualify for membership in a certified political party and for voting at a party primary election include the following: the applicant for membership, or voter, must be at least eighteen years of age or become so before the succeeding general election, and must be a registered elector and a citizen of the United States and of this State. A person may not vote in a primary unless he~~

~~is a registered elector. The state convention of any political party, organization, or association in this State may add by party rules to the qualifications for membership in the party, organization, or association and for voting at the primary elections if the qualifications do not conflict with the provisions of this section or with the Constitution and laws of this State or of the United States to meet the criteria for voting in a party's partisan primary election or partisan advisory referendum, the applicant for membership, or voter, must be:~~

- ~~(1) at least eighteen years of age or become so before the succeeding general election;~~
- ~~(2) a registered elector, a citizen of the United States and of this State; and~~
- ~~(3) registered as a member of the certified political party.~~

~~(B) A person may not belong to a party club or vote in a partisan primary election unless he is a registered elector and a member of that party. The state convention of a political party, organization, or association in this State may add by party rules to the qualifications for membership in the party, organization, or association and for voting at the primary elections if the qualifications do not conflict with the provisions of this section or with the Constitution and laws of this State or of the United States.~~

~~(C) The county boards of voter registration and elections charged by law with conducting a primary shall allow an elector to change his political party affiliation by executing an affidavit not later than thirty days before the primary. During that time, an elector may execute an affidavit declaring that he desires not to be affiliated with a political party. The choice to affiliate with a political party is valid until changed by the qualified elector pursuant to the provisions of this section.~~

~~(D) When a qualified elector presents himself at a polling place to vote in a partisan primary election or partisan advisory referendum, the entity charged by law with conducting the election or its representative shall require the qualified elector to sign an affidavit affirming that he is a member of the party conducting the primary. If the qualified elector does not sign this affidavit, he may not vote in the partisan primary election or partisan advisory referendum.”~~

Section VI: Notwithstanding the provisions of this act, in all primaries conducted before June 1, 2028, an elector is permitted to vote if he has not signed the affidavit required

by this act. After May 31, 2028, all political party primaries must be conducted pursuant to the provisions of this act.

Section VII: This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Caleb Rose
Bob Jones University

Purpose: To begin government funding for power companies to construct small modular reactors.

Whereas, South Carolina is nearing an energy crisis.

Whereas, South Carolina energy production is heavily reliant on imported coal and natural gas; and

Whereas, South Carolina uses more than twice as much energy as it produces; and

Whereas, South Carolina has prerequisite nuclear infrastructure to utilize SMR's; and

Whereas, small nuclear reactors create 300 MWs; and

Therefore, be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: For the purposes of this bill, the following terms are defined:

- A. Small modular reactors (SMRs) are defined as nuclear reactors generally 300 MWe equivalent or less, designed with modular technology using module factory fabrication, pursuing economies of series production and short construction times.
- B. Conventional Nuclear Energy: A nuclear reactor produces and controls the release of energy from splitting the atoms of certain elements. In a nuclear power reactor, the energy released is used as heat to make steam to generate electricity. (In a research reactor the main purpose is to utilize the actual neutrons produced in the core.
- C. Megawatts (MW): A unit of power equal to one million watts, especially as a measure of the output of a power station.
- D. The (Energy) Advisory Council is a group of nine persons who are selected by the governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.

Section II: To amend Title 48 – Chapter 52: Article 4, SECTION 48-52-440 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“(E) In evaluating the plans required by this section, the Advisory Council shall consider the extent to which the plans allocate funds in a cost effective manner and promote the following alternative sources of domestic energy or avoidance of consumption of energy:

- (1) the development of energy efficiency and conservation;
- (2) renewable sources of energy, including wind power, solar power, energy from biomass sources, and energy storage;
- (3) ~~nuclear energy; and~~ *conventional nuclear energy and small modular reactors; and*
- (4) alternative fuels or power sources for the transportation sector.

In considering the cost-effectiveness of the plans the Advisory Council must consider the cost of the proposed measures as to the expected useful life of the measures being proposed and the impact of the proposed measures on consumers. For each proposed plan, the Advisory Council must consider the value of the avoided cost of complying with anticipated state and federal environmental regulations.”

Section III: This bill will go into effect July 1, 2027, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

**A Bill
Presented by CJ Spare
Bob Jones University**

Purpose: To require businesses to offer paid leave to employees who have a serious family or medical emergency.

Whereas, over the last few years South Carolinians have made the same amount while the cost of living has increased, and

Whereas, 43% make just over the US official poverty level, live paycheck to paycheck, and are one emergency away from financial instability, and

Whereas, many employees are forced to choose between their health, family obligations, and their financial stability due to lack of paid leave options, and

Whereas, 18% of south Carolinians take care of elderly family members or other family members that require special care, and

Whereas, many other states provide employees with paid family and medical leave, and

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: For the purposes of this bill, the following terms are defined:

- (A) "Child" means a biological, adopted, or foster son or daughter; a stepson or stepdaughter; a legal ward; or a son or daughter of a person to whom the employee stands in loco parentis who is either:
 - (1) under eighteen years of age; or
 - (2) eighteen years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
- (B) "Employee" means an individual for whom an employer must complete a Form I-9 pursuant to federal law and regulations and does not include an independent contractor.
- (C) "Family leave" means any leave taken by an employee from work pursuant to Section 41-35-770B.
- (D) "Family member" means a child, spouse, or parent, or another person defined as a family member in a policy of insurance issued under this chapter.

Section II: Title 41, Chapter 35 of the South Carolina Code of Laws is amended by adding:

ARTICLE 6
Paid Family Leave

Section 41-35-770

(A) Employers must offer Paid Medical or Family Leave

- (1) If their business employs 20 or more employees, and
- (2) To employees who make under \$35,000 annually, and
- (3) For at least 6 weeks starting from business's first business day after serious family and medical emergency

(B) Family leave benefits are provided to eligible employees who take leave from work to

- (1) participate in providing care, including physical or psychological care, for a family member of the employee made necessary by a serious health condition of the family member;
- (2) bond with the employee's child during the first twelve months after the child's birth, or the first twelve months after the placement of the child for adoption or foster care with the employee;
- (3) address a qualifying exigency as interpreted under the Family and Medical Leave Act, 29 U.S.C. Section 2612(a)(1)(e) and 29 C.F.R. Section 825.126(a)(1)-(8), arising out of the fact that the spouse, child, or parent of the employee is on active duty, or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty, in the Armed Forces of the United States;
- (4) care for a family service member injured in the line of duty; or
- (5) take other leave to provide care for a family member or other family leave as specified in the policy of insurance.

(C) Employers may not discriminate employees on the basis of receiving Paid Medical or Family Leave.

Section III: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Christina Bals
Charleston Southern University

- Purpose:** To extend the window of opportunity for the prosecution of spousal sexual battery.
- Whereas,** South Carolina Law Codes currently only provide a thirty-day window in which individuals can report the commitment of sexual battery by their spouse and see their spouse receive prosecution for their acts; and,
- Whereas,** An extensive study on domestic violence from the National Institute of Health asserts that all forms of domestic violence are largely underreported due to fear that the abuse will worsen upon reporting, fear of not being taken seriously, and various other factors; and,
- Whereas,** A year would provide a more reasonable window of time for a victim to potentially gain the necessary confidence and support to report their situation and receive justice.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 16-3-615, subsection (B), of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
- “(B) The offending spouse’s conduct must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities within ~~thirty days~~ *one year* in order for that spouse to be prosecuted for this offense.”
- Section II:** This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Victoria Boskey
Charleston Southern University

- Purpose:** To mandate health and safety inspections on hotels.
- Whereas,** Currently in South Carolina there is no mandate for health and safety inspection on hotel rooms. Inspections occur on all other aspects of hotels such as spas, restaurants, and pools. The only way to get an inspection of a hotel room is by calling the South Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Administration or making a complaint to the local municipality; and,
- Whereas,** Local municipalities will be able to monitor closely for lack of health and safety in the hotels with the changing of this bill. A minimum inspection by the government would occur every four years. This allows the prevention of dirty or unhygienic hotel rooms being sold to guest; and,
- Whereas,** The importance of protecting one's health can never be exaggerated. Mandatory inspections can only improve the standard of hygiene found within a hotel. The government has shown precedent to step in to protect consumers from unsanitary conditions in restaurants and hotel rooms, where one sleeps should be no different.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 45-3-20 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
- “SECTION 45-3-20.** Inspection; Penalty for obscuration.
- All such towns and cities ~~may~~ *must*, by ordinance, provide for the inspection of all such places by some competent person appointed by the mayor or intendant and all persons conducting or operating such places shall at all times permit and allow inspections to be made of their premises by such inspectors. *These inspections must occur every four years.* Any person who shall refuse to allow such inspection or who shall obstruct any officer whose duty it is to make such inspection shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be subject to such penalties as such towns or cities may impose by ordinance, not exceeding a fine of one hundred dollars or imprisonment for thirty days.”
- Section II:** This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

**A Bill
Presented by Ashley Butler
Charleston Southern University**

- Purpose:** To make illegal the use of headphones while driving.
- Whereas,** The current South Carolina law does not prohibit the use of any type of headphone while driving; and,
- Whereas,** It is dangerous to drive while wearing headphones; and,
- Whereas,** According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 40,990 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2023; and,
- Whereas,** According to the Center for Motor Vehicle Safety around 3,000 people die in crashes due to a distracted driver every year; and,
- Whereas,** Other states have already criminalized or restricted the use of headphones while driving.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To add Section 56-5-3891 to the South Carolina Code of Laws:

“Section 56-5-3891. Unlawful use of headphones, earbuds, headset, or other listening device while operating a motor vehicle; limitations on select personnel; penalties.

(A) It is unlawful for a person to wear a headset, headphones, earbuds, or other listening device that’s purpose is for receiving sound and transmitting sound to that individual, other than a hearing aid or other instrument used to improve defective human hearing, while operating a motor vehicle on the public streets and highways of this State.

(B) This section does not apply to:

(1) any person who is lawfully parked;

(2) any headphone like equipment needed for a law enforcement officer to safely and effectively carry out his or her assigned duties;

(3) any headphone like equipment needed for an emergency vehicle operator; or

(4) any person operating a motorcycle who is using a headset installed in a helmet worn to prevent the speakers from making direct contact with the user's ears so that the user can hear surrounding sounds.

(C) The penalties for this shall be the same as those found in Section 56-5-3890, Subsection (D)."

Section II: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Kaitlyn Conner
Charleston Southern University

Purpose: To increase and maintain the beautification and charm of South Carolina using greenery.

Whereas, The State of South Carolina is known its charm and a large contributor to its charm is its trees; and,

Whereas, The State of South Carolina has rapidly expanded in turn increasing the number of trees removed for new development and housing; and,

Whereas, The State as a whole has lost 36% of its tree cover since 2023 according to the global forest watch organization; and,

Whereas, Trees need to be replanted to protect the environment, wildlife, and to continue the beauty of the state.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To add Section 48-23-71 to the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read:

“Section 48-23-71.

(A) Definitions. --

(1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) "Construction activity" means work by a constructing agency related to:

(I) Construction of or improvements to a highway; or

(II) Off-site environmental mitigation related to highway construction.

(3) "Constructing agency" means:

(I) A unit of State or local government; or

(II) Any other person who uses State funding and performs any construction activity with the State funding.

(4) "Forest" means a biological community dominated by trees or other woody plants covering a land area of 1 acre or more.

(I) "Forest" includes an area that has been cut but not cleared of trees or other woody plants.

(5) "Forest mitigation banking" means the intentional restoration or creation of forests undertaken expressly for the purpose of providing credits for reforestation requirements with enhanced environmental benefits from future activities.

(6) "Watershed" means all lands lying within an area described as a subbasin in water quality regulations adopted by the Department of the Environment.

(B) Government to minimize cutting or clearing. -- To accomplish a construction activity involving land clearing, a unit of State or local government or any other person using State funding for the construction project:

(1) May cut or clear only the minimum number of trees and other woody plants that are necessary and consistent with sound design practices; and,

(2) Shall make every reasonable effort to minimize the cutting or clearing of trees and other woody plants.

(C) When required. --

(1) If the total area of forest cut or cleared in connection with a construction activity by a unit of State or local government or any other person using State funding for the construction project equals 1 acre or more, the constructing agency shall locate an equivalent area of State-owned or other publicly owned land to be reforested by the Department at a rate of 10 cents per square foot of the area of required planting.

(2) (I) Except as provided in subparagraph (II) or (III) of this paragraph, the reforestation projects shall be established on any public land within the county and watershed in which construction activity by a unit of State or local government has caused a loss of trees where the public entity that owns the land agrees to that use of the land.

(II) If the reforestation project cannot be reasonably accomplished in the county and watershed in which the construction activity is located, then the reforestation shall occur in the county or watershed in the State in which the construction activity is located or shall be accomplished by use of credits in a forest mitigation bank in the county and watershed in which the construction activity is located.

(III) If the reforestation project cannot be reasonably accomplished in the county or watershed in which the construction activity is located, or by use of credits in the county and watershed in which the construction activity is located, then reforestation may occur by the use of credits in a forest mitigation bank in the county or watershed in which the construction activity is located.

(3) The constructing agency shall reimburse the Department for the reforestation activities at an appropriate rate of 10 cents per square foot of the area of required planting. (4) Any land for a reforestation project shall be:

(I) If possible, on the site or in the project right-of-way being used for the construction activity;

(II) If sufficient area is not available at the site or within the project right-of-way, on State-owned or other publicly owned land in the county and watershed in which the construction activity is located; (iii) If the reforestation project cannot be reasonably accomplished in the county and watershed in which the construction activity is located, on State-owned or other publicly owned land in the county or watershed in the State in which the construction activity is located; or

(IV) If the reforestation project cannot be reasonably accomplished on State-o

(V) If the reforestation project cannot be reasonably accomplished on State-owned or other publicly owned land in the county or watershed in the State in which the construction activity is located, accomplished through use of forest mitigation bank credits in the watershed in which the construction activity is located.

(D) Contribution of money. -- If the constructing agency is unable to locate a sufficient amount of State or other publicly owned land or available forest mitigation bank credits to comply with the requirements of subsection (C) of this section, the constructing agency shall contribute money, at the rate of 10 cents per square foot of the area of required planting, to the Reforestation Fund established under subsection (E) of this section.

(E) Reforestation Fund. --

(1) In this subsection, "Fund" means the Reforestation Fund.

(2) There is a Reforestation Fund in the Department.

(3) The purpose of the Fund is to:

(I) Finance the planting of trees on:

(a). Land located in the county and watershed in which construction projects giving rise to Fund contributions are located; and

(b). Private property on which trees were destroyed by a treatment to destroy plant pests that was applied by the Department of Agriculture; and

- (II) Finance the prevention of and response to forest health emergencies.*
- (4) The Department shall administer the Fund.*
- (5) (I) The Fund is a special, nonlapsing fund that is not subject to § 7-302 of the State Finance and Procurement Article.*
- (II) The Treasurer shall hold the Fund separately and the Comptroller shall account for the Fund.*
- (6) The Fund consists of any money received from contributions by a constructing agency under subsection (D) of this section.*
- (7) (I) Subject to subparagraph (II) of this paragraph, the Fund may be used only to:*
- (a). Plant trees on land located in the county and watershed in which construction projects giving rise to Fund contributions are located;*
- (b). If reforestation cannot be reasonably accomplished in the county and watershed in which the construction activity is located:*
- (i). Plant trees on State or other publicly owned lands located in the county or in the watershed in the State in which the construction activity is located; or*
- (ii). Purchase credits in, establish, or maintain a forest mitigation bank in the county or watershed in which the construction activity is located in accordance with Department regulations;*
- (c). Replace trees, except nursery stock that has not been replanted, that were destroyed by the application of a treatment applied to destroy plant pests under a quarantine imposed by the Secretary of Agriculture, whether or not the quarantine is in effect in the county or watershed where the construction activity occurred; or*
- (d). Finance the prevention of and response to forest health emergencies by:*
- (i). Maintaining the health and vitality of forest land and urban tree canopy; and*
- (ii). Preventing or controlling significant forest land and urban tree canopy degradation caused by acts of nature.*
- (II) (a). Except as provided in subparagraph (b) of this subparagraph, moneys in the Fund may be used for administrative costs calculated in accordance with § 1-103(b)(2) of this article.*
- (b). The Fund may not be used to finance administrative activities associated with a mitigation bank.*

(c). Any credits created by the Fund may not be sold to compensate for additional forest impacts.

(III) (a). The Department shall accomplish the reforestation for which money is deposited in the Fund within 2 years or three growing seasons after project completion, as appropriate.

(b). Money deposited in the Fund under subsection (D) of this section shall remain in the Fund for a period of 2 years or three growing seasons, and at the end of that time period, any portion that is not used to meet the reforestation requirements shall be returned to the constructing agency.

(8) (I) The Treasurer shall invest the money of the Fund in the same manner as other State money may be invested.

(II) Any investment earnings of the Fund shall be credited to the General Fund of the State.

(9) Expenditures from the Fund may be made only in accordance with the State budget.

(F) Consultation with Department. --

(1) Any unit of State or local government that engages in construction activities involving land clearing on forest lands shall consult with the Department to assure compliance with this section:

(I) Before cutting in or clearing a forest; and

(II) Before locating a reforestation area in accordance with this section.

(2) The provisions of this subsection shall also apply to any construction activity by any other person who uses State funding for that activity.”

Section II: To add Section 48-23-72 to the South Carolina Code of Laws:

“SECTION 48-23-72. Restoration Fund

(E) Reforestation Fund. --

(1) In this subsection, "Fund" means the Reforestation Fund.

(2) There is a Reforestation Fund in the Department.

(3) The purpose of the Fund is to:

(I) Finance the planting of trees on:

(a) Land located in the county and watershed in which construction projects giving rise to Fund contributions are located; and

(b). Private property on which trees were destroyed by a treatment to destroy plant pests that was applied by the Department of Agriculture; and

(II) Finance the prevention of and response to forest health emergencies.

(4) The Department shall administer the Fund.

(5) (I) The Fund is a special, nonlapsing fund that is not subject to § 7-302 of the State Finance and Procurement Article.

(II) The Treasurer shall hold the Fund separately and the Comptroller shall account for the Fund.

(6) The Fund consists of any money received from contributions by a constructing agency under subsection (D) of this section.

(7) (I) Subject to subparagraph (II) of this paragraph, the Fund may be used only to:

(a) Plant trees on land located in the county and watershed in which construction projects giving rise to Fund contributions are located;

(b) If reforestation cannot be reasonably accomplished in the county and watershed in which the construction activity is located:

(i) Plant trees on State or other publicly owned lands located in the county or in the watershed in the State in which the construction activity is located; or

(ii) Purchase credits in, establish, or maintain a forest mitigation bank in the county or watershed in which the construction activity is located in accordance with Department regulations;

(c) Replace trees, except nursery stock that has not been replanted, that were destroyed by the application of a treatment applied to destroy plant pests under a quarantine imposed by the Secretary of Agriculture, whether or not the quarantine is in effect in the county or watershed where the construction activity occurred; or

(d) Finance the prevention of and response to forest health emergencies by:

(i) Maintaining the health and vitality of forest land and urban tree canopy; and

(ii) Preventing or controlling significant forest land and urban tree canopy degradation caused by acts of nature.

(II) (a) Except as provided in sub subparagraph (b) of this subparagraph, moneys in the Fund may be used for administrative costs calculated in accordance with § 1-103(B)(b) of this article.

(b) The Fund may not be used to finance administrative activities associated with a mitigation bank.

(c) Any credits created by the Fund may not be sold to compensate for additional forest impacts.

(III) (a) The Department shall accomplish the reforestation for which money is deposited in the Fund within 2 years or three growing seasons after project completion, as appropriate.

(b) Money deposited in the Fund under subsection (D) of this section shall remain in the Fund for a period of 2 years or three growing seasons, and at the end of that time period, any portion that is not used to meet the reforestation requirements shall be returned to the constructing agency.

(8) (I) The Treasurer shall invest the money of the Fund in the same manner as other State money may be invested.

(II) Any investment earnings of the Fund shall be credited to the General Fund of the State.

(9) Expenditures from the Fund may be made only in accordance with the State budget.

(F) Consultation with Department. --

(1) Any unit of State or local government that engages in construction activities involving land clearing on forest lands shall consult with the Department to assure compliance with this section:

(I) Before cutting in or clearing a forest; and

(II) Before locating a reforestation area in accordance with this section.

(2) The provisions of this subsection shall also apply to any construction activity by any other person who uses State funding for that activity.”

Section III: This bill will go into effect January 1st, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

**A Bill
Presented by Ava Ladd
Charleston Southern University**

Purpose: To accommodate college students' schedules, allowing them to exercise their civil right and duty to vote.

Whereas, This would encourage civil responsibility in young adults, making it exponentially more likely that they will become lifetime voters; and,

Whereas, Many students are not able to vote in person because of classes, but 177,346 students at South Carolina colleges live in state, being likely to drive home to vote if school is closed; and,

Whereas, The outcome of the Election is an important part of society and has much effect on their lives.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To amend Section 53-5-10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“Legal holidays enumerated; holiday schedules of public colleges and universities.

The first day of January-New Year's Day, the third Monday of January-Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the third Monday in February-George Washington's birthday/President's Day, the tenth day of May-Confederate Memorial Day, the last Monday of May-National Memorial Day, the fourth day of July-Independence Day, the first Monday in September-Labor Day, *the Tuesday after the first Monday in November-Election Day*, the eleventh day of November-Veterans Day, National Thanksgiving Day and the day after, and the twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth, and twenty-sixth days of December in each year are legal holidays.

The holiday schedules of public colleges and universities, including technical colleges, shall not be in violation of this section so long as the number of holidays provided for in this section are not exceeded.”

Section II: This bill will go into effect May 1, 2025, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Peter Jackson Link, III
Charleston Southern University

Purpose: To allow students in public high schools to have the right to run Free/Libre and Open Source Software on their computers.

Whereas, The primary goal of education is to spread knowledge; and,

Whereas, Proprietary software is based upon keeping the knowledge of the inner workings of the program secret; and,

Whereas, Free/Libre and Open Source Software is founded on the premise that information such as the inner workings of the program are as visible and easy to access as possible.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To create Section 59-39-250 in the South Carolina Code of Laws which shall read:

“No High School in this State shall require any student to utilize proprietary software. In the event proprietary software is utilized, students will be allowed to use Free/Libre and Open Source solutions instead without penalty.”

Section II: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Samuel Link
Charleston Southern University

Purpose: To provide an income tax break for families with children not using public schooling.

Whereas, Homeschooling families get no benefits from public schooling so they shouldn't have to pay for it.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To add Section 12-6-3801 of the South Carolina Code of Laws:

“Section 12-6-3801 - Income Tax credit for families with children not using public schooling

(A) For the purposes of this bill

(1) Family is defined as groups of related people, bound by connections that are biological and/or legal.

(2) A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar amount taxpayers claim on their tax return to reduce the income tax they owe. Eligible taxpayers can use them to reduce their tax bill and potentially increase their refund.

(3) “Public school” means “any elementary or secondary educational institution

(B) There is allowed an income tax credit for each family with children not enrolled in a public school.

(C) The tax credit is the percentage of the family's income tax that would have gone towards education in the State.

Section II: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Seth Nolan and Reagan Fairchild
Charleston Southern University

- Purpose:** To increase the effectiveness of travel in the state of South Carolina.
- Whereas,** Frequent issues involving the speed of interstate travelers has arisen under the current law; and,
- Whereas,** Travelers often must break speed limit laws simply to keep up with the flow of traffic; and,
- Whereas,** Countries like Germany have removed speed limits on specified roads and have not seen an uptick in major traffic incidents.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 57-1-30 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (C), which shall read:
- “(C) The Department may designate specific sections of the state highway system as non-speed limit corridors where no maximum speed limit will be enforced. These corridors will be specifically defined and clearly marked with appropriate signage at all entry and exit points to ensure that drivers are aware of the change in speed regulation.”*
- Section II:** This bill will go into effect January 1st 202 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Evan Rapp
Charleston Southern University

- Purpose:** To establish a minimum wage in South Carolina.
- Whereas,** There is no set minimum wage in the state of South Carolina; and
- Whereas,** The Fair Labor Standards Act governs the minimum wage for most workers which was passed in 2009 and mandates the wage be set at \$7.25 per hour; and
- Whereas,** Inflation has pushed the dollar to hold 36% more value compared to 2009; and
- Whereas,** Only South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee have not adopted a minimum wage.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To Amend Section 41-10-40 of Title 41, Chapter 10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws by adding Subsection (E):
- “(E) Except where exempt in this Code, every employer, whether a person, firm, or corporation, shall pay to all employees a minimum wage which shall be not less than \$12.00 per hour for each hour worked in the employment of such employer.”*
- Section II:** To add Section 41-10-41 to Chapter 10 of Title 41 of the South Carolina Code of Laws:
- “41-10-41. Penalties and exemptions to the minimum wage.*
- (A) Any employer, whether a person, firm or corporation that chooses to violate the State standard minimum wage, shall be held liable for all backpay of their employees at the fixed minimum wage. This liability and minimum wage requirement will not apply to the following employers:*
- (i) Employers, whether a person, firm, or corporation and businesses whose revenue is less than forty thousand annually,*
 - (ii) Employers, whether a person, firm, or corporation who are considered ‘Juveniles’ pursuant to Section 63-19-20 (1),*
 - (iii) Employers, whether a person, firm, or corporation who have three employees or less, and*

- (iv) *Employers, whether a person, firm, or corporation whose sole business is farming.*

Section III: This bill will go into effect on January 1st, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Macie Thomas
Charleston Southern University

Purpose: To provide criteria for the cause of immediate removal of a guardian ad litem.

Whereas, The removal of a guardian ad litem is at the discretion of the court; and,

Whereas, There is no listed criteria to guide the court in deciding to remove a guardian ad litem; and,

Whereas, There is no listed criteria that requires the immediate removal of a guardian ad litem; and,

Whereas, A guardian ad litem may neglect their responsibilities without being immediately required to resign from their service in a case; and,

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To amend Section 63-3-870 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (B), which shall read:

“(B) A guardian ad litem must be immediately removed from a case for failure to fulfill any of their responsibilities as provided in Section 63-3-830 or any attempt to violate prohibitions as provided in Section 63-3-840.”

Section II: To amend Section 63-3-870 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“SECTION 63-3-870. Removal.

(A) A guardian ad litem may be removed from a case at the discretion of the court.

(B) A guardian ad litem must be immediately removed from a case for failure to fulfill any of their responsibilities as provided in Section 63-3-830 or any attempt to violate prohibitions as provided in Section 63-3-840.”

Section III: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Grayson Alexander
Clemson University

- Purpose:** To increase the annual salaries of public school teachers in South Carolina; and for other purposes.
- Whereas,** South Carolina ranks 33rd in annual teacher salary, which leads to high turnover rates and provides less motivation for teachers; and,
- Whereas,** Having less teachers results in larger class sizes, decreasing the quality of education for students, and;
- Whereas,** Many teachers quit due to low salary, resulting in school instability and lack of leadership and role models for students; and,
- Whereas,** Due to higher salaries in North Carolina and Georgia, teachers are more likely to leave South Carolina schools for higher salaries in these states; and,
- Whereas,** Raising teacher salaries improve both job satisfaction for teachers and long term success as a result; and,
- Whereas,** Improving education is an essential for social and economic development in South Carolina.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 59-20-50(b) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
“SECTION 59-20-50(b). State contribution level requirements; salary schedules. The state minimum salary schedule must be based on the state minimum salary schedule index in effect as of July 1, 1984. ~~In Fiscal Year 1985, the 1.000 figure in the index is \$14,172. (This figure is based on a 10.27% increase pursuant to the South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984.)~~ Beginning with ~~Fiscal Year 1986~~ *Fiscal Year 2026*, the 1.000 figure in the index must be adjusted on a schedule to *increase by 20% annually until the state minimum teacher salary is stay at the southeastern average at or above the national average* as projected by the Office of Research and ~~Statistic~~ *Statistics* of the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office and provided to the General Assembly during their deliberations on the annual appropriations bill. ~~The southeastern national average teacher salary is the average of the average teachers' salaries of the southeastern states~~ *shall serve as a*

benchmark for South Carolina's minimum salary schedule. In projecting the ~~southeastern~~ national average, the office shall include in the South Carolina base teacher salary all local teacher supplements and all incentive pay. Under this schedule, school districts are required to maintain local salary supplements per teacher no less than their prior fiscal level *and shall adjust for inflation annually at a rate no less than 3%.*

Section II: The increase in salary will be funded by reallocating the budget funds for education, revenue surplus funds, and reallocation of tax revenues. The General Assembly will have an annual budget review to ensure the funds are allocated appropriately.

Section III: If a school district fails to comply with the raise in salaries, the district will be punished by reducing their funding or face financial oversight by the SC Department of Education.

Section IV: Bonuses, stipends, or benefits will not be reduced because of the raise in salary.

Section V: The plan to increase the salaries of public educators in SC shall take place in a five-year increment, increasing gradually each year.

The increase will occur like this:

2026: 20% of the difference between South Carolina's average and the national average

2027: 40% of the difference

2028: 60% of the difference

2029: 80% of the difference

2030: The state average will match the national average.

With the adoption of this bill, the minimum annual pay of teachers will reach the national average by 2030. To adjust to inflation, the minimum salary shall increase annually at a rate of no less than three percent.

Section VI: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

**A Bill
Presented by Katie Balster
Clemson University**

Purpose: To ensure that school districts provide for the needs of special education students. In the case of insufficient numbers where they are truly unable, parents should be given the choice to either relocate, or demand that the district reallocates funding to cater to their child’s specific needs.

Whereas, All students have access to a free and fair public education, including students with special needs; and,

Whereas, Parents/guardians have choice with these changes, as this bill acknowledges that they know their children, and what they need the best; and,

Whereas, Districts are held accountable for ensuring special education services are sufficiently provided; and,

Whereas, Districts must ensure that their resources are allocated efficiently and effectively; and,

Whereas, State, federal officials, and citizens can ensure that districts are complying with the state and federal laws which require the provision of services to students with disabilities.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To amend section 59-30-50 of the South Carolina code of Laws to read:

“**SECTION 59-33-50.** District programs; contracts between districts; special arrangements for multiple-handicapped children.

The board of trustees of each school district shall, upon approval of its district's plan by the State Department of Education, establish and operate a program which will insure an appropriate education for each handicapped child resident within the district and shall maintain adequate records of the training and services provided and the children participating in the program. When a school district cannot satisfy the requirements of this section by providing for the education of its resident handicapped children because of insufficient numbers, the district may contract with other districts within the State or school systems or public or private

institutions or agencies within or without the State which maintain approved special educational facilities; provided, that such institutions or agencies shall accept applicable children into the program regardless of color, race, sex, or religion. The sending district must document this lack of numbers and receive prior approval from the State Department of Education. The sending district may contract and pay the receiving district or institution the per capita cost of instruction, special equipment and special services not reimbursed to the receiving district by State, Federal and other moneys plus the cost of transportation and of maintenance if the nonresident children must reside away from their homes. The district which enters into such nonresident contract arrangements, which are approved by the State Department of Education, shall be reimbursed by the department for tuition, fees, transportation and books, not to exceed the per pupil cost of educating a handicapped child of identical age in the public schools. Special arrangements for multiple-handicapped children for whom special appropriations are provided because of the severity of their handicaps may be made with the Department. **The guardians of the child have the right to deny the misplacement of their child if it burdens them financially or personally. In that case, the school must reallocate funding to be able to provide for the child. This may include more staff, different resources/transportation, etc.**

A Bill
Presented by Elli Berry
Clemson University

Purpose: To increase the South Carolina state gas tax to generate additional revenue for the maintenance, repair, and improvement of the state's transportation infrastructure.

Whereas, South Carolina's roads and bridges are in urgent need of repair and modernization to ensure the safety and efficiency of the state's transportation network; and,

Whereas, Inflation has significantly increased the cost of construction materials, labor, and maintenance, reducing the effectiveness of current funding sources for infrastructure projects; and,

Whereas, Deteriorating road conditions contribute to higher vehicle repair costs for South Carolina drivers and negatively impact economic productivity and public safety; and,

Whereas, investing in road infrastructure improvements will create jobs, support local businesses, and enhance the state's economic competitiveness.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To amend Section 12-28-310 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“SECTION 12-28-310.User fees on gasoline and diesel fuel.

(A) Subject to the exemptions provided in this chapter, a user fee of sixteen cents a gallon is imposed on:

(1) all gasoline, gasohol, or blended fuels containing gasoline that are used or consumed for any purpose in this State; and

(2) all diesel fuel, substitute fuels, or alternative fuels, or blended fuels containing diesel fuel that are used or consumed in this State in producing or generating power for propelling motor vehicles.

(B) The user fee levied on motor fuel subject to the user fee pursuant to this chapter is a levy and assessment on the consumer, and the levy and assessment on other persons as specified in this chapter are as agents of the State for the collection of the user fee. This section does not affect the method of collecting the user fee as provided in this chapter. The user fee imposed by

this section must be collected and paid at those times, in the manner, and by the persons specified in this chapter.

- (C) The license user fee imposed by this section is instead of all sales, use, or other excise tax that may be imposed otherwise by any municipality, county, or other local political subdivision of the State.
- (D) On July 1, 2017, and each July first thereafter until after July 1, 2022, the department shall permanently increase the amount of the user fee imposed pursuant to subsection (A) by two cents, for a total of twelve cents. All of the funds raised by the increase in the motor fuel user fee imposed by this subsection must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund.

HISTORY: 1995 Act No. 136, Section 2; 1996 Act No. 461, Section 4A; 2005 Act No. 161, Section 25.A, eff June 9, 2005; 2006 Act No. 386, Section 18.C, eff July 1, 2006; 2017 Act No. 40 (H.3516), Section 2, eff July 1, 2017.

Effect of Amendment

2017 Act No. 40, Section 2, added (D), providing that the department shall phase-in an increase of twelve cents on the user fee over six years.

(E) On January 1, 2026, and each January first thereafter until January 1, 2028, the department shall permanently increase the amount of the user fee imposed pursuant to subsection (A) by two cents, for a total of six cents. All of the funds raised by the increase in the motor fuel user fee imposed by this subsection must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund."

Section III: This bill will go into effect on January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Camille Chu
Clemson University

Purpose: To amend **South Carolina Code Section 61-6-1500**, to permit the sale of liquor in grocery stores that meet specific licensing and regulatory requirements, ensuring responsible sales and consumer convenience while maintaining compliance with public safety regulations.

Whereas, The State of South Carolina currently restricts the sale of liquor to designated retail liquor stores, limiting consumer access and convenience; and,

Whereas, Many states allow grocery stores to sell liquor under controlled conditions, promoting competition and increasing convenience for consumers while maintaining public safety; and,

Whereas, Modernizing South Carolina’s liquor laws will encourage economic growth, support local businesses, and generate additional tax revenue for the state; and,

Whereas, Ensuring responsible sales practices through proper licensing, training, and enforcement measures will mitigate risks associated with increased liquor availability; and,

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: Amendment to South Carolina Code Title 61

A. Amendment to Section 61-6-1500:

1. Grocery stores that hold a valid beer and wine retail permit under **Section 61-4-520** may apply for a Liquor Retail Endorsement to sell liquor for off-premises consumption.
2. To qualify, a grocery store must:
 - a. Maintain at least 60% of total sales from food and non-alcoholic beverages.
 - b. Be at least 10,000 square feet in size to prevent small convenience stores from selling liquor.
 - c. Establish a designated liquor sales area, separate from general merchandise, with controlled access.
 - d. Implement an ID verification system to prevent sales to

individuals under 21.

e. Ensure all employees selling liquor complete a state-approved responsible beverage service training program.

B. Restrictions and Regulations:

- a. Liquor sales in grocery stores shall be permitted Monday through Saturday, 9:00 AM to 10:00 PM.
- b. Liquor sales shall be prohibited on Sundays unless allowed by local option laws.
- c. Grocery stores must maintain compliance with all South Carolina Department of Revenue (SCDOR) regulations regarding liquor sales.
- d. Violations of these provisions may result in fines, suspension, or revocation of the Liquor Retail Endorsement.

Section II: Implementation

- A. This act shall take effect six (6) months after passage to allow for regulatory adjustments.
- B. The South Carolina Department of Revenue (SCDOR) shall oversee licensing, compliance, and enforcement.

Section III: Repeal of Conflicting Laws

- A. Any laws or regulations in conflict with this act are hereby repealed.

Section IV: This Act shall take effect January 1st, 2026, with the Commission required to establish licensing procedures within six months.

A Bill
Presented by William Griffith
Clemson University

Purpose: To legalize, regulate, and tax sports wagering in the State of South Carolina, and to establish the South Carolina Gaming Commission to oversee its implementation; and for other purposes.

Whereas, To generate revenue for the state, promote consumer protections, and curb illegal gambling operations; and,

Whereas, Regulation of sports wagering will ensure integrity in gaming activities and prevent fraud and exploitation; and,

Whereas, The American Gambling Association states in a November 2022 release, that over \$500 billion was gambled illegally in 2021, causing a loss of over \$13 billion in lost revenue to the state; and,

Whereas, Forbes reported in July 2024, there were only twelve states that prohibit any kind of sports gambling; and,

Whereas, Other forms of gambling such as lottery, raffle and stock are legal.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: This Act shall be known and cited as the "South Carolina Sports Wagering Act."

Section II: This Act shall add: *Title 16, Chapter 19, Sections 170* to the South Carolina Code of Laws.

Section III: For the purposes of this Act, the following definitions apply:

1. "Commission" means the South Carolina Gaming Commission, established under this Act.
2. "Sports wagering" means placing bets on the outcome of sporting events, cock fighting or individual performance statistics, including but not limited to professional and collegiate sports.
3. "Operator" means a licensed entity authorized to conduct sports wagering, including casinos, racetracks, and online platforms.

4. "Wager" means a sum of money risked on a sports event or outcome.

Section IV: The South Carolina Gaming Commission is hereby established to regulate and oversee sports wagering. The Commission shall:

1. Issue and enforce regulations related to sports wagering.
2. License operators and ensure compliance with state and federal laws.
3. Monitor wagering activity to detect fraud and ensure fair play.
4. Collect and distribute tax revenue from sports betting.

Section V:

A. The Commission shall issue licenses to operators that meet the following criteria:

1. Payment of a non-refundable application fee of \$500,000.
2. Submission of financial records and background checks.
3. Compliance with responsible gaming initiatives.

B. Licensed operators may offer sports wagering through:

1. Physical sportsbook locations at licensed establishments.
2. Online and mobile platforms accessible to users within South Carolina.

No person under the age of 21 shall be permitted to place a sports wager.

Section VI: A 15% tax shall be imposed on the gross revenue generated by sports wagering.

Revenue from sports wagering shall be allocated as follows:

1. 40% to South Carolina's Department of Education.
2. 30% to infrastructure projects, including roads and bridges.
3. 20% to responsible gaming and addiction treatment programs.
4. 10% to the operational expenses of the Gaming Commission.

Section VII: It shall be unlawful for:

1. Any unlicensed entity to offer sports wagering in the state.
2. Any sports wagering operator to accept bets from individuals under the age of 21.
3. Athletes, coaches, referees, or team personnel to place bets on events in which they are involved.

Section VIII: Any entity operating sports wagering without a license shall be subject to a fine of up to \$500,000 per violation and potential criminal charges.

Individuals engaging in match-fixing or fraudulent betting activities shall be guilty of a felony punishable by up to 5 years in prison and a \$100,000 fine.

Section IX: If any section or provision of the bill is found to be invalid, such invalidity, such invalidity shall not affect the other sections or provision, which shall remain in full force and effect.

Section X: If any provision of this bill of the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this bill, or the application of the bill shall remain in full force and effect.

Section XI: This Act shall take effect January 1st, 2026, with the Commission required to establish licensing procedures within six months.

A Bill
Presented by Melanie Mae Henderson
Clemson University

Purpose: To amend South Carolina’s Blue Laws to allow for greater flexibility and modernization of alcohol sales, including allowing the sale of alcohol on Sundays before 12:30 p.m. and eliminating restrictions on certain holidays.

Whereas, South Carolina’s Blue Laws, which regulate the sale of alcohol, were originally instituted to promote a certain social standard and public morality; and,

Whereas, The evolving social and economic conditions in South Carolina, including changes in consumer behavior and business operations, now call for a revision of these laws to better align with contemporary standards; and,

Whereas, The current restrictions on alcohol sales limit the potential for economic growth and convenience for consumers, while also encouraging black market or illegal sales; and,

Whereas, Revising these Blue Laws will support local businesses, increase tourism, and provide consumers with more choices, while still maintaining necessary controls to avoid excess consumption; and,

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina General Assembly in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: Amendment of South Carolina Code of Laws Title 61, Chapter 4

SECTION 61-4-10. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the sale of alcoholic beverages in South Carolina shall be allowed as follows:

1. On Sundays, the sale of alcohol may begin at 10:00 a.m., rather than the previously restricted 12:30 p.m.
2. On all holidays, there will no longer be a restriction on alcohol sales, except for the restrictions on alcohol sales on Christmas Day.

Section II: Modifying Sunday Sales Regulations

1. Section 61-4-110 is amended to read as follows:
“It is unlawful to sell or serve alcoholic beverages between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. on Sundays. However, alcohol may be sold for on-premises consumption starting at 10:00 a.m., but no sales shall be made prior to this time.”

2. Establishment owners wishing to sell alcohol before 10:00 a.m. on Sundays must request a special permit from the Department of Revenue.

Section III: Repeal of Alcohol Sales Restrictions on Certain Holidays

1. Section 61-4-50 is amended to allow the sale of alcohol on the following holidays, which previously had restrictions:
 - New Year's Day
 - Memorial Day
 - Labor Day
 - Independence Day
2. Sales of alcohol may occur from 10:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. on all holidays, except for Christmas Day, when alcohol sales remain prohibited.

Section IV: Penalties for Non-Compliance

1. Any establishment that sells alcohol outside of the authorized hours under this amendment will be subject to fines as determined by the South Carolina Department of Revenue.
2. First Offense: A fine of \$500.
3. Second Offense: A fine of \$1,000 and potential suspension of the license to sell alcohol for 30 days.
4. Third Offense: A fine of \$2,000 and a revocation of the license to sell alcohol for one year.

Section V: This bill shall go into effect on January 1, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

**A Bill
Presented by Eva Hoagland
Clemson University**

- Purpose:** To raise the minimum legal dropout age in South Carolina to eighteen.
- Whereas,** Education is a fundamental right and essential for personal and professional development; and,
- Whereas,** Requiring students to attend school until the age of 18, unless completed before then, will increase graduation rates; and,
- Whereas,** Sixteen percent of recent high school dropouts are unemployed and thirty-two percent live below the poverty line; and,
- Whereas,** Civic participation is higher in communities with higher graduation rates; and,
- Whereas,** Adolescents can be subject to impulsive actions, causing them to make decisions without weighing the long-term costs.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To amend Section 59-65-10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“**SECTION 59-65-10.** Responsibility of parent or guardian; transportation for kindergarten pupils.

(A) A parent or guardian shall require his child to attend regularly a public or private school or kindergarten of this State which has been approved by the State Board of Education, a member school of the South Carolina Independent Schools' Association, a member school of the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, or some similar organization, or a parochial, denominational, or church-related school, or other programs which have been approved by the State Board of Education from the school year in which the child is five years of age before September first until the child attains his ~~seventeenth birthday~~ eighteenth birthday, enlists in the armed forces, or graduates from high school.”

Section II: This bill will go into effect at the beginning of the 2026 school year upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Zoe Leaphart
Clemson University

- Purpose:** To expand addiction treatment programs and increase access to Narcan for overdose prevention in South Carolina.
- Whereas,** The opioid crisis continues to be a public health emergency, leading to thousands of deaths annually due to overdoses; and,
- Whereas,** In 2020, South Carolina reported 1,035 opioid-related deaths, and the trend has continued in subsequent years, with fentanyl being involved in the majority of those cases.
- Whereas,** Expanding addiction treatment programs, including medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and counseling services, is crucial in combating substance use disorders and reducing recidivism; and,
- Whereas,** Increasing public access to Narcan through pharmacies, community centers, and first responders can significantly reduce overdose fatalities.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend the South Carolina Code of Laws to add “**Section 44-53-400.** Expansion of Addiction Treatment and Naloxone Accessibility.” to read:
- (A) The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) shall allocate funding to establish and expand addiction treatment programs, including medication-assisted treatment (MAT), counseling services, and rehabilitation facilities.
 - (B) Naloxone (Narcan) shall be made available over the counter at all pharmacies without a prescription and distributed at community health centers, schools, and law enforcement agencies at no cost to individuals at risk of overdose or their families.
 - (C) The state shall establish grants to support local organizations that provide harm reduction services, including syringe exchange programs and overdose prevention education.

Section II: For the purpose of this bill:

- (A) "Naloxone" refers to the opioid antagonist medication approved by the FDA to reverse opioid overdoses.
- (B) "Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)" refers to the use of FDA-approved medications in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies to treat substance use disorders.
- (C) "Harm reduction services" include programs aimed at reducing the negative health outcomes associated with substance use, including syringe exchanges and education initiatives.

Section III: Stipulations:

- (A) Any pharmacy that refuses to dispense Naloxone in accordance with this law shall be subject to a fine of up to \$5,000 per offense.
- (B) Any institution receiving funding under this bill must report annually on the effectiveness and accessibility of its addiction treatment programs.

Section IV: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Sarah Moorshead
Clemson University

- Purpose:** To remove barriers to reporting spousal sexual abuse; and for other purposes.
- Whereas,** One in four women and one in seven men experience relationship violence; and,
- Whereas,** Between 10 and 14% of married women are raped by their partners; and,
- Whereas,** Around 18% of marital sexual abuse survivors report that their children witnessed the crime; and,
- Whereas,** Current sentencing procedures surrounding criminal sexual conduct when the victim is a spouse does not allow someone to be found guilty of criminal sexual conduct and carry a lesser sentence than criminal sexual conduct; and,
- Whereas,** The statute of limitations on reporting criminal sexual conduct when the victim is the spouse is thirty days; and,
- Whereas,** Being married to the offender is frequently a barrier to reporting a rape, as 77% of marital rape cases go unreported; and,
- Whereas,** Marital rape has many long term impacts on mental and physical health, such as depression, PTSD, insomnia, gynecological problems, among other issues.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 16-3-658 to read:
- SECTION 16-3-658. Criminal sexual conduct; when victim is spouse.
- A person ~~cannot~~ *can* be guilty of criminal sexual conduct under Sections 16-3-651 through 16-3-659.1 if the victim is the legal spouse *of the accused* ~~unless the couple is living apart and the offending spouse's conduct constitutes criminal sexual conduct in the first degree or second degree as defined by Sections 16-3-652 and 16-3-653.~~
- The offending spouse's conduct must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities ~~within thirty days~~ *at any time after the offense* in order for a person to be prosecuted for these offenses.
- ~~This section is not applicable to a purported marriage entered into by a male under the age of sixteen or a female under the age of fourteen.~~
- Section II:** This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Mary Austin Sturkie
Clemson University

- Purpose:** To eliminate the time restriction for each felony offense in child custody cases.
- Whereas,** the safety and well-being of children are paramount, and ensuring their protection is a fundamental responsibility of society and the legal system;
- Whereas,** in child custody cases, it is essential that parents who pose a risk to their child's physical, emotional, or psychological safety are held accountable for their actions;
- Whereas,** when a parent is found guilty of severe misconduct, such as abuse, neglect, or endangerment, the legal system must impose appropriate penalties to deter future harmful behavior and protect the child from further harm;
- Whereas,** charging parents with felonies in cases of child endangerment, abuse, or neglect sends a strong message about the gravity of these offenses and the legal and societal commitment to safeguarding vulnerable children;
- Whereas,** felony charges in child custody cases ensure that the judicial system is taking appropriate action to prevent perpetrators of abuse or neglect from gaining custody or unsupervised visitation rights, which could endanger the child's welfare;
- Whereas,** the imposition of felony charges may prompt necessary rehabilitation, therapy, or counseling for parents to address underlying issues, with the aim of fostering a healthier environment for both the parent and the child in the future;
- Whereas,** parents convicted of felonies related to child custody violations can be monitored and held accountable in ways that protect the child's future, supporting long-term stability and well-being;
- Whereas,** protecting children from harm in custody disputes requires the application of the law in a manner that prioritizes their best interests and provides a just, fair, and effective resolution in the most serious cases of abuse or neglect;
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** 63-5-70. Unlawful conduct toward a child:
- A. It is unlawful for a person who has charge or custody of a child, or who is the parent or guardian of a child, or who is responsible for the welfare of a child as defined in Section 63-7-20 to:

- (1) place the child at unreasonable risk of harm affecting the child's life, physical or mental health, or safety;
- (2) do or cause to be done unlawfully or maliciously any bodily harm to the child so that the life or health of the child is endangered or likely to be endangered; or
- (3) willfully abandon the child.

B. A person who violates subsection (A) is guilty of a felony and for each offense, upon conviction, must be fined in the discretion of the court or imprisoned ~~not more than ten years,~~ or both.

Section II: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Ava Urban
Clemson University

- Purpose:** To ensure transparency and accountability in cases of in-custody deaths by requiring an independent review of deaths occurring under suspicious circumstances.
- Whereas,** The safety and well-being of incarcerated individuals are the responsibility of the state and its correctional institutions; and,
- Whereas,** In-custody deaths, particularly those occurring under suspicious circumstances, raise concerns about potential misconduct, negligence, or systemic failures; and,
- Whereas,** Requiring an independent agency to review deaths under suspicious circumstances will enhance public trust in the criminal justice system and provide necessary oversight; and,
- Whereas,** Establishing an independent review process ensures that all deaths in correctional facilities are properly examined, allowing for additional investigations if warranted; and,
- Whereas,** A 30-day timeframe for such a review will promote efficiency and accountability while ensuring a timely response to potential concerns; and,
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 24-9-35 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
- “SECTION 24-9-35.** If a person dies while incarcerated or in the custody of a municipal, county, or multijurisdictional overnight lockup or jail, county prison camp, or state correctional facility, the facility manager or any other person physically in charge of the facility at the time death occurs immediately shall notify the coroner of the county in which the institution is located. The facility manager or other person in charge also shall report the death and circumstances surrounding it within seventy-two hours to the Jail and Prison Inspection Division of the Department of Corrections. *If an incarcerated person dies under suspicious circumstances, an independent agency must conduct a review within 30 days to determine whether additional investigation is warranted.* The division shall retain a permanent record of the reports. Reports must be made on forms prescribed by the division.

Section II: Definition of Suspicious Circumstances

For the purposes of this amendment, "suspicious circumstances" shall include but are not limited to:

1. Deaths involving the use of force by correctional officers or facility staff.
2. Deaths occurring while in solitary confinement or restrictive housing.
3. Deaths where there are allegations of medical neglect or failure to provide adequate care.
4. Deaths resulting in unexplained injuries or inconsistencies in official reports.
5. Deaths where credible allegations of misconduct, abuse, or negligence have been made by staff, other inmates, or third-party observers.

Section III: Independent Agency Review Process

1. The independent review shall be conducted by an agency with no direct oversight or financial interest in the correctional facility in question. The reviewing entity may be:
 - A. The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED),
 - B. The State Inspector General's Office,
 - C. A civilian oversight board designated by the legislature, or D. Any other independent investigative body as deemed appropriate.
2. The independent review must include:
 - A. A forensic review of medical records, autopsy reports, and facility documentation.
 - B. Interviews with facility staff, medical personnel, and inmates.
 - C. Examination of security footage or other relevant evidence.
3. If the independent agency determines further investigation is necessary, it shall refer the case to the appropriate law enforcement or prosecutorial authority.
4. The findings of the independent review shall be made available to the public, with redactions only where necessary for security or privacy concerns.

Section IV: Penalties for Non-Compliance

1. Any facility manager or staff member who fails to report a death as required under Section 24-9-35 shall be subject to disciplinary action, including termination or legal penalties.
2. Any facility that fails to comply with the independent review process shall be subject to fines, loss of state funding, or other penalties as determined by the Department of Corrections.
3. Intentional obstruction, destruction of evidence, or interference with an independent review shall be classified as a misdemeanor offense, punishable by a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or imprisonment for up to one year.”

Section V: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Olivia Brannen
Coastal Carolina University

- Purpose:** To ensure that individuals are not jailed solely because they cannot afford bail, and save taxpayers money by requiring courts to make ability-to-pay determinations when deciding bond amounts.
- Whereas,** Since the mass incarceration trend started in the 1970s in America, jail populations have increased by 251%, and in South Carolina, “in 2015, pretrial detainees constituted 70% of the total jail population in South Carolina” (Vera Institute); and,
- Whereas,** Bail decisions are increasingly based on wealth, not public safety or court attendance further creating economic inequality disparities. This results in exploitative practices, like nonrefundable bail fees from bondsmen, further exacerbating financial hardship for those without means (Brennan Center); and,
- Whereas,** Pretrial incarceration leads to job and housing loss, and an increase of future arrest risks, especially for those jailed due to inability to pay bail. Faced with years of incarceration to get a day in court, many opt for false guilty pleas just to be released sooner (Brennan Center); and,
- Whereas,** Some legal scholars argue that the 8th Amendment’s Excessive Fines Clause considers both the crime and the defendant’s ability to pay when setting bail. They also interpret the 14th Amendment’s Due Process Clause as prohibiting the punishment of defendants based on their financial status in bail determinations (National Center for Access to Justice); and,
- Whereas,** The Brennan Center estimates 500,000 individuals are currently in jail waiting for their cases to go to trial. In the eyes of the law in the United States, they are legally innocent individuals. In 11 states, there are ability-to-pay determinations written in their laws (National Conference of State Legislatures). Ultimately, making bail costs affordable for everyone, translates into less time each pretrial individual serves, saving money for the state.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** Amend Section 17-15-15 to read:
- (A) Except as provided in subsection (D), in lieu of requiring actual posting of

bond as provided in Section 17-15-10(A), the court setting bond may permit the defendant to deposit in cash with the clerk of court an amount not to exceed ten percent of the amount of bond set, which amount, when the defendant fulfills the condition of the bond, must be returned to the defendant by the clerk except as provided in subsection (C). *Judges are required to make ability-to-pay determinations when deciding bond amounts for all non-violent crimes, if the defendant wishes. Ability-to-pay determinations include but are not limited to income, expenses, dependents, debts, and employment status.*

Section II: This bill will go into effect on January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Camille Fortino
Coastal Carolina University

- Purpose:** To decrease domestic violence related homicides by prohibiting and limiting the possession of firearms of those convicted of domestic abuse.
- Whereas,** Half of all female victims of homicide in the United States were killed as a result of domestic violence and most of these deaths are by firearms according to Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. According to Emergency Medicine Clinics of North America, A firearm was the weapon used in 61% of domestic violence homicides; and,
- Whereas,** According to World Population Reviews, South Carolina has one of the highest rates of domestic violence in the country with 42.3% of the adult female population being victims; and,
- Whereas,** Virginia prohibits anyone convicted of a domestic violence misdemeanor from purchasing firearms and anyone with a domestic violence restraining order against them from owning firearms according to Every Town Research.; and,
- Whereas,** Vigdor and Mercy (2006) conclude domestic violence homicide rates of female victims decrease around 7% when the state passes a law restricting firearm access to a convicted abuser.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** Add Section 20-4-200 to read:
- A) Anyone charged with a domestic violence misdemeanor must relinquish their firearms to local law enforcement authorities. Anyone convicted of a domestic violence misdemeanor will not be allowed to obtain, receive, purchase, or construct any firearms.*
- Section II:** Amend Section 16-25-30 to read:
- (E) The provisions of this section prohibiting the possession of firearms and ammunition by persons who have been convicted of domestic violence shall apply to a person who has been convicted of domestic violence for:
- (1) life, if the person has been convicted of a violation of Section 16-25-65, or has been convicted of domestic violence in another state, tribe, or territory containing among its elements those elements enumerated in Section 16-25-65;

(2) ~~Ten~~ *Fifteen* years from the date of conviction or the date the person is released from confinement for the conviction, whichever is later, if the person has been convicted of a violation of Section 16-25-20(B), or has been convicted of domestic violence in another state, tribe, or territory containing among its elements those elements enumerated in Section 16-25-20(B);

(3) ~~Three~~ *Ten* years from the date of conviction or the date the person is released from confinement for the conviction, whichever is later, if the person has been convicted of a violation of Section 16-25-20(C) or (D) and the judge at the time of sentencing ordered that the person is prohibited from shipping, transporting, receiving, or possessing a firearm or ammunition, or has been convicted of domestic violence in another state, tribe, or territory containing among its elements those elements enumerated in Section 16-25-20(C) or (D) and the judge at the time of sentencing ordered that the person is prohibited from shipping, transporting, receiving, or possessing a firearm or ammunition;

Section III: This bill will go into effect on January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Franceska Guerrero
Coastal Carolina University

- Purpose:** To increase opportunity by prohibiting legacy admissions by public higher education institutions in South Carolina.
- Whereas,** Legacy admissions allow preference to be given to applicants based on an applicant's family connections, which unfairly advantages individuals with family alumni connections and undermines the merit-based process of college admissions; and,
- Whereas,** Research from the ACLU indicates that the practice of legacy admissions can create barriers for first-generation college students, who may not have family ties to alumni, thus limiting otherwise qualified applicants access to higher education opportunities; and,
- Whereas,** International students, often face unique challenges in navigating the college admissions process, and legacy admissions adds to the issues by prioritizing familial connections over individual merit and potential; and,
- Whereas,** The practice of legacy admissions does not guarantee that an admitted student will perform well academically or contribute positively to campus life, bringing doubt on the validity of such admissions as a measure of merit; and,
- Whereas,** By ensuring that all qualified applicants, regardless of to the institution, have the same opportunities to access higher education, thereby fosters fairness in the admissions process, supports academic merit, and promotes inclusivity across the state's public colleges and universities.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** Amend Section 59-101-50 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
- The colleges and other institutions of learning of this State supported in whole or in part by the State shall receive as students those applicants residing within the State in preference to those residing without; provided, however, that the applications of those residing within the State shall be filed with the president or secretary of such college or institution of learning at least thirty days before the opening of such college or institution. *However, legacy admission, based only on familial connections to the institution, is prohibited.*
- Section II:** This bill will go into effect on January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Brian Hughes
Coastal Carolina University

- Purpose:** To grant school districts in South Carolina increased flexibility over their academic calendars, allowing them to accommodate the unique needs of their communities and improve student success.
- Whereas,** The current state-mandated start and end dates for academic calendars limit school districts' ability to adapt to the specific needs of their students and communities. The current school calendar law sets strict guidelines on when public schools can start and end each year. These rules have been a point of debate among educators, parents, and lawmakers, as they impact student learning, family schedules, and local economies.; and,
- Whereas,** Increased calendar flexibility would allow districts to implement balanced calendars, address summer learning loss, and schedule breaks more effectively to support student well-being; and,
- Whereas,** School districts face varying challenges, including severe weather, local economic factors, and community events, which require adaptable scheduling; and,
- Whereas,** Granting local control over academic calendars would empower school boards, educators, and families to make decisions that best support student success. California, Texas, Florida, Michigan, Hawaii, Nevada, North Carolina, and Arizona have similar laws.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** Add Section 59-1-425 (I) to read:
- (I) Local school districts in South Carolina shall have the authority to establish their academic calendars, including start and end dates, without restrictions imposed by state-mandated parameters. The South Carolina Department of Education shall provide guidance and resources to assist school districts in developing academic calendars that meet state-mandated instructional hour requirements while accommodating local needs along with answering any changes to the students and community. Local school boards will have discussions with community leaders, including parents, teachers, and students, through public meetings and forums before finalizing their academic calendars for their schools.

Section II: For the purpose of this bill:

A) “Academic Calendar” shall be defined as the schedule of instructional days, holidays, and breaks for a given school year established by a local school district.

Section III: This bill will go into effect on January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Kennedy Kovach
Coastal Carolina University

- Purpose:** To alter South Carolina’s definition of domestic violence to include emotional and economic abuse to allow for additional victims to be protected by law.
- Whereas,** Annually, there are approximately over 12 million documented cases of domestic violence in the United States according to *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)*; and,
- Whereas,** The United States Department of Justice acknowledges that domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, psychological, or technological; and,
- Whereas,** Emotional abuse leads to long-term psychological harm, while economic abuse traps victims by restricting financial independence. Legal recognition would provide victims with protection, financial support, and easier access to justice; and,
- Whereas,** As stated by South Carolina’s official website of the Governor, South Carolina is ranked second highest in the nation for the rate of women murdered by men and has ranked top ten for the past twelve years (governor.sc.gov); and,
- Whereas,** Nationally, South Carolina has been ranked sixth highest regarding the rates of domestic violence according to *The World Population Review*; and,
- Whereas,** According to the *National Domestic Violence Hotline*, in 2020 98% of their documented contacts experienced emotional abuse and 31% of callers documented experienced economic abuse; and,
- Whereas,** According to the *National Domestic Violence Hotline*, a person who has experienced any form of domestic violence, including emotional and economic abuse are three times more likely to meet the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder, be diagnosed with a major depressive disorder, exhibit self-harming behaviors, have suicidal thoughts, and four times more likely to commit suicide; and,
- Whereas,** Economic abuse can often go unnoticed because of the societal expectation that one partner handles the finances in a relationship, however, economic abuse is commonly underreported due to a victims financial independence on their abuser; and,
- Whereas,** South Carolina would not be the first state to recognize emotional and economic abuse to be as harmful as physical abuse in regards to domestic violence. Connecticut, Washington, and New York have recognized emotional abuse in the

law and neighboring states such as North Carolina recognize emotional distress as domestic violence; and,

Whereas, Regarding financial and or economic abuse, financial abuse is a crime in both California, where courts can order a restitution and Washington state, where financial abuse can result in criminal charges.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: Amend Section 20-4-20 to read:
Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

(a) "Abuse" means:

(1) physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or the threat of physical harm;

(2) sexual criminal offenses, as otherwise defined by statute, committed against a family or household member by a family or household member.

(3) Persistent verbal and or written harmful manipulation, physical threats, coercion, or intimidation to control or harm someone's mental health.

(4) Controlling a person's access to financial resources, preventing independence, or exploiting their assets to control them.

Section II: For the purposes of this bill:

A) 'Manipulation' shall be defined as: using subtle or emotionally charged tactics to control or influence another person's thoughts, feelings, and actions to get what you want.

Section III: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

**A Bill
Presented by Daniel Lala
Coastal Carolina University**

Purpose: To decrease the financial constraint of divorce by removing the requirement of separation.

Whereas, The average divorce in South Carolina costs \$12,600 in legal fees; and,

Whereas, By requiring couples to live separately the cost-of-living increases for both parties; and,

Whereas, The average rent in South Carolina is roughly \$1,000 per month, which for a year of living, adds up to \$12,000, practically doubling the cost of a divorce; and,

Whereas, The average American household is \$105,056 in debt, with mortgages accounting for roughly 70% of the total debt. Further growth in this debt can lead to an inability to provide for the family's needs and an over-reliance on public assistance; and,

Whereas, Out of our 50 states, 22 of them, including Georgia, Mississippi, Maine, and Michigan, have no requirement for divorcing couples to live separate and apart.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: Amend Section 20-3-10 to read:

No divorce from the bonds of matrimony shall be granted except upon one or more of the following grounds, to wit:

(1) adultery;

(2) desertion for a period of one year;

(3) physical cruelty;

(4) habitual drunkenness; provided, that this ground shall be construed to include habitual drunkenness caused by the use of any narcotic drug; or

(5) on the application of either party ~~if and when the husband and wife have lived separate and apart without cohabitation for a period of one year. A plea of res judicata or of recrimination with respect to any other provision of this section shall not be a bar to either party obtaining a divorce on this ground.~~

Section II: This act shall take effect upon passage by the General Assembly and signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Matthew McCall
Coastal Carolina University

- Purpose:** To combat opioid addiction in South Carolina by implementing stricter regulations on prescriptions.
- Whereas,** South Carolina has a drug problem. The highest killer is prescription drugs of which Opioids remain the highest prescribed. Opioid laws related to prescription are lenient compared to other states suffering similar problems. States such as Nebraska, Nevada, Arizona, Rhode Island, Maine, and Tennessee have lowered the prescription cap to an initial 5 days and have implemented a Morphine Milligram Equivalent per day of 80-100; and,
- Whereas,** According to the CDC states such as Nebraska and Maine that have already implemented similar restrictions in 2016 have seen decreases in Opioid deaths both synthetic and non-synthetic by 15%; and,
- Whereas,** The overall figure in S.C. for 2022 has 1,982 prescription drug overdoses, of which 1,864 are attributed to opioids, both synthetic and non-synthetic, as well as opioids obtained legally and illegally.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** Amend Section 44-53-360 to read:
- (j)(1) ~~Initial~~ Opioid prescriptions for acute pain management or postoperative pain management must not exceed a seven-day supply and *100 morphine milligram equivalent per day*, except when clinically indicated for cancer pain, chronic pain, hospice care, palliative care, major trauma, major surgery, treatment of sickle cell disease, treatment of neonatal abstinence syndrome, or medication-assisted treatment for substance use disorder. Upon any subsequent consultation for the same pain, the practitioner may issue any appropriate renewal, refill, or new opioid prescription, *this is subject to the 100 MME limit unless exceptions apply.*
- (j)(2) *exceptions to the 100 MME per day limit are as follows: cancer pain, palliative care, hospice care, major trauma, traumatic surgery, sickle cell disease, chronic pain, or any other surgery and or ailment decided upon by the proceeding doctor.*
- Section II:** This bill will go into effect January 1st, 2026.

A Bill
Presented by Connor Mojo
Coastal Carolina University

- Purpose:** To secure the future of economically disadvantaged South Carolina undergraduates by creating an assurance fund if FAFSA grants and loans fail to be distributed on time.
- Whereas,** Due to recent uncertainty in the future of the Department of Education, there are concerns about whether FAFSA funds will be adequately allocated to those who need them by the beginning of the semester; and,
- Whereas,** Out of the 158,000 undergraduates from South Carolina who attend schools in South Carolina, roughly half receive some kind of funding from the FAFSA, with around 19,000 of these students receiving the maximum allotted Pell Grant amount of \$7,395; and,
- Whereas,** An additional third of South Carolina undergraduates receive some form of federal loans to pay for their education; and,
- Whereas,** To meet the possible downsides of federal restructuring and shut-downs have on our most vulnerable students, the state government has a duty to ensure that its students are secured the funding which is owed to them.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** Add Section 59-5-170 to Title 59, Chapter 5 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall be read as the following:

SECTION 59-5-170: Establishment of the South Carolina Federal Student Aid Assurance Fund (SCFSAAF)

- (A) The South Carolina General Assembly, in concert with the State Board of Education, shall create the South Carolina Federal Student Aid Assurance Fund (SCFAAF).*
- (B) The function of this fund shall be to match and allot obligated funds otherwise disbursed federally under the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) program.*
- (C) Guidelines for eligibility*
- (1) For a student be eligible for assurance, the student must fulfill all of the following requirements:*

- (i) *Must be a legal resident of South Carolina.*
 - (ii) *Must attend a university in South Carolina.*
 - (iii) *Must be pursuing an undergraduate degree.*
 - (iv) *Must be eligible for the FAFSA.*
 - (v) *Must have completed and submitted the FAFSA with their necessary tax information.*
 - (vi) *Can verify, in concert in with their South Carolina undergraduate institution, that they did not receive their Federal Student Aid.*
- (2) *If all of these requirements are fulfilled, the student can submit a form which will be duly created by the State Board of Education which shall verify that they meet all of these requirements.*

(D) Funding

- (1) *Funding for the SCFSAAF shall be allocated from a seasonal state-wide 1% increase in the Accommodations Tax, as it is defined in Title 6, Chapter 1, Article 5, between the months of May and August, beginning in 2026.*
- (i) *The taxation will decrease back to its original percentage on the 1st of September*
 - (2) *The monies allotted from this increase shall be in their totality allocated to SCFSAAF.*
 - (3) *The South Carolina General Assembly and necessary executive offices shall annually evaluate SCFSAAF allocation and dispersals and will be tasked to enact the following:*
 - (i) *If there is over \$25 million left in the fund after semesterly dispersals, half of the final amount must be reallocated into the General Fund, and the seasonal state-wide Accommodations Tax increase must be lowered to .5%*
 - (ii) *If there is between \$10 million and \$25 million left in the fund after semesterly dispersals, half of the final amount must be reallocated into the General Fund. The 1% seasonal state-wide increase in the Accommodations Tax shall be maintained or increased to.*

(iii) *If there is less than \$10 million left in the fund after semesterly dispersals, the amounts and duration established in subsection (D) (1-2) shall maintained until the next annual evaluation.*

(4) *Upon the third annual evaluation of SCFSAAF, the South Carolina General Assembly shall vote on whether SCFSAAF should be maintained or abolished.*

Section II: This bill will go into effect on January 1st, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Robert Nese
Coastal Carolina University

- Purpose:** To deter and prevent deliberate animal fighting by requiring mandatory jail time.
- Whereas,** According to the FBI, “During major dogfight raids, law enforcement has seized more than \$500,000; it is not unusual for \$20,000-\$30,000 to change hands in a single fight”; and,
- Whereas,** According to ASPCA, “there are tens of thousands of dogfighters in the U.S., forcing hundreds of thousands of dogs to train, fight, and suffer every year”; and,
- Whereas,** According to the FBI, “Animal cruelty is a predictor of current and future violence, including crimes of assault, rape, murder, arson, domestic violence, and sexual abuse of children”; and,
- Whereas,** According to the FBI, “Seventy-five percent of abused women who have companion animals report a history of their companion animal being threatened or intentionally harmed by their intimate partner, with children being present and witnessing the violence over 90% of the time.”
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** Amend Section 16-27-30 to read:
- Any person who:
- (a) owns an animal for the purpose of fighting or baiting;
 - (b) is a party to or causes any fighting or baiting of any animal;
 - (c) purchases, rents, leases, or otherwise acquires or obtains the use of any structure, facility, or location for the purpose of fighting or baiting any animal; or
 - (d) knowingly allows or permits or makes available any structure, facility, or location to be used for the purpose of fighting or baiting any animal is guilty of a felony and upon conviction must be punished by a fine of five thousand dollars *and* imprisoned for five years. ~~or both.~~
- Section II:** For the purposes of this bill, definitions are listed in Title 16 Article 27 Section 16-27-20 of the South Carolina Code of Laws.
- Section III:** This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and signature by the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Samuel Rau
Coastal Carolina University

- Purpose:** To decrease the number of hazing incidents across the state by increasing the potential punishment for hazing to a felony.
- Whereas,** Including death, hazing can also cause major physical harm such as brain damage, which can leave someone unable to do things like speak, walk, or even see. Hazing can also lead to mental health issues ranging from social anxiety to post traumatic stress disorder and depression (Behavioral Health News). Every year 1.5 million high school students experience hazing and nearly half of college freshman have already experienced hazing by the time they enter college (Goldberg and Loren Injury Firm); and,
- Whereas,** Since 2011 there have been 124 hazing reports throughout the colleges in South Carolina, including 16 reported within the last two years alone (The Post and Courier); and,
- Whereas,** Currently, the state of South Carolina criminalizes hazing but only considers it as a misdemeanor. It comes with a possible maximum fine of \$500 and possible imprisonment of no more than 12 months (Stop Hazing.org); and,
- Whereas,** Ohio passed a bill in 2021 that raised the potential punishment for hazing to a felony (Ohio Capital Journal). 15 more states have gone and done the same (Max Gruver Foundation).
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: Amend Section 16-3-530 to read:

Any person who violates the provisions of Sections 16-3-510 or 16-3-520 is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be punished by a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars or by imprisonment for a term not to exceed twelve months, or both.

(a) Any person who violates the provisions of Sections 16-3-510 or 16-3-520 that results in serious harm to the victim's bodily functions is guilty of a felony, once convicted, must face a fine no more than \$1,500 or imprisonment of no more than 3 years or both.

(b) Any person who violates the provisions of Sections 16-3-510 or 16-3-520 that results in great bodily injuries or death is guilty of a felony, once convicted, must face a fine no more than \$12,000 or imprisonment for no more than 10 years or both.

(c) The volunteering or consent to the actions described in Section 16-3-510 from the victim(s) cannot be used for the defense of anyone charged with hazing.

Section II: This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and signature by the Governor.

A Bill
Presented By Ahmad Brown
Francis Marion University

- Purpose:** To change punishments for possession of Marijuana.
- Whereas,** The 30 day minimum sentence for certain drug offenses unfairly impacts low-income individuals; and,
- Whereas,** Sentencing people for minor drug offenses of 10 grams or less wastes resources of the legal system; and,
- Whereas,** Higher fines provide a more effective and fair alternative to jail time.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following;
- Section I:** To amend Subsection D-5 of **Section 44-53-370** of the South Carolina Code is amended to read:

“(d) A person who violates subsection (c) with respect to:

(1) a controlled substance classified in Schedule I (B) and (C) which is a narcotic drug or lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) and in Schedule II which is a narcotic drug is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than two years or fined not more than five thousand dollars, or both. For a second offense, the offender is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than five thousand dollars, or both. For a third or subsequent offense, the offender is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than ten thousand dollars, or both. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person convicted and sentenced pursuant to this item may have the sentence suspended and probation granted and is eligible for parole, supervised furlough, community supervision, work release, work credits, education credits, and good conduct credits;

(2) any other controlled substance classified in Schedules I through V is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than six months or fined not more than one thousand dollars, or both. For a second or subsequent offense, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than one year or fined not more than two thousand dollars, or both, except as provided in subsection (d)(4). Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person convicted and sentenced pursuant to this item

may have the sentence suspended and probation granted and is eligible for parole, supervised furlough, community supervision, work release, work credits, education credits, and good conduct credits;

(3) cocaine is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than three years or fined not more than five thousand dollars, or both. For a first offense, the court, upon approval of the solicitor, may require as part of a sentence, that the offender enter and successfully complete a drug treatment and rehabilitation program. For a second offense, the offender is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than seven thousand five hundred dollars, or both. For a third or subsequent offense, the offender is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than ten years or fined not more than twelve thousand five hundred dollars, or both. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person convicted and sentenced pursuant to this item may have the sentence suspended and probation granted and is eligible for parole, supervised furlough, community supervision, work release, work credits, education credits, and good conduct credits;

(4) more than two grains of fentanyl or fentanyl-related substance is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than five thousand dollars, or both. For a second offense, the offender is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than ten years or fined not more than seven thousand five hundred dollars, or both. For a third or subsequent offense, the offender is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than fifteen years or fined not more than ten thousand dollars, or both. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person convicted and sentenced pursuant to this item for a first or second offense may have the sentence suspended and probation granted and is eligible for parole, supervised furlough, community supervision, work release, work credits, education credits, and good conduct credits;

(5) possession of more than: one gram of cocaine, one hundred milligrams of alpha- or beta-eucaine, four grains of opium, four grains of morphine, two grains of heroin, two grains of fentanyl or a fentanyl-related substance as described in Section 44-53-190 or 44-53-210, one hundred milligrams of isonipecaine, twenty-eight grams or one ounce of marijuana, ten grams of hashish, fifty micrograms of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) or its compounds, fifteen tablets, capsules, dosage units, or the equivalent quantity of 3, 4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA), or twenty milliliters or milligrams of gamma hydroxybutyric acid or a controlled substance analogue of gamma hydroxybutyric acid, is prima facie guilty of violation of subsection (a) of this section. A person who violates this subsection with respect to twenty-eight grams or one ounce or less of marijuana or ten grams or less of hashish is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than thirty days or fined not less than ~~one~~ *four*

hundred dollars nor more than ~~two hundred~~ *one thousand* dollars. Conditional discharge may be granted in accordance with the provisions of Section 44-53-450 upon approval by the circuit solicitor to the magistrate or municipal judge. As a part of a sentence, a magistrate or municipal judge may require attendance at an approved drug abuse program. Persons charged with the offense of possession of marijuana or hashish under this item may be permitted to enter the pretrial intervention program under the provisions of Sections 17-22-10 through 17-22-160. For a second or subsequent offense, the offender is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be imprisoned not more than one year ~~or fined not less than two hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars, or both.~~

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person convicted and sentenced pursuant to this item may have the sentence suspended and probation granted and is eligible for parole, supervised furlough, community supervision, work release, work credits, education credits, and good conduct credits.”

Section II: This bill will take effect July 1st, 2025, among passage by the General Assembly and signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Sophie Chambella
Francis Marion University

- Purpose:** To encourage sibling preservation through the adoptive process.
- Whereas,** The Children's House International adds “For children who have faced instability, uncertainty, or even trauma, the presence of a brother or sister provides a unique comfort and a deep, unspoken understanding that can be critical to their adjustment and emotional development in a new family environment”; and,
- Whereas,** The National Institutes of Health mentions, “In general, joint sibling placement is viewed favorably by most child welfare professionals; it also tends to be the preferred placement option for youth themselves”; and,
- Whereas,** Prioritizing sibling groups serves various benefits, including a sense of emotional stability, connection to cultural backgrounds, and support through challenging times.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 63-7-1680 (E) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

(E) Unless subsection (C), (F), or (G) applies, if the court determines at the permanency planning hearing that the child should not be returned to the child's parent at that time, the court's order shall require the department to file a petition to terminate parental rights to the child not later than sixty days after receipt of the order. If a petition to terminate parental rights is to be filed, the department shall exercise and document every reasonable effort to promote and expedite the adoptive placement and adoption of the child, including a thorough adoption assessment and child-specific recruitment. *If the child has a sibling or siblings, contact between these parties must be considered throughout efforts. Adoptive placements that can preserve familial ties should be prioritized.* Adoptive placements must be diligently sought for the child and failure to do so solely because a child is classified as "special needs" is expressly prohibited. An adoption may not be delayed or denied solely because a child is classified as "special needs". For purposes of this subsection:

(1) "thorough adoption assessment" means conducting and documenting face-to-face interviews with the child, foster care providers, and other significant parties; and,

(2) "child specific recruitment" means recruiting an adoptive placement targeted to meet the individual needs of the specific child including, but not be limited to, use of the media, use of photo listings, and any other in-state or out-of-state resources which may be utilized to meet the specific needs of the child, unless there are extenuating circumstances that indicate that these efforts are not in the best interest of the child.

Section II: This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Connor Denny
Francis Marion University

- Purpose:** To allow divorce due to emotional abuse under South Carolina law.
- Whereas,** As South Carolina Law currently stands, divorce is only permitted to physical and not emotional abuse; and,
- Whereas,** This can make it hard for individuals to escape emotionally abusive marriages; and,
- Whereas,** Physical abuse happens in almost 20 percent of marriages, and emotional abuse is even more common; and,
- Whereas,** Emotional spousal abuse should not be excusable under South Carolina law.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** For the purposes of this bill, the following term is defined as:
- (1) “Emotional abuse” means non-physical behaviors that are meant to control, isolate, or frighten.
- Section II:** To amend Section 20-3-10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read as follows:
- “SECTION 20-3-10. Grounds for divorce.**
- No divorce from the bonds of matrimony shall be granted except upon one or more of the following grounds, to wit:
- (1) adultery;
- (2) desertion for a period of one year;
- (3) physical *or emotional* ~~cruelty~~ *abuse*;
- (4) habitual drunkenness; provided, that this ground shall be construed to include habitual drunkenness caused by the use of any narcotic drug; or

(5) on the application of either party if and when the husband and wife have lived separate and apart without cohabitation for a period of one year. A plea of res judicata or of recrimination with respect to any other provision of this section shall not be a bar to either party obtaining a divorce on this ground.”

Section III: This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented By Daiveon Glover
Francis Marion University

Purpose: To reduce government involvement in bedroom affairs.

Whereas, “Buggery” includes the act of anal and oral intercourse between humans; and,

Whereas, According to a survey by the US National Center for Health Statistics, about eighty percent (80%) of both men and women partake in oral intercourse with a partner of the opposite sex; and,

Whereas, According to the same survey, about thirty-five percent (35%) of women and thirty-eight percent (38%) of men participate in anal intercourse with an opposite-sex partner; and,

Whereas, Enforcing a law that targets such a private affair is ludicrous and a waste of taxpayer dollars, as many individuals are guilty under such a broad term.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following;

Section I: For the purposes of this bill:

(1) “Bestiality” shall be defined as: Any sexual conduct between any person and any animal.

(2) All relevant definitions and punishments contained in Section 16-15-305, relating to “Disseminating, procuring or promoting obscenity,” shall be applicable when necessary.

Section II: To amend Section 16-15-120 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
~~SECTION 16-15-120. Buggery.~~

~~Whoever shall commit the abominable crime of buggery, whether with mankind or beast, shall, on conviction, be guilty of felony and shall be imprisoned in the Penitentiary for five years or shall pay a fine of not less than five hundred dollars, or both, at the discretion of the court.~~

“SECTION 16-15-120. Bestiality.

It shall be unlawful for any person to commit bestiality, and for any person to knowingly disseminate, procure, or promote any obscene material containing bestiality. Any person convicted of committing bestiality shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor with penalties left to the discretion of the courts.”

Section III: This bill will take effect immediately after passage by the General Assembly and signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented By Zachary Lingerman
Francis Marion University

- Purpose:** To produce revenue to support and improve road infrastructure in South Carolina.
- Whereas,** The infrastructure of roads in the State of South Carolina have fallen behind resulting in hazardous conditions; and,
- Whereas,** The State of South Carolina has an infrastructure grade of D for its roads; and,
- Whereas,** This is unacceptable as many citizens have complained about the lack of infrastructure maintenance for many years; and,
- Whereas,** Failing to keep up maintenance and improve roads in the state can lead to more accidents.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 12-38-310 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“**SECTION 12-28-310.** User fees on gasoline and diesel fuel.

- (A) Subject to the exemptions provided in this chapter, a user fee of sixteen cents a gallon is imposed on:
- (1) all gasoline, gasohol, or blended fuels containing gasoline that are used or consumed for any purpose in this State; and
 - (2) all diesel fuel, substitute fuels, or alternative fuels, or blended fuels containing diesel fuel that are used or consumed in this State in producing or generating power for propelling motor vehicles.
- (B) The user fee levied on motor fuel subject to the user fee pursuant to this chapter is a levy and assessment on the consumer, and the levy and assessment on other persons as specified in this chapter are as agents of the State for the collection of the user fee. This section does not affect the method of collecting the user fee as provided in this chapter. The user fee imposed by this section must be collected and paid at those times, in the manner, and by the persons specified in this chapter.
- (C) The license user fee imposed by this section is instead of all sales, use, or other excise tax that may be imposed otherwise by any municipality, county, or other local political subdivision of the State.

- (D) On July 1, ~~2017~~ 2025, and each July first thereafter until after July 1, ~~2022~~ 2031, the department shall permanently increase the amount of the user fee imposed pursuant to subsection (A) by two cents, for a total of twelve cents. All of the funds raised by the increase in the motor fuel user fee imposed by this subsection must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust.”

Section II: This bill will go into effect on July 1st, 2025 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented By Charity Turner
Francis Marion University

Purpose: To require elementary to high school students to learn about the danger of binge drinking.

Whereas, Of those aged 12-20 10.8% participated in binge drinking over a month-long period; and,

Whereas, The average age of one’s first experience with alcohol is 16; and,

Whereas, South Carolina loses an estimated 85 people under 21 to binge drinking each year.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To amend SECTION 59-29-20 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“The nature of alcoholic drinks and narcotics, *including binge drinking’s definition*, and special instruction as to their effect upon the human system shall be taught in all the grammar and high schools of this State which receive any State aid whatsoever and shall be studied and taught as thoroughly and in the same manner as all other required branches in such schools, as may be required by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall provide for the enforcement of the provisions of this section.”

Section II: This bill will take effect on July 1st, 2025, after passage by the General Assembly and signature of the Governor.

**A Bill
Presented by Ellie Brown
Presbyterian College**

- Purpose:** To better protect the children of South Carolina.
- Whereas,** At the age of 16, a person’s brain is continuing to grow and develop, and one is unable to make fully informed and rational decisions; and,
- Whereas,** Sex education programs are reliant on the implementation of abstinence until marriage, which would become null if a child is married at 16; and,
- Whereas,** Children under the age of 18 should not be eligible to be married.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section Section 10-1-100 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
- “SECTION 20-1-100.** Minimum age for valid marriage.
- Any person under the age of ~~sixteen~~ *eighteen* is not capable of entering into a valid marriage, and all marriages hereinafter entered into by such persons are void ab initio. A common-law marriage hereinafter entered into by a person under the age of ~~sixteen~~ *eighteen* is void ab initio.”
- Section II:** To remove Section 20-1-250 of the South Carolina Code of Laws:
- ~~“SECTION 20-1-250. Applicants under age of consent; consent of relative or guardian.~~
- ~~A marriage license must not be issued when either applicant is under the age of sixteen. When either applicant is between the ages of sixteen to eighteen under the age of eighteen and that applicant resides with father, mother, other relative, or guardian, the probate judge or other officer authorized to issue marriage licenses shall not issue a license for the marriage until furnished with a sworn affidavit signed by the father, mother, other relative, or guardian giving consent to the marriage.”~~
- Section III:** This bill will go into effect one week after passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Braylen Dixon
Presbyterian College

- Purpose:** To create Section 44-20-530 in order to legalize and regulate sports betting in the state of South Carolina.
- Whereas,** South Carolina currently prohibits sports betting, limiting economic growth and revenue opportunities for the state.
- Whereas,** Many neighboring states have already legalized sports betting, generating significant tax revenue that could be used to support public education, infrastructure, and responsible gaming programs.
- Whereas,** The illegal sports betting market continues to thrive in South Carolina, creating unregulated and potentially unsafe conditions for residents who wish to participate in sports wagering.
- Whereas,** The legalization of sports betting would create jobs, stimulate the economy, and allow for consumer protections through proper regulation and oversight.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** The South Carolina Code of Laws shall be amended to allow for the legal operation of sports betting within the state under a regulated framework.
- Section II:** To amend Section 16-19-130 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to strike through the following language:
- “Any person who shall operate, keep, or exhibit for the purpose of gambling any gaming table, machine, or device prohibited by law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, in the discretion of the court.”*
- Section III:** To create Section 44-20-530 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read:
- “(A) The South Carolina Gaming Commission shall oversee and regulate sports betting in the state. The Commission shall issue licenses to qualified operators, ensure consumer protections, and establish responsible gaming programs.
- (B) Sports betting shall be permitted both in-person at licensed gaming establishments and through approved online platforms.

(C) A tax rate of *15%* shall be imposed on all sports betting revenue, with funds allocated to public education, infrastructure improvements, and addiction prevention programs.

(D) Individuals under the age of *21* shall be prohibited from participating in sports betting.

(E) Any operator found in violation of state regulations shall be subject to a fine of *\$50,000* per offense and potential revocation of their license.”

Section IV: This act shall take effect upon passage by the General Assembly and approval by the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Jacob Kerwin
Presbyterian College

- Purpose:** To amend SECTION 61-6-110. and SECTION 61-4-50. to lower the legal drinking age to from 21 to 18 and create a 13% tax on all alcoholic beverages for those between the ages of 18-21.
- Whereas,** The drinking age was raised to 21 after pressure from the federal government to curb driving under the influence. Countless statistics created since then reveal that it has been ineffective as South Carolina still ranks 5th in DUI fatalities; and,
- Whereas;** Those who are 18 years old can go to war, vote, and be charged as an adult for other crimes they should be allowed to drink when and where they want. and,
- Whereas,** It is time to amend a law that does not help anyone and makes criminals of a large section of the law abiding voting population.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following: (This stays the same)
- Section I:** To amend “**SECTION 61-4-90** Transfer of beer or wine for underage person's consumption” of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read as follows:
- (A) It is unlawful for a person to transfer or give to a person under the age of ~~twenty-one~~ 18 years for the purpose of consumption of beer or wine in the State, unless the person under the age of ~~twenty-one~~ 18 is recruited and authorized by a law enforcement agency to test a person's compliance with laws relating to the unlawful transfer or sale of beer and wine to a minor. A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction:
- (1) for a first offense, must be fined not less than two hundred dollars nor more than three hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than thirty days, or both; and
 - (2) for a second or subsequent offense, must be fined not less than four hundred dollars nor more than five hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than thirty days, or both.
- (B) A person found guilty of a violation of Section and this section may not be sentenced under both sections for the same offense.
- (C) The provisions of this section do not apply to a:
- (1) spouse over the age of ~~twenty-one~~ 18 giving beer or wine to his spouse under the age of twenty-one 18 in their home;

(2) parent or guardian over the age of twenty-one 18 giving beer or wine to his children or wards under the age of twenty-one 18 in their home; or

(3) person giving beer or wine to another person under the age of twenty-one 18 in conjunction with a religious ceremony or purpose if the beer or wine was lawfully purchased.

(D) A person eighteen years of age and over lawfully employed to serve or remove beer, wine, or alcoholic beverages in establishments licensed to sell these beverages are not considered to be in unlawful possession of the beverages during the course and scope of their duties as an employee. The provisions of this subsection do not affect the requirement that a bartender must be at least twenty-one 18 years of age.

(E) This section does not apply to an employee lawfully engaged in the sale or delivery of these beverages in an unopened container.

(F) The provisions of this section do not apply to a student who:

(1) is eighteen years of age or older;

(2) is enrolled in an accredited college or university and a student in a culinary course that has been approved through review by the State Commission on Higher Education;

(3) is required to taste, but not consume or imbibe, any beer, ale, porter, wine, or other similar malt or fermented beverage as part of the required curriculum; and

(4) tastes a beverage pursuant to item (3) only for instructional purposes during classes that are part of the curriculum of the accredited college or university.

The beverage must remain at all times in the possession and control of an authorized instructor of the college or university who must be twenty-one 18 years of age or older. Nothing in this subsection may be construed to allow a student under the age of twenty-one 18 to receive any beer, ale, porter, wine, or other similar malt or fermented beverage unless the beverage is delivered as part of the student's required curriculum and the beverage is used only for instructional purposes during classes conducted pursuant to the curriculum.

HISTORY: 1996 Act No. 415, Section 1; 1999 Act No. 1, Section 5; 2007 Act No. 103, Section 12.

Section II: To amend **SECTION 61-6-110**. Qualifications for license.

Unless the department in its discretion otherwise orders, no person is eligible for a license under this article or Article 7 of this chapter if he or the person who will have actual control and management of the business proposed to be operated:

- (1) is less than twenty-one years 18 of age;
- (2) is not a legal resident of the United States and has not been a resident of South Carolina for at least thirty days before the date of application and has maintained his principal place of abode in South Carolina for at least thirty days before the date;
- (3) is not of good repute; or
- (4) has had a license under this or another statute regulating the manufacture or sale of alcoholic liquors which has been revoked within five years preceding the filing of the application.

Section III: To amend “**SECTION 12-33-245.** Excise tax on sales for on-premises consumption; "gross proceeds" defined; nonprofit organizations exception; penalties; issuance of license for premises for which license revoked or suspended.

(A) In addition to taxes imposed pursuant to the provisions of Sections 12-33-230, 12-33-240, Article 5 of this chapter, and Chapter 36, Title 12, there is imposed an excise tax equal to ~~five~~ 13 percent of the gross proceeds of the sales of alcoholic liquor by the drink for on-premises consumption in an establishment licensed for sales pursuant to Article 5, Chapter 6, Title 61 or at a location holding a temporary license or permit that authorizes the sale of liquor by the drink. All proceeds of this excise tax must be deposited to the credit of the general fund of the State. Except with respect to the distribution of the revenue of this tax, this excise tax is considered to be imposed pursuant to Chapter 36, Title 12. For purposes of this subsection, "gross proceeds of sales" has the meaning as provided in Section 12-36-90, except that the sales tax imposed under Chapter 36, Title 12 is not included in "gross proceeds of sales". The term "gross proceeds of sales" also includes, but is not limited to, the retail value of a complimentary or discounted beverage containing alcoholic liquor, an amount charged for ice for a drink containing alcoholic liquor, and an amount charged for a nonalcoholic beverage that is sold or used as a mixer for a drink containing alcoholic liquor. This section does not apply to nonprofit organizations that are issued a temporary permit to allow possession, sale, and consumption of alcoholic liquors pursuant to subarticle 5, Article 5, Chapter 6, Title 61.

(B) Eleven percent of the revenue generated by the excise tax provided for in subsection (A) must be placed on deposit with the State Treasurer and credited to a fund separate and distinct from the general fund of the State. On a quarterly basis, the State Treasurer shall allocate this revenue to counties on a per capita basis according to the most recent United States Census. The State Treasurer must

notify each county of the allocation pursuant to this subsection in addition to the funds allocated pursuant to Section 6-27-40(B), and the combination of these funds must be used by counties for educational purposes relating to the use of alcoholic liquors and for the rehabilitation of alcoholics and drug addicts. A county may pool these funds with other counties and may combine these funds with other funds for the same purpose.

(C) Those state agencies and local entities, including counties, which by law received minibottle tax revenues in fiscal year 2004-2005 for education, prevention, and other purposes, shall receive in a fiscal year at least the same amount of revenues from the excise tax revenues as they received from minibottle tax revenues during fiscal year 2004-2005. If these state agencies and local entities do not, the difference must be made up from the general fund. Payments will be distributed in four equal payments based on the total payments remitted to these state agencies and entities in fiscal year 2004-2005, including funds received pursuant to Section 6-27-40(B). At the end of each fiscal year, the State Treasurer, in consultation with the Department of Revenue, shall determine whether the tax collected pursuant to these sections exceed the total collection and remittance for fiscal year 2004-2005. If the tax collected exceeds the amount collected and allocated in fiscal year 2004-2005, a distribution of the difference will be remitted to the county treasurers within thirty days after the close of each fiscal year.

(D) In addition to all other penalties that may be imposed for violations arising pursuant to subsection (A) of this section, a failure to report and remit the full amount of the excise tax imposed pursuant to subsection (A) on the gross proceeds of the sale of each drink of alcoholic liquor sold for consumption in the establishment subjects the licensee to the following penalties:

- (1) for a first violation, a civil penalty of one thousand dollars;
- (2) for a second violation, a civil penalty of one thousand dollars and an automatic suspension for thirty days of the license allowing such sales; and
- (3) for a third or subsequent violation, a civil penalty of five thousand dollars and a revocation of the license.

(E) When a license is suspended or revoked, a partner or person with a financial interest in the business may not be issued a license for the premises concerned. A person within the second degree of kinship to a person whose license is suspended or revoked may not be issued a license for the premises concerned for a period of one year after the date of suspension or revocation.

HISTORY: 1996 Act No. 415, Section 3; 1999 Act No. 100, Part II, Section 10; 2005 Act No. 139, Section 3, eff January 1, 2006; 2006 Act No. 386, Section

19.A, eff June 14, 2006; 2007 Act No. 36, Section 1, eff June 7, 2007; 2008 Act No. 287, Sections 1.A, 3, eff June 11, 2008.

Editor's Note

2008 Act No. 287, Section 1.B provides as follows:

"This section [amending subsection (C)] takes effect upon approval by the Governor and first applies for excise tax revenues distributed for fiscal year 2007-2008."

Section IV: This bill will go into effect June 1st, 2025 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Alexandra McAllister
Presbyterian College

- Purpose:** To make sexual/reproductive education more effective, educational, and inclusive, and therefore improve the understanding and wellbeing of students.
- Whereas,** The legally established curriculum does not include any explanations of consent/constitutions of withdrawal of consent
- Whereas,** The law prohibits any discussion of non-heterosexual relationships
- Whereas,** The law emphasizes abstinence above all other contraceptive methods, which has been empirically proven to be counterproductive
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend section 59-32-10 subsections (2), (4) of the South carolina Code of Laws to read:
- (2) "Reproductive health education" means instruction in human physiology, conception, prenatal care and development, childbirth, and postnatal care, but does not include instruction concerning sexual practices ~~outside marriage or practices~~ unrelated to reproduction except within the context of the risk of disease. ~~Abstinence and the risks associated with sexual activity outside of Marriage must be strongly emphasized.~~ *The importance of obtaining consent and specific examples of potential withdrawal of such must be strongly emphasized.*
- (4) "Pregnancy prevention education" means instruction intended to:
- (a) *Advise students on the potential dangers and consequences of sexual activities.* ~~stress the importance of abstaining from sexual activity until marriage;~~
- (b) help students develop skills to enable them to resist peer pressure ~~and abstain from sexual activity;~~
- (c) explain methods of contraception and the risks and benefits of each method. Abortion must not be included as a method of birth control. Instruction explaining the methods of contraception must not be included in any education program for grades kindergarten through fifth. Contraceptive information must be given *when developmentally appropriate* ~~in the context of future family planning.~~

Section II: To amend Section 59-32-20 subsections (5) of the South Carolina Code of Laws which shall read:

Local school boards to implement comprehensive health education program; guidelines and restrictions.

(A) Pursuant to guidelines developed by the board, each local school board shall implement the following program of instruction:

(2) Beginning with the 1988-1989 school year, for grades six through eight, instruction in comprehensive health must include the following subjects: community health, consumer health, environmental health, growth and development, nutritional health, personal health, prevention and control of diseases and disorders, safety and accident prevention, substance use and abuse, dental health, mental and emotional health, and reproductive health education. Sexually transmitted diseases are to be included as a part of instruction. At the discretion of the local board, instruction in family life education or pregnancy prevention education or both may be included, but instruction in these subjects may not include an explanation of the methods of contraception before the sixth grade. Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, for grades six through eight, instruction in comprehensive health education also must include the subject of domestic violence.

(3) Beginning with the 1989-90 school year, at least one time during the four years of grades nine through twelve, each student shall receive instruction in comprehensive health education, including at least seven hundred fifty minutes of reproductive health education and pregnancy prevention education.

For the validity of (A)(5), see Editors' Notes below.

~~(5) The program of instruction provided for in this section may not include a discussion of alternate sexual lifestyles from heterosexual relationships including, but not limited to, homosexual relationships except in the context of instruction concerning sexually transmitted diseases.~~

(B) Local school boards may use the instructional unit made available by the board pursuant to Section 59-32-20, or local boards may develop or select their own instructional materials addressing the subjects of reproductive health education, family life education, and pregnancy prevention education. To assist in the selection of components and curriculum materials, each local school board shall appoint a thirteen-member local advisory committee consisting of ~~three~~ ~~two~~ parents, ~~three~~ ~~clergy~~, ~~Three~~ ~~two~~ health professionals, ~~the~~ ~~school~~ ~~guidance~~ ~~counselor~~ ~~or~~ ~~equivalent~~ ~~psychological~~ ~~professional~~, two teachers, two students, one being the president of the student body of a high school, and two other persons not employed by the local school district.

(G) Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, districts annually shall provide age-appropriate instruction in sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention to all students in four-year-old kindergarten, where offered, through twelfth grade. *Including emphasis on the concept of consent.* This instruction must be based on the units developed by the board, through the department, pursuant to Section 59-32-20(B).

Section III: This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Kaitlyn McAllister
Presbyterian College

Purpose: To revise 16-3-615 (A) and 16-3-615 (B), to amend the legislation and expand the scope of legal reportability regarding spousal sexual battery.

Whereas, For Section 16-3-615 to be applicable, the victim of spousal sexual battery must reside with the offending spouse; and,

Whereas, In order for a victim of spousal sexual battery to prosecute the offending spouse, the incident has to be reported within thirty days; and,

Whereas, The current legislation regarding spousal sexual battery is restrictive, potentially placing victims at further risk, while also allowing offenders the possibility of evading accountability; and,

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To revise Section 16-3-615 (A), which shall read:

“(A) Sexual battery, as defined in Section 16-3-651(h), when accomplished through use of aggravated force, defined as the use or the threat of use of a weapon or the use or threat of use of physical force or physical violence of a high and aggravated nature, by one spouse against the other spouse ~~if they are living together~~, constitutes the felony of spousal sexual battery and, upon conviction, a person must be imprisoned not more than ten years.”

Section II: To revise Section 16-3-65 (B), which shall read:

“(B) The offending spouse's conduct must be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities within ~~thirty days~~ *3 years* in order for that spouse to be prosecuted for this offense.”

Section III: This bill will go into effect May 1st, 2025, upon passage of the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Alex Melgar
Presbyterian College

- Purpose:** To raise the fine for impersonating a state or local official, employee, or law enforcement officer.
- Whereas,** impersonating a law enforcement officer or government official can be used to commit fraud, deceive citizens, and undermine public trust in government institutions; and,
- Whereas,** According to South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) Crime Report, individuals have falsely posed as officers to conduct unlawful stops, issue fake citations, and extort money from residents, thereby undermining public trust in law enforcement,
- Whereas,** with current tensions between law enforcement and the public already high, impersonating a law enforcement officer or government official only worsens the situation and further erodes trust in legitimate authorities; and,
- Whereas,** ensuring stricter consequences for those impersonating officials reinforces the state's commitment to transparency, accountability, and the rule of law.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 16-17-735 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read in subsection (D):
- “(D) It is unlawful for a person falsely to assert authority of law, in an attempt to intimidate or hinder a state or local official or employee or law enforcement officer in the discharge of official duties, by means of threats, harassment, physical abuse, or use of a sham legal process. A person violating this subsection is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than ~~ten thousand dollars~~ *fifteen thousand dollars*, or imprisoned not less than one year and not more than three years, or both.”
- Section IV:** This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Barrett Moody
Presbyterian College

- Purpose:** To aid Title 46 the Unified Aquaculture Certification Program in South Carolina, in further development and investment of the SC aquaculture sector.
- Whereas,** South Carolina has the climate, resources, and geographic advantage to become a major player in aquaculture, sustaining the state’s needs while profiting from exports; and,
- Whereas,** Despite this potential, South Carolina lags behind others states with more investment production, research funding, and regulatory efficiency; and,
- Whereas,** The state lacks a centralized aquaculture research hub, like Florida (University of Florida) or Washington (University of Washington), despite having Clemson University, USC, and College of Charleston, which could support industry growth; and,
- Whereas,** South Carolina’s aquaculture industry primarily focuses on low-margin species, missing opportunities in high-value markets such as sturgeon, shellfish, and shrimp; and,
- Whereas,** Federal policy shifts, including NOAA budget cuts and reduced grant funding, highlight the need for South Carolina to develop its own state-led aquaculture strategy to remain competitive.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** This act may be known and cited as the "South Carolina Unified Aquaculture Program.”
- Section II:** To add subsection **46-51-40** to Title 46, Chapter 51 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read:
- 46-51-40. Enhancement of the Aquaculture Certification Office.
- (A) The South Carolina Aquaculture Permit Assistance Office and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) shall rebrand the current permit office into a program titled the South Carolina Unified Aquaculture Program (SCUAP) to host not only permit facilitators but develop R&D partnerships, databases and State campaigns focused on aquaculture.

(B) The Aquaculture permit office shall continue to consolidate all required aquaculture-related permits into a single comprehensive regulatory permit, ensuring efficiency while maintaining environmental oversight.

(C) SCUAP shall create a Best Management Practices (BMPs) for our state, including:

1. Water quality management.
2. Sustainable feed & waste disposal protocols.
3. Biosecurity & disease prevention measures.
4. Climate resilience practices.
5. State conservation goals
6. Adherence to environmental impact assessments and public reporting
7. Reports added to a State aquaculture database
8. Certification renewal every five (5) years.

(D) Eligibility will be determined by the SCUAP through an application and evaluation process that assesses:

1. Sustainability Practices: Compliance with climate-resilient and environmentally responsible aquaculture methods.
2. Market Potential: Viability for market expansion and export potential.
3. Economic Impact: Contribution to job creation, workforce development, and regional economic growth.
4. Innovation & Research Alignment: Projects that align with cutting-edge aquaculture technology and industry advancements.
5. Regulatory Compliance: Adherence to state and federal aquaculture regulations and best management practices.

(E) Private and Public farms in compliance with (BMPs) will be eligible for a sustainable certification that will:

1. Enhance marketability
2. Qualify them for select grants and funding
3. State funding & priority conservation grants.
4. Tax incentives for sustainable innovation.
5. Research Funding from the SCUAP determined by project size.
6. Technical Support from institutions.

(F) Non-compliance after being issued a sustainable certification may result in:

1. Fines up to \$7,000 per violation.
2. Suspension or revocation of (SCUAP) sustainable certification.

46-51-50. Research, Support, and Economic Incentives.

(A) The state shall prioritize investment in high-value aquaculture species and sustainable practices for existing operations.

(B) The SCDA, in partnership with state institutions, data centers, and the SCUAP shall create an Aquaculture Research and Innovation Hub, supporting:

1. Climate-resilient aquaculture research.
2. High-value market expansion.
3. Workforce development programs.

(C) Aquaculture projects accepted through the SCUAP that enhance conservation shall receive:

1. Public-Private Partnership Opportunities: Collaboration with state agencies, universities, and conservation organizations to scale environmental benefits.
2. Recognition & Certification: A state-endorsed sustainability certification to enhance marketability and consumer trust.

Section III: This Act shall take effect January 1, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Ladson Porter
Presbyterian College

Purpose: To amend SECTION 44-34-100. of the South Carolina laws so that it is lawful for a tattoo artist to tattoo any part of the head, face, or neck of another person.

Whereas, The First Amendment guarantees freedom of expression, which extends to tattoos, as long as both parties are consenting, the giving of face and neck tattoos is perfectly constitutional by the federal constitution; and,

Whereas, Tattoo artists in South Carolina are losing a potential revenue stream because of this law; and,

Whereas, South Carolina is the only state in the country to have a law such as this.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To amend Section of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

SECTION 44-34-100. Unlawful acts; penalties.

(A) It is unlawful for a person to perform or offer to perform tattooing upon a person under the age of eighteen years.

(B) The minor upon whom tattooing is performed, or the parent or legal guardian of that minor, or any other minor is not liable for punishment pursuant to this section.

(C) Tattooing may not be performed upon a person impaired by drugs or alcohol. A person impaired by drugs or alcohol is considered incapable of consenting to tattooing and incapable of understanding tattooing procedures and aftercare suggestions.

(D) Tattooing may not be performed on skin surfaces having a rash, pimples, boils, keloids, sunburn, open lesions, infections, or manifest any evidence of unhealthy conditions.

(E) ~~It is unlawful for a tattoo artist to tattoo any part of the head, face, or neck of another person.~~

(F) A person who violates a provision of this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined up to two thousand five hundred dollars or imprisoned up to one year, or both.

(G) All licensing fees and monetary penalties collected must be remitted to the Department of Health and Environmental Control in a separate and distinct account to be used solely to carry out and enforce the provisions of this chapter.

Section II: This bill will go into effect January, 1st 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Dakota Price
Presbyterian College

- Purpose:** To revise Section 61-4-120 (A), to allow all alcohol on Sundays and to strike Section 61-4-140.
- Whereas,** It is currently unlawful for a person to sell or offer for sale of liquor in this State between the hours of twelve o'clock Saturday night and sunrise Monday morning; and,
- Whereas,** A person who drinks beer or wine or possesses beer or wine in an open container between the hours of twelve o'clock Saturday night and sunrise Monday morning at a place licensed to sell beer or wine is considered guilty of a misdemeanor; and,
- Whereas,** Municipal governments in counties have the ability to allow the sale of alcoholic beverages on Sundays: and,
- Whereas,** The sale of Liquor on Sundays could provide up to two billion dollars of additional tax revenue and,
- Whereas,** These laws are based upon outdated religious rules of Sunday being a day of rest often referred to as sabbath laws; but, It is essential to separate church and state; and,
- Whereas,** Nineteen other states including South Dakota, North Dakota, Washington, California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan, Louisiana, West Virginia, New York and Maine allow for the unrestricted sale of all alcoholic beverages on Sundays.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To revise Section 61-4-120 (A), which shall read:

~~“(A) It is unlawful for a person to sell or offer for sale wine or beer in this State between the hours of twelve o'clock Saturday night and sunrise Monday morning. However, an establishment licensed pursuant to Article 5 of Chapter 6 is authorized to sell these products during those hours in which the sale of alcoholic liquors by the drink is lawful. A person who violates the provisions of this section is considered guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than one hundred dollars or imprisoned for not more than thirty days. The right of a person to sell wine and beer in this State under a license issued by the State must be forfeited and the license revoked upon his conviction of violating the provisions of this section. It is lawful for a person to sell or offer for sale wine, beer, spirits, liquor and other alcoholic beverages regardless of the day of~~

the week to persons over 21 years of age if proper licensing is owned by the business owner.”

Section II: To strike Section 61-4-140, which shall read:

~~“A person who drinks beer or wine or possesses beer or wine in an open container between the hours of twelve o'clock Saturday night and sunrise Monday morning at a place licensed to sell beer or wine is considered guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than one hundred dollars or be imprisoned for not more than thirty days.”~~

Section III: This bill will go into effect January 1st, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Amelia Rhyne
Presbyterian College

- Purpose:** To strike out 44-20-210 in order to disband South Carolina Commission on Disabilities and Special Needs and replace it with an appointed secretary by the governor in order to add the department to the governor's cabinet.
- Whereas,** South Carolina's Commission on Disabilities and Special Need has suffered noticeable mismanagement which has garnered national attention in the last couple of years, and,
- Whereas,** South Carolina has recently been sued by the Justice Department for being in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act; by failing to offer South Carolina residents with severe mental illness the opportunity to receive services while still living independently or with family that state has failed to live up to its duty as stated by the ADA, and,
- Whereas,** The Justice Department informed South Carolina of the violations in July of 2023, yet not actions were taken by the Commission and in December of 2024 the lawsuit was brought forward.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To strike section 44-20-210 in order to disband South Carolina Commission on Disabilities and Special Needs:

~~SECTION 44-20-210. Creation of South Carolina Commission on Disabilities and Special Needs; membership; terms of office; removal; vacancies.~~

~~There is created the South Carolina Commission on Disabilities and Special Needs. The commission consists of seven members. One member must be a resident of each congressional district appointed by the Governor upon the advice and consent of the Senate. They shall serve for four years and until their successors are appointed and qualify. Members of the commission are subject to removal by the Governor pursuant to the provisions of Section 1-3-240. A vacancy may be filled by the Governor for the unexpired portion of the term.~~

~~HISTORY: 1990 Act No. 496, Section 1; 1993 Act No. 181, Section 1078; 2011 Act No. 47, Section 2, eff June 7, 2011; 2012 Act No. 222, Section 13, eff June 7, 2012.~~

~~Editor's Note~~

~~2012 Act No. 222, Section 15, provides as follows:~~

~~"SECTION 15. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, any person elected or appointed to serve, or serving, as a member of any board, commission, or committee to represent a congressional district, whose residency is transferred to another district by a change in the composition of the district, may serve, or continue to serve, the term of office for which he was elected or appointed; however, the appointing or electing authority shall appoint or elect an additional member on that board, commission, or committee from the district which loses a resident member on it as a result of the transfer to serve until the term of the transferred member expires. When a vacancy occurs in the district to which a member has been transferred, the vacancy must not be filled until the full term of the transferred member expires."~~

Section II: To replace every mention of "Commission" with "Secretary" in title 44-20.

Section III: The secretary of the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs will be appointed by the governor and be a member of their cabinet.

Section IV: This bill will go into effect July 1, 2025 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Andy Robertson
Presbyterian College

Purpose: To amend Section 16-8-290 of the Code of Laws to require that law enforcement agencies notify the relevant parties of the release of a criminal gang member within ten days of the release and establish penalties for failure to comply.

Whereas, ensuring public safety and community awareness is a fundamental responsibility of law enforcement agencies, particularly regarding the release of individuals associated with criminal gang activity; and

Whereas, timely notification to relevant parties about the release of a criminal gang member is essential for maintaining security, preventing recidivism, and fostering trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: Section 16-8-290 of the Code of Laws is amended to read:

"Section 16-8-290. Notification of police or sheriff of release of criminal gang member from prison.

When a criminal gang member is released from the custody of a jail, prison, or corrections facility, and the criminal gang member was in the custody of the jail, prison, or corrections facility for a violation of the provisions of this article, the jail, prison, or corrections facility must transmit notice of the release of the criminal gang member to the sheriff of the county in which the crime was committed no later than ten days following the release of the individual. Notice also must be given to a sheriff that the criminal gang member is being released and has provided an address within the jurisdiction of that sheriff for the county in which the criminal gang member intends to reside within the same ten-day period. If the crime was committed in a municipality, or if the criminal gang member will reside in a municipality upon release, that law enforcement agency must transmit the same notice to the chiefs of police of those municipalities within ten days of the release.

Failure to comply with the ten-day notification requirement may result in a fine of up to \$100 for each violation, to be enforced by the appropriate state agency."

Section II: This act takes effect upon passage by General Assembly and signature from the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Katelynn Ryan
Presbyterian College

Purpose: To give eligible high school students the opportunity to register to vote before graduation.

Whereas, Younger generations have a lower voter turnout, and making voter registration accessible in high schools will increase participation in elections; and,

Whereas, Educating students about the voting process encourages civic engagement and lifelong participation in democracy; and,

Whereas, Without proper education on their civic responsibilities, many students will remain unaware of their ability to influence change within their communities.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To amend Section 59-39-200 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“**SECTION 59-39-200.** Voter registration application forms to be made available to students.

(a) Each high school in this State shall make available to its students voter registration application forms. Pursuant to Section 7-5-175, the forms must be provided to high school administrators upon their request to the appropriate county voter registration board or entity charged by law with registering an elector

(b) All high schools in the state shall hold an annual voter registration event in collaboration with local election boards to ensure accessibility for all eligible students

(c) Local election officials shall coordinate with school guidance counselors to provide schools with the resources necessary for high schools to facilitate student voter registration drives

Section II: This bill will go into effect January 1st upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Ava Westhart
Presbyterian College

Purpose: To amend Title 31, Chapter 13 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to create a **statewide affordable housing tax credit program** that incentivizes developers to build affordable housing in South Carolina’s underserved communities.

Whereas, the lack of affordable housing in South Carolina is a growing concern, particularly in urban and rural areas, which affects low-income families, increases homelessness, and limits economic mobility for residents, especially in the face of mass population growth;

Whereas, the affordable housing shortage is especially prevalent in high-demand areas, including major cities and regions experiencing significant population growth, including but not limited to Greenville, Columbia, Charleston, and Anderson;

Whereas, incentivizing private sector investment in affordable housing through tax credits and other financial tools will accelerate the development of much-needed housing units and provide new opportunities for working families;

Whereas, the tax credit program has been successful in other states, such as **Massachusetts** and **California**, in stimulating affordable housing construction while additionally ensuring long-term affordability and stability for residents;

Whereas, this program will support the state’s commitment to reducing homelessness and improving the quality of life for South Carolinians by increasing the availability of safe, affordable housing.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To add section 31-13-180 to the South Carolina Code of Laws to establish the South Carolina Affordable Housing Tax Credit Program, to read as follows:

- (a) Developers who build or rehabilitate affordable housing units may receive tax credits, provided the following criteria are met:
- (i) **Income Restrictions:** The units must be reserved for households earning no more than 80% of the area median income (AMI).
 - (ii) **Location:** The units must be located in high-demand areas or underserved communities within the state.
 - (iii) **Duration of Affordability:** The units must remain affordable for a

minimum of 30 years, with rental prices set below market rates for the specified period.

- (b) Eligible Applicants. The following entities are eligible to apply for tax credits:
- (i) Private developers, nonprofit organizations, and public-private partnerships.
 - (ii) The project must be approved for certification by the South Carolina Housing Authority (SCHA).

Section II: To add section 31-13-190 to the South Carolina Code of Laws to establish Tax Credit Allocation and Funding for the South Carolina Affordable Housing Tax Credit Program, to read as follows:

- (a) Developers of affordable housing projects may receive a state tax credit equal to 30% of the total construction or rehabilitation costs incurred in the development of qualifying affordable housing units.
- (b) The Affordable Housing Tax Credit Program shall be funded by a combination of state budget appropriations, tax credit revenues, and, where applicable, federal housing development grants.
- (c) Developers seeking tax credits under this program must submit an application to the South Carolina Housing Authority (SCHA), which shall include a detailed project scope, financing plan, and a demonstration of how the project meets the affordability criteria established by the SCHA. The SCHA will allocate credits based on the project's need, feasibility, and alignment with state housing goals.

Section III: This bill shall take effect on January 1, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and signature by the Governor and will apply to all housing development projects that are initiated on or after this date.

A Bill
Presented by Thomas Willis
The Presbyterian College

- Purpose:** To Provide Further Tax Grants For Companies Who Convert Abandoned Properties into Affordable Housing Units.
- Whereas,** Large Numbers of buildings all over the state fall under the definition of abandoned which reads as follows “An abandoned building is one that has been at least 66 percent vacant for the past five years, is not operational to produce income, is not a single-family residence, and is listed on the National Register for Historic Places when used only for storage or warehousing;” and,
- Whereas,** South Carolina has been ranked as the third fastest growing state in the country and housing prices are increasing rapidly; and,
- Whereas,** Providing further incentives to companies will encourage them to produce affordable housing units for our rapidly growing population which will further stimulate our economy.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend SECTION 12-67-140 of the code laws to add sub section (B)(4), which shall read as follows:
- (B) If the taxpayer elects to receive the credit pursuant to subsection (A)(1), the following provisions apply:
- (1) The taxpayer shall file with the department a Notice of Intent to Rehabilitate before incurring its first rehabilitation expenses at the building site. Failure to provide the Notice of Intent to Rehabilitate results in qualification of only those rehabilitation expenses incurred after the notice is provided.
- (2) The amount of the credit is equal to twenty-five percent of the actual rehabilitation expenses incurred at the building site if the actual rehabilitation expenses incurred in rehabilitating the building site are between eighty percent and one hundred twenty-five percent of the estimated rehabilitation expenses set forth in the Notice of Intent to Rehabilitate. If the actual rehabilitation expenses exceed one hundred twenty-five percent of the estimated expenses set forth in the Notice of Intent to Rehabilitate, the taxpayer qualifies for the credit based on one hundred twenty-five percent of the estimated expenses as opposed to the actual expenses it incurred in rehabilitating the building site. If the actual rehabilitation expenses are below eighty percent of the estimated rehabilitation expenses, the credit is not allowed.

(3)(a) The entire credit is earned in the taxable year in which the applicable phase or portion of the building site is placed in service but must be taken in equal installments over a three-year period beginning with the tax year in which the applicable phase or portion of the building site is placed in service. Unused credit may be carried forward for the succeeding five years at the individual, partnership, or limited liability company level.

(b) The entire credit earned pursuant to this subsection may not exceed seven hundred thousand dollars for any taxpayer in a tax year for each abandoned building site. The limitation provided in this subitem applies to each unit or parcel deemed to be an abandoned building site.

(4)(a) If the area being rehabilitated is to be converted into affordable housing units then the amount of the credit is equal to forty percent of the actual rehabilitation expenses incurred at the building site if the actual rehabilitation expenses incurred in rehabilitating the building site are between eighty percent and one hundred twenty-five percent of the estimated rehabilitation expenses set forth in the Notice of Intent to Rehabilitate. If the actual rehabilitation expenses exceed one hundred twenty-five percent of the estimated expenses set forth in the Notice of Intent to Rehabilitate, the taxpayer qualifies for the credit based on one hundred twenty-five percent of the estimated expenses as opposed to the actual expenses it incurred in rehabilitating the building site. If the actual rehabilitation expenses are below seventy-five percent of the estimated rehabilitation expenses, the credit is not allowed.

(b) The entire credit earned pursuant to subsection (4)(a) may not exceed seven hundred fifty thousand dollars for any taxpayer in a tax year for each abandoned building site. The limitation provided in this subitem applies to each unit or parcel deemed to be an abandoned building site.

Section II: This bill will go into effect January 1st, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Taylor Mckenzie Wooten
Presbyterian College

- Purpose:** To phase out the use of private prisons in South Carolina by **prohibiting new contracts, gradually terminating existing agreements, and redirecting resources to public correctional facilities and rehabilitation programs** that focus on reducing recidivism and reintegrating individuals into society.
- Whereas,** Private prisons house 8% of the total U.S. prison population, yet account for 28% more inmate-on-inmate assaults and 49% more inmate-on-staff assaults compared to public facilities due to cost-cutting on staff training and security; and,
- Whereas,** A 2021 study by the Sentencing Project found that states using private prisons have higher recidivism rates, as corporations profit from high incarceration numbers and do not invest in meaningful rehabilitation; and,
- Whereas,** The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) reported that private prison contracts often include "bed quotas" that require the state to maintain 80-100% capacity, incentivizing mass incarceration over rehabilitation; A 2023 report from the Prison Policy Initiative shows that private prisons fail to provide cost savings, as hidden fees, legal liabilities, and increased recidivism offset any perceived financial benefits; and,
- Whereas,** South Carolina taxpayers spent \$472 million on incarceration in 2018, yet only 3% of funds were allocated to reentry programs, making it difficult for formerly incarcerated individuals to reintegrate into society; and,
- Whereas,** African Americans make up 27% of South Carolina's population but represent 60% of its incarcerated population, a disparity worsened by for-profit prisons that target marginalized communities; and,
- Whereas,** Private prisons have been directly linked to corruption and judicial misconduct, as seen in the 2008 "Kids for Cash" scandal, in which Pennsylvania judges Mark Ciavarella and Michael Conahan accepted \$2.8 million in bribes from private juvenile detention centers in exchange for sentencing thousands of children—many for minor infractions such as truancy or mocking school administrators—to harsh juvenile detention terms; and,
- Whereas,** The "Kids for Cash" case resulted in the wrongful incarceration of over 2,000 minors and exposed how private prisons financially benefit from longer and more frequent incarcerations; and,
- Whereas,** States that have eliminated private prisons and reinvested in rehabilitation have seen significant improvements: New Jersey reduced its private prison population by 75% between 2011 and 2022 while expanding education and vocational

training programs, leading to a 20% reduction in recidivism. California phased out private prisons by 2020, shifting to public rehabilitation programs, which led to a 25% decrease in parole violations and rearrests in participating counties. Norway’s rehabilitative prison model, which prioritizes education, therapy, and skill-building, boasts a recidivism rate of 20% one of the lowest in the world compared to 66% in the U.S.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: Definitions

“Private prison” refers to any correctional facility operated by a for-profit entity under contract with the state or local government.

“Public correctional facility” refers to state-run and locally operated correctional facilities funded by taxpayers.

“Rehabilitation program” refers to education, vocational training, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and reentry services provided to incarcerated individuals.

Section II: Termination of Existing Contracts

All current private prison contracts *shall be phased out within three (3) years* of this bill’s enactment.

An independent oversight commission *shall review* the status of all existing private prison contracts within six (6) months.

Facilities failing to meet state standards for safety, rehabilitation, and healthcare *shall have their contracts terminated immediately.*

Section III: Improving Public Prisons and Rehabilitation Programs

A. Expanding Rehabilitation Services

At least 25% of funds previously allocated to private prison contracts *shall be redirected toward:*

- Education and vocational training programs inside prisons.
- Mental health services, including counseling and psychiatric care.
- Substance abuse treatment programs for incarcerated individuals.
- Reentry services, such as job placement, housing support, and social reintegration programs.

B. Regulating the Use of Funds for Rehabilitation

The South Carolina Department of Corrections *must submit an annual public report detailing:*

- The amount of funding directed to rehabilitation programs.
- The effectiveness of these programs, measured by recidivism rates, employment rates, and successful reentry cases.
- The conditions of public correctional facilities.

Any misallocation of funds intended for rehabilitation will result in civil penalties of up to \$250,000 and mandatory corrective action.

C. Improving Public Prison Conditions

Funds shall also be used to:

- Increase staffing levels and improve training for correctional officers.
- Upgrade prison facilities to meet humane standards.
- Reduce prison overcrowding by expanding community supervision programs for nonviolent offenders.

Section IV: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Damien Barber
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To require all 46 county sheriffs to opt-in to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency’s 287(g) program of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
- Whereas,** this law would reduce and hopefully eliminate alien recidivism by removing criminals from the country as a whole; and,
- Whereas,** Jose Ibarra, the murderer of Laken Riley had multiple run-ins with law enforcement, loopholes in New York State law allowed for him to roam the country freely; and,
- Whereas,** among the crisis of our southern border and an influx of illegal immigration via multiple points of entry, South Carolina will not be hospitable to people of illegal residence.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I: Definitions.**
- 1) For the purpose of this bill “detention” shall be defined as: the holding of a person by the State or its political subdivision’s Law Enforcement Agencies after the following an arrest for the alleged commission of a felony. Detention may also be used to refer to the time in custody between arrest and trial for the crimes in the indictment.
 - 2) For the purposes of this bill “incarceration” shall be defined as: the time to be served after a successful conviction of a crime.
 - 3) For the purposes of this bill, the division” shall be used to refer to the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED)
- Section II:** To add this section as Article 4; Agreements with Law Enforcement to Section 3-7-290 which shall read:
- Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with The Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS), Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency’s (ICE) 287 (g) program
- (A) To the maximum extent possible, all 46 county sheriff’s departments are required to attempt to enter a Memorandum of Agreement with the United States agency on Immigration and Customs Enforcement utilizing the Jail Enforcement Model allowing for the delegation of immigration authority to states by Section 287(g) of the federal Immigration and Nationality Act as soon as possible after the effect date of this legislation.

- (B) All Sheriff applicants are required to present 5% or 10 sworn officers to be deputized by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, whichever number is greater in value.
- (C) Sheriff's must acquire the written consent of the Chief of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) to terminate, allow to lapse, or fail to renew their 287(g) MOA.
- (D) Notwithstanding Section 23-3-1100, LEAs with active 287(g) MOAs shall use their delegated immigration authority to primarily verify the presence of suspects charged or arrested on suspicion of committing or conspiracy to commit offenses outlined in subsection (E)
- (E) Any offense from subsection (D) of 16-1-10. Any offense from Section 16-1-60. Any offense from subsections (A) (B) (C) (D) (E) of Section 16-1-90. Section 16-1-80 pursuant to the other statutes cited in this section.
- (F) After the issuance or receipt of an immigration detainer or administrative warrant by Homeland Security or a participating LEA, the accused person must be presented to a circuit judge of this state, in the jurisdiction where the accused had been arrested, or where the crime is alleged to have been committed without unnecessary delay. Upon reasonable confirmation the individual presented is the unlawful resident of the United States as purported in the removal efforts; the judicial official shall order the detention of the accused until the first occurrence of any condition as provided in subsection (G) of this section.
- (G) Conditions for release from detention by order of immigration detainer or administrative warrant.
1. 48 hours have elapsed from the time of the circuit judge ordering the detention of the accused pursuant to the immigration detainer or administrative warrant.
 2. ICE or a 287(g) participating LEA has taken custody of the accused pursuant to a valid detainer or warrant.
 3. The detainer has been rescinded by ICE.
- (H) Nothing in this section shall be construed to deny a person bond or from being released from confinement when such person is otherwise eligible for release. However, pursuant to the provisions of Section 17-15-30, a court setting bond shall consider whether the person charged is an alien unlawfully present in the United States. The initial arrestable offense shall stand as an independent legal process from immigration enforcement efforts.

Section III: To amend Section 23-3-80 of the South Carolina Code of Laws by adding:

(G) SLED shall audit, and cross reference new biometric data submitted to the division's Central Record Repository for the purpose of enforcement of immigration law within this state as delegated by the 287(g) MOA.

Section IV: Severability Clause

(A) If any one or several provisions of this act are found illegal, invalid, unconstitutional, or unenforceable for any reason, the adjudication of such question shall not causally affect another provision or this act as a whole.

Section V: This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Andrew Boswell
University of South Carolina

Purpose: To lower homeowner’s insurance costs for South Carolina homeowners.

Whereas, Homeowner's’ insurance costs have increased 40% in Horry County; and,

Whereas, Insurance has increased by nearly 25% along the rest of the coast; and,

Whereas, The average homeowner now pays \$2,503 for homeowners' insurance; and,

Whereas, South Carolina is one of the fastest growing states in the nation

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To add section 11-40-280 to Title 11, Chapter 40 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read as the following:

Section 11-40-280. Development Fund for the Building of Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

- A) The South Carolina state government will disperse in the form of grants, and to the amount of \$120 million, taken from the general fund.*
- B) The distributions of these funds and their usage will be reported by each locality to the Commerce Department, who will then be required by law to report the data to the Senate Committee for Legislative Oversight.*

Section II: This bill will go into effect on June 1st, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

**A Bill
Presented by Max Brabham
University of South Carolina**

- Purpose:** To improve the overall health of South Carolinian citizens.
- Whereas,** More than twenty thousand South Carolinians are diagnosed with cancer each year (DHEC); and,
- Whereas,** Smoking is responsible for 20% of all cancer diagnoses, and 80% of all lung cancer diagnoses (American Cancer Society); and,
- Whereas,** Cost of treating cancer for the state is on average 5% of the total medical expenditures for a year (Tangka Et. Al.); and,
- Whereas,** Cigarettes are costing South Carolina more than \$961,200,000 every year; (KFF) and,
- Whereas,** South Carolina earns \$226,900,000 from settlements and taxes (Truth Initiative).
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 12-21-620 of the South Carolina Code of laws to read:
- (A) There shall be levied, assessed, collected, and paid in respect to the articles containing tobacco enumerated in this section the following amounts:
- (1) upon all cigarettes made of tobacco or any substitute for tobacco, ~~three and one-half mills~~ *one cent on each cigarette;*
- (2) upon all tobacco products, as defined in Section 12-21-800, five percent of the manufacturer's price.
- Manufacturer's price as used in this section is the established price at which a manufacturer sells to a wholesaler.
- Section II:** This bill will go into effect on January 1st, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Nailah Brown
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To expand Affordable housing around the state of South Carolina.
- Whereas,** South Carolina has experienced rapid population growth in recent years, resulting in a significant demand for affordable housing; and,
- Whereas,** there is a growing shortage of affordable rental units and homes for low- and moderate-income residents, leading to higher rates of homelessness and housing insecurity; and,
- Whereas,** research indicates that the lack of affordable housing exacerbates health disparities, economic inequality, and social instability, which hinders the overall well-being of South Carolina’s residents; and,
- Whereas,** the state government has a responsibility to promote equitable access to safe and affordable housing for all residents; and,
- Whereas,** investing in affordable housing will stimulate economic growth, provide jobs, and improve community stability across South Carolina.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To strike and replace Section 31-13-190 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

SECTION 31-13-190. Powers conferred upon South Carolina State Housing, Finance, and Development Authority.

In addition to all other powers, functions, rights, duties and privileges vested in the Authority, including without limitation those set forth in chapters 3, 5, 10 and 11 of this title as now constituted and vested in the Authority by reference in Act 500 of 1971 which are hereby expressly confirmed and made applicable to all undertakings of the Authority authorized by this chapter except as limited by the provisions of Section 31-13-250, the Authority may exercise all powers necessary to carry out its functions in any county or municipality and, without limitation, may exercise any of the following powers:

- (1) Make and execute contracts and any other instruments and agreements necessary or desirable for the performance of its functions.

(2) Borrow money through the issuance of notes and bonds under the conditions set forth in Section 31-13-200.

(3) Make mortgage loans in such amounts and on such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve to housing sponsors and to persons and families of the beneficiary classes for residential housing and housing development. The terms and conditions of such loans shall prescribe that the undertakings for which such mortgage loans are made shall be available to persons of the beneficiary classes on the best available terms.

(4) Invest in, purchase or make commitments to purchase mortgages, federally insured mortgages and federal mortgages or participations in such mortgages from any housing sponsor or mortgage lender in such amounts and on such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve for the purpose of providing residential housing, upon the condition that the proceeds of such purchase shall be used by the seller for the purpose of making mortgage loans for residential housing to persons and families of the beneficiary classes on the best available terms.

(5) Make loans to or purchase securities from mortgage lenders under such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve including a requirement that the proceeds thereof be used by the mortgage lenders for the making of mortgage loans for residential housing.

(6) Require that loans made to mortgage lenders pursuant to Section 31-13-200(1)(a) shall be additionally secured as to payment of both principal and interest by a pledge of and lien upon collateral security in such amounts and consisting of obligations and securities of the class enumerated in Section 31-13-200(1)(a) and, in the event of a default under any such arrangement with a mortgage lender, to take possession of or otherwise acquire, hold or sell on such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve such collateral security without regard to whether the Authority would under any other provisions of this chapter otherwise have the authority to act.

(7) Make and execute contracts with mortgage lenders or other financial institutions in the State for the servicing of mortgage loans made or acquired by the Authority pursuant to this chapter and to pay the reasonable value of services rendered to the Authority pursuant to these contracts.

Make and execute contracts and any other instruments and agreements necessary or desirable for the performance of its functions.

(2) Borrow money through the issuance of notes and bonds under the conditions

set forth in Section 31-13-200.

(3) Make mortgage loans in such amounts and on such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve to housing sponsors and to persons and families of the beneficiary classes for residential housing and housing development. The terms and conditions of such loans shall prescribe that the undertakings for which such mortgage loans are made shall be available to persons of the beneficiary classes on the best available terms.

(4) Invest in, purchase or make commitments to purchase mortgages, federally insured mortgages and federal mortgages or participations in such mortgages from any housing sponsor or mortgage lender in such amounts and on such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve for the purpose of providing residential housing, upon the condition that the proceeds of such purchase shall be used by the seller for the purpose of making mortgage loans for residential housing to persons and families of the beneficiary classes on the best available terms.

(5) Make loans to or purchase securities from mortgage lenders under such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve including a requirement that the proceeds thereof be used by the mortgage lenders for the making of mortgage loans for residential housing.

(6) Require that loans made to mortgage lenders pursuant to Section 31-13-200(1)(a) shall be additionally secured as to payment of both principal and interest by a pledge of and lien upon collateral security in such amounts and consisting of obligations and securities of the class enumerated in Section 31-13-200(1)(a) and, in the event of a default under any such arrangement with a mortgage lender, to take possession of or otherwise acquire, hold or sell on such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve such collateral security without regard to whether the Authority would under any other provisions of this chapter otherwise have the authority to act.

(7) Make and execute contracts with mortgage lenders or other financial institutions in the State for the servicing of mortgage loans made or acquired by the Authority pursuant to this chapter and to pay the reasonable value of services rendered to the Authority pursuant to these contracts.

(8) An Affordable Housing Development Fund shall be created, providing grants and low-interest loans to developers and nonprofit organizations to construct and rehabilitate affordable housing units across the state.

(a) The fund shall prioritize projects that serve families earning below 80% of the area median income (AMI), with at least 50% of the units designated for individuals earning below 60% AMI

(b) The fund will be initially seeded with a one-time appropriation of \$100 million from the state budget, with an annual review for additional funding allocation based on need.

(9) Make and undertake commitments to make in such amounts and upon such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve, temporary loans, preconstruction loans, construction loans, interim financing loans and development loans to any housing sponsor and to persons and families of the beneficiary classes in order to provide funds to be used for any housing development costs.

(10) Sell upon such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve any mortgages, federally insured mortgages, federal mortgages and loans.

(11) Procure insurance against any loss in connection with its property and other assets and those of any housing sponsor or persons and families occupying residential housing insured or partially or wholly financed by the Authority.

(12) Require reasonable fees and charges for the rendering of its services which, unless required for purposes of the proceedings, may be used by the Authority for any of its corporate purposes.

(13) Institute any action or proceeding necessary to require the performance of any agreement relating to any housing development partially or wholly financed by the Authority and the use of the proceeds of loans made by the Authority for such purpose.

(14) Institute any action necessary to require housing sponsors or any member of either beneficiary class to abide by the terms of any agreement pursuant to which such housing sponsor or such member obtained a loan or other financial assistance from the Authority.

(15) Acquire title to and sell real property where necessary to accomplish the purposes and intent of this chapter or where necessary to enforce a lien on any property, security or collateral pledged to the Authority.

(18) Sell and dispose of any real property and any residential housing thereon on such terms and conditions as the Authority shall approve.

(17) Avail itself of all legal and equitable remedies to protect properties or other securities in which it has any interest.

(18) Institute any action or proceeding necessary to insure against any loss in

connection with its property and other assets and those of housing sponsors or persons or families of the beneficiary classes whose projects were partially or wholly financed by the Authority.

(19) Administer, coordinate, establish priorities and make commitments for any funds or programs over which the Authority has jurisdiction, including any funds or programs committed to the Authority by the federal government, and loan, commit or grant any funds or subsidies committed to the Authority's jurisdiction in any manner not inconsistent with any existing obligation of the Authority.

(20) Utilize all income earned on investments, including income earned by the Authority and any income earned from the sale of any such mortgages or loans, in accordance with the proceedings of the Authority providing for the issuance of any notes or bonds and to use any income not required for the purposes of the proceedings for any of its corporate purposes.

(21) Create and establish such funds as may be necessary or desirable for its corporate purposes.

(22) Initiate counselling and management programs for all persons or families of the beneficiary classes occupying housing developments in which the Authority has an interest.

(23) Provide advice, technical assistance and other services to public and corporate bodies, appropriate and prospective housing sponsors or persons and families of the beneficiary classes.

(24) Acquire, own and operate rental projects under the terms and conditions set forth in Section 31-13-250.

In exercising its powers the Authority shall operate in a sound, economical and prudent manner and any powers granted by this chapter may be exercised by the adoption of a resolution at any regular or special meeting of the Authority. A copy of any such resolution certified by the chairman and the executive director of the Authority shall be conclusive evidence of the exercise of such powers in accordance with this chapter.

HISTORY: 1977 Act No. 76, Section 4.

Section II: To add Section 31-13-19 to the SC Code of Laws, which shall read:

INCENTIVES FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPERS

A. Private developers who agree to set aside a percentage of new housing units as affordable housing (with rents no higher than 30% of the AMI for the area) will be eligible for tax credits, including reduced fees and expedited permit processing.

- B. Developers will be required to sign a 30-year affordability commitment for any affordable housing units created under these incentives.
- C. The South Carolina Housing Finance and Development Authority will oversee and monitor the program and ensure compliance with affordability standards.

Section III: To add Section 31-13-190 to the SC Code of Laws, which shall read:

THE SC RENTAL VOUCHER PROGRAM

- A. A state-funded rental assistance program will be established to provide rental vouchers for eligible low-income families who are struggling to meet rental payments.
- B. The rental assistance will be administered by the South Carolina Department of Housing and Urban Development and will be aimed at families earning below 50% AMI.
- C. Priority will be given to households with children, seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities.
- D. Funding for the program will be allocated based on need, with a cap set to provide support for at least 10,000 households annually.

Section IV: This bill will go into effect on October 1, 2025, pending federal grant approval and upon passage by the General Assembly and the governor's signature.

Section V: Severability

If any provision of this Act or its application to any person or circumstance is held to be invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this Act that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end, the provisions of this Act are declared to be severable.

**The South Carolina Cultural Heritage Promotion Act
Presented by Eric Center
University of South Carolina**

- Purpose:** To promote South Carolina’s diverse cultural and linguistic heritage.
- Whereas,** South Carolina is a very diverse state full of different cultures, cuisines, and peoples; and,
- Whereas,** All of these diverse factors help make the state of South Carolina unique amongst many in the United States; and,
- Whereas,** Promoting South Carolina’s cultural and linguistic heritage will instill more pride amongst the state’s citizens.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** This bill will be referred to as “The South Carolina Cultural Heritage Promotion Act”.
- Section II:** To amend the South Carolina Code of Laws to add Section 1-1-684 to designate the Lowcountry Boil as the official state seafood dish:
- “SECTION 1-1-684. Official state seafood dish.**
- A. The Lowcountry boil, often known as Frogmore stew, is a dish usually consisting of unpeeled shrimp, corn on the cob, sausage, and red potatoes, cooked in a large pot full of seasoned broth for about 30 minutes. Often it is served on a newspaper covered table.
- B. This dish is designated as South Carolina’s official state seafood dish. “
- Section III:** To amend the South Carolina Code of Laws to add Section 1-1-687 to designate The Rice Museum in the city of Georgetown as the official state rice museum.
- “SECTION 1-1-687. Official state rice museum.**
- A. The Rice Museum in Georgetown is a museum dedicated to the history of Georgetown County’s rice agriculture. The designation of the museum as the

official state rice museum is an honorary designation and does not bind the State in any way

- B. The official designation does not create a new state agency or educational institution or qualify The Rice Museum for state funds.
- C. The official designation does not confer any liability upon the State.
- D. The official designation does not sanction by the State any activity, philosophy, or course of action conducted, published, or undertaken by The Rice Museum."

Section IV: To amend Section 1-1-696 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“**SECTION 1-1-696.** Official state languages.

The English language ~~is and~~ the Gullah language are the official ~~language~~ languages of the State of South Carolina.”

Section V: To amend Section 1-1-697 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“**SECTION 1-1-697.** Use of language other than English ~~prohibited~~.

~~Neither this State nor any political subdivision thereof shall require, by law, ordinance, regulation, order, decree, program, or policy, the use of any language other than English; provided, however, that nothing in Sections 1-1-696 through 1-1-698 shall prohibit a state agency or a political subdivision of the State from requiring an applicant to have certain degrees of knowledge of a foreign language as a condition of employment where appropriate.~~

The designation of languages other than English as official languages of the state under Section 1-1-696 does not require or place a duty or responsibility on the State or any political subdivision thereof to print a document or record or conduct a meeting, assembly, or other government activity in a language other than English.”

Section VI: To strike Section 1-1-698 from the South Carolina Code of Laws:

~~**SECTION 1-1-698.** Exceptions to prohibition against use of languages other than English~~

~~Sections 1-1-696 through 1-1-698 do not prohibit any law, ordinance, regulation, order, decree, program, or policy requiring educational instruction in a language other than English for the purpose of making students who use a language other than English proficient in English or making students proficient in a language in addition to English.”~~

Section VII: To amend the South Carolina Code of Laws to add Section 1-1-714B to designate the Benne Wafer as the official state cookie:

“SECTION 1-1-714B”. Official state cookie.

- A. The benne wafer is a thin wafer that contains sesame seeds, and holds cultural significance to the Gullah-Geechee culture in the Lowcountry.
- B. Due to this cultural significance, the benne wafer is designated the official state cookie.

Section VIII: This bill will go into effect immediately upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Allison DeHart
The University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To promote the use of renewable energy in the state by creating an income tax credit for the installation of energy storage systems.
- Whereas,** Increased energy storage ability in South Carolina will allow utilities to manage intermittent demand, increase the state’s overall energy capacity, enable better integration of all forms of renewable energy (especially solar); and,
- Whereas,** South Carolina is 14th in the country in terms of installed capacity for solar power, but inconsistent seasonal production stops the state from increasing its proportion of the electricity portfolio; and,
- Whereas,** Reducing peak demand stress by having a greater storage capacity can save consumers a significant amount of money; and,
- Whereas,** At least \$7.9B has been invested in energy-storage and battery production in the state since 2022; and,
- Whereas,** Increasing energy reserves will support the building of data centers, bolstering technology jobs in the state.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To add Section 12-6-3777 to the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read:
- “SECTION 12-6-3777. Energy Storage Tax Credit.
- (A) For the purposes of this section “energy storage system” means a system used to store electrical energy, or mechanical, chemical, or thermal energy that was once electrical energy, for use as electrical energy at a later date or in a process that offsets electricity use at peak times.
- (B) For tax years beginning after 2025, there is allowed an income tax credit equal to thirty percent of the total costs, including the cost of installation, of an energy storage system if the taxpayer is:
- (i) the owner of a residential property who purchases and installs an energy storage system on the residential property;
 - (ii) the owner of a commercial property who purchases and installs an energy storage system on the commercial property; or
 - (iii) an individual or a corporation that owns or pays for the installation of an energy storage system that supplies electrical energy intended for use on

the residential or commercial property on which the energy storage system is installed.

- (C) If the energy storage system with respect to which the credit was claimed is disposed of, taken out of service, or moved out of the State in a year in which the installment of a credit accrues, then the credit expires, and the taxpayer may not take any remaining installments of the credit.
- (D) A credit for each installation of energy storage system placed in service may not exceed:
 - (i) five thousand dollars for an energy storage system installed on a residential property; or
 - (ii) one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for an energy storage system installed on a commercial property.
- (E) The credit is allowed on a first come, first served basis, and the total amount of credits available to be taken for all taxpayers in a taxable year, may not exceed one million five hundred thousand dollars in the aggregate.
- (F) The credit under this section may not be claimed for an energy storage system installed before July 1, 2025.”

Section II: This bill will go into effect July 1, 2025, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Kaleelah El-Amin
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To reform and expand criminal record expungement access.
- Whereas,** Criminal record expungements are conducted through the Solicitor's Office and cost at least \$250 per charge; and,
- Whereas,** Expungements take about 2-6 weeks to be completed and sealed from the public; and,
- Whereas,** An expungement of a criminal record gives citizens an opportunity for a fresh start.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:

Section I: To amend Section 17-22-950 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (L), which shall read:

“(L) Persons seeking expungement have the option to a payment plan. A deposit of at least \$50 must be paid to the Solicitor’s office. The Solicitor's office has the discretion to present the terms of the payment plan based on income level. Failure to make a payment without notifying the Solicitor’s office of need for an extension may cause temporary unsealing of records and a fee of \$20 dollars.”

Section II: To amend Section 17 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add Section 17-22-970:

“SECTION 17-22-970. Automatic Expungements

(A) On qualifying charges specified in Section 17-22-910 an automatic no charge expungement will be made to charges if the person has.

- 1) Completed all required prison time...with the exception of probation time*
- 2) Made all restitution fee payments for said crime*
- 3) If the charge has remained on their record for a period of at least two years from the time the previous sections were completed.*

(B) Persons seeking expungement must still contact their respected Solicitors office for expungement application and complete the application .

(C) This section applies to all criminal charges listed under section 17-22-910 however it is not limited to these charges.

(1) This provision does not apply to violent crimes, sex crimes, and felonies punishable by more than 5 years in prisons.

(D) If a person does not stay in good standing with the law, their automatic expungement will be withdrawn, and they will not be able to apply for another expungement in the future.”

Section III: This bill will go into effect July 1st, 2025 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Zackery Haddon
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To modernize the South Carolina education system by enhancing core academic curricula, integrating life skills education, and improving teacher compensation. This legislation aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and critical thinking necessary to thrive in the 21st century.
- Whereas,** The current education system lacks comprehensive updates to curricula that align with modern career and societal demands; and,
- Whereas,** There is a pressing need for improved teacher compensation to attract and retain high-quality educators; and,
- Whereas,** Integrating life skills education will better prepare students for financial independence, career readiness, and civic engagement.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** This bill is to be named The Education Standards Act of 2025
- Section II:** To amend Section 59-29-10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (A), shall read:
- “(A) Over the next five years, the education curriculum will undergo a comprehensive transformation to enhance student learning, promote critical thinking, and integrate modern technology. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, foundational changes will be introduced, starting with mathematics and science education. The mathematics curriculum will be redesigned to deepen students' understanding of essential concepts, focusing on calculus, algebra, statistics, and probability theory. Critical thinking and problem-solving will be emphasized through hands-on, project-based learning, allowing students to apply mathematical principles to real-world scenarios. Advanced topics will be introduced earlier to better prepare students for higher education and STEM careers, while digital tools and mathematical modeling software will be incorporated to familiarize students with modern data analysis techniques. These updates will be implemented gradually through revised lesson plans, professional development for educators, and updated learning materials, with full integration in all schools by 2027-2028. Simultaneously, the science curriculum will expand to include advanced courses in physics, chemistry, biology, and environmental science, with a strong emphasis on experimental design, data collection, and scientific communication. By 2026-2027, middle school students will begin coding and computer science courses covering software development, hardware engineering, and cybersecurity. High school students will gain access to advanced

courses in artificial intelligence and digital robotics, equipping them for careers in emerging technology fields. These subjects will be introduced through dedicated computer science classes, interdisciplinary STEM projects, and partnerships with tech companies offering mentorships and hands-on learning experiences. Additionally, sustainability education will be woven into the science curriculum through environmental clubs, sustainability initiatives, and collaborations with ecological organizations, with full implementation by 2028-2029. English Language Arts (ELA) will be restructured beginning in 2026-2027 to emphasize a well-rounded literacy approach, incorporating reading comprehension, writing skills, critical analysis, and media literacy. Students will engage in advanced literary studies, integrating diverse authors and perspectives to promote cultural awareness. Writing instruction will extend beyond traditional essays to include creative, persuasive, and journalistic writing, while argumentation skills will be refined through debates and peer discussions on contemporary issues. These reforms will be introduced through updated reading lists, multimedia projects, and writing workshops, with full implementation by 2029-2030. Starting in 2027-2028, the social studies curriculum will undergo modernization to include in-depth studies of American history, government, economics, and world affairs, with a renewed focus on civics education. Students will explore the principles of democracy, constitutional law, civil rights, and social justice within both historical and contemporary contexts. A global studies component will emphasize international relations, cultural interdependence, and pressing global challenges such as climate change and international conflicts. These changes will be reinforced through interactive learning experiences, including mock elections, government simulations, guest lectures from policymakers, and community service projects. To ensure civics education remains relevant, teachers will receive ongoing professional development, with full implementation by 2030-2031. In addition to these subject-specific reforms, foreign language education will become a graduation requirement beginning in 2025-2026, mandating at least two years of language study. Schools will offer diverse language options, including Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, French, Arabic, and sign language, with immersion programs and international exchange opportunities enhancing language acquisition. Proficiency assessments will be introduced to track student progress and provide additional support as needed. Schools will gradually expand language offerings, integrate language labs, and establish virtual exchange programs, with all high schools adopting this requirement by 2028-2029. Technology education will be infused across all disciplines, emphasizing coding, digital literacy, and media creation. Cybersecurity education will be a core component of digital literacy courses, preparing students to safely navigate and contribute to the digital world. Middle and high school students will have access to personal learning devices such as tablets or laptops, ensuring equitable access to technology. STEM-related extracurricular activities, including coding clubs and robotics teams, will be promoted to encourage collaborative, hands-on learning. These initiatives will be incorporated through expanded computer science electives, after-school technology workshops, and partnerships with tech companies offering students exposure to industry-leading tools and real-world

applications, with full implementation by 2029-2030. To support these curriculum reforms, educators will receive ongoing professional development, learning materials will be updated, and partnerships between schools, universities, and industries will be strengthened. By 2030-2031, all elements of the five-year education reform plan will be fully implemented, ensuring a modernized, skill-focused, and future-ready curriculum that prepares students for success in an increasingly complex world.”

Section III: To amend Section 59-29-410 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (C), shall read:

“(C) All schools will establish mandatory life skills courses as part of the graduation requirements. These courses will focus on essential skills such as financial literacy, career preparation, health and wellness, personal finance, communication, and goal setting. Financial literacy courses will include lessons on budgeting, saving, investing, credit management, and taxes, preparing students to manage their finances effectively after high school. Career preparation courses will emphasize resume writing, interview skills, job market analysis, and entrepreneurship to ensure students are equipped for both employment and college. Health and wellness courses will cover topics such as nutrition, mental health, stress management, and physical fitness to promote holistic well-being.”

Section IV: To amend Section 59-25-50 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (A), shall read:

“(A) The Teacher Pay Grant Program will be established to provide state funding to support increases in teacher salaries. The program’s long-term goal is to raise the minimum starting salary for teachers to \$65,000 per year over 10 years. The program is designed to address teacher shortages, improve recruitment, and reduce teacher turnover by providing competitive salaries. Teachers will receive a 4% minimum annual salary increase. The maximum annual salary increase will be capped at 8%, based on performance evaluations and regional budget needs. Districts will be required to allocate a portion of funding specifically for salary increases, and teachers will be evaluated for performance to determine the specific increase each year. As part of the Teacher Pay Grant, teachers will receive an additional 1.5% annual salary increase, irrespective of district budget constraints. This ensures consistent, significant salary growth for teachers throughout their careers. After 10 years of 4-8% annual salary increases, once a teacher’s salary reaches \$95,000, the Teacher Pay Grant will transition to a state-determined salary increase structure. The new increase structure will be aligned with state policies, and no additional minimum increases will apply, ensuring flexibility and long-term sustainability in teacher compensation. Funds will be allocated for teacher retention programs, including mentorship, peer coaching, and leadership training to support teachers in their professional growth. Career advancement opportunities will be emphasized, and teachers will receive support

for professional development and continuing education to keep them engaged and effective in their teaching.”

Section V: To amend Section 59-20-40 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (9), shall read:

“(9) The state government will allocate \$225,000,000 annually to support the Teacher Pay Grant Program and other related educational initiatives. These funds will be used to increase teacher salaries, fund professional development programs, and support the integration of technology into classrooms. Local school districts will be required to match state funding for teacher salaries and implement salary increase as outlined in the Teacher Pay Grant Program. Local governments will be encouraged to increase their investment in education, particularly in areas with the greatest need for educators. An independent body will evaluate the effectiveness of the Teacher Pay Grant Program every year to assess the impact on teacher recruitment, retention, and overall performance. This review will include tracking student outcomes, including academic performances and college/career readiness, to determine the overall success of the program”

Section VII: To amend Section 59-18-350 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (D), shall read:

“(D) Longitudinal data will be gathered to measure the effectiveness of the revised curriculum on student outcomes, including performance in core subjects, life skills, and career readiness courses. The data will be analyzed to identify trends and areas for further improvement, ensuring the curriculum is preparing students for future success.”

Section VIII: This bill will go into effect August 1, 2025, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Brooke Kelly
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To create a premium security plan to protect the citizens of South Carolina through healthcare reinsurance.
- Whereas,** Under Section 1332 waivers, the State of South Carolina will have the ability to experiment with healthcare insurance coverage, affordability and quality.
- Whereas,** According to The Commonwealth Fund, as of 2023, South Carolina is ranked 37th in healthcare, and 48th in state-by-state cost a quality index.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** Title 38 of the South Carolina Code of Laws is amended by adding:

“Article 1
South Carolina Healthcare Reinsurance

Section 38- 105-10. Definitions.

- (1) “board” refers to South Carolina’s reinsurance entity which administers the state-based reinsurance program, also known as the South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan.
- (2) “attachment point” means, the threshold amount for claim costs incurred by an eligible health carrier for an enrolled individual's covered benefits in the benefit year.
- (3) “reinsurance cap” means, the amount of costs incurred by an eligible health carrier for an enrolled individual’s covered benefits.
- (4) “benefit year” refers to a calendar year in which an eligible health carrier provides coverage through individual health plans.
- (5) “coinsurance rate” means, an insured individuals shared costs of covered expenses.
- (6) “commissioner” refers to the Commissioner of Health and Human Services.
- (7) “health carrier” or “eligible health carrier” refers to all of the following;
 1. an insurance company licensed under Title 38, Chapter 43 to offer, sell or issue a policy of accident or sickness insurance;
 2. a non-profit health insurance plan corporation operating under Title 38, Chapter 71;

3. a health maintenance organization operating under Title 38, Chapter 33.

Section 38-105-20. The establishment of the South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan Board for the purposes of limiting liability risks, stabilizing loss, and protecting against catastrophe.

- (a) The board of directors will be composed of thirteen members appointed by the Governor and approved by the Commissioner of Health and Human Services.
 - a. One member must be a health actuary;
 - b. One must represent hospitals, and one must represent health care providers; and
 - c. One must be a licensed insurance agent, and two must be enrollees in the individual market.
- (b) Each member will be entitled to vote in person or by proxy.
- (c) In accordance with the above, the commissioner must make sure each member is fairly represented.

Section 38-105-30. Duties of the Commissioner of Health and Human Services under this article are as follows;

- (a) The commissioner shall require eligible health carriers that offer individual health benefit plans in the state to calculate the premium amount that would have been charged for the benefit year.
- (b) The commissioner must also consider any information that an eligible health carrier submits as part of their rate filings.

Section 38-105-30. Section 1332 of the Affordable Care Act: State Innovation Waivers.

- (a) The Commissioner of Health and Human Services shall apply to the Secretary of Health and Human Services under United States Code, Title 24, Section 18052, for a state innovation waiver for The South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan which will begin January 1, 2027, and continue indefinitely.
- (b) The waiver application must state the operation of the plan and is contingent on approval of the waiver request.

Section 38-105-40. The South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan.

- (a) This state-based reinsurance program shall be referred to as the South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan.
- (b) Beginning January 1, 2026, the board may begin requesting funding for reinsurance in the individual market through the South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan by;

- a. Applying for any available federal funding under 1332 of the Affordable Care Act.
 - b. Any funds designated by the federal government to provide reinsurance to carriers that offer individual benefit plans in the state; and
 - c. Any funds that have been designated by the state to provide reinsurance to carriers that offer individual benefit plans in the state.
- (c) All funds received by or appropriated to the board shall be deposited in the Reinsurance Health Plan account.
- a. The board must notify the chairs and running members of the committees with jurisdiction over health and human services and insurance within seven days of receiving federal funds.
 - b. The board will not use any funds allocated to the plan for anything other than reinsurance. This includes, but is not limited to; financial benefits, staff retreats, donations, or promotional giveaways.
- (d) The board is required to collect and access data from eligible healthcare that is necessary to determine reinsurance payments.
- (e) For each applicable benefit year, the board must notify an eligible health carrier of reinsurance payments that are to be made for the applicable benefit year no later than December 15 of the following year.
- (f) On a quarterly basis during the applicable benefit year, the board must provide each eligible health carrier with the calculation of total reinsurance payment requests.
- (g) By November 1 of the following applicable benefit year, the board must disburse all reinsurance payments to eligible health carriers.

Section 38-105-50. South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan - Payment Parameters.

- (a) The board will design and adjust the payment parameters to ensure the following:
- a. stabilize or reduce premium rates in the individual market;
 - b. increase participation in the individual market;
 - c. improve access to healthcare providers and services for those in the market;
 - d. help mitigate the impact high-risk individuals have on premium rates in the market;
 - e. consider any federal funding available for the plan; and
 - f. consider the total amount available to fund the plan.
- (b) The board will set the attachment point at \$50,000 or more, but will not exceed the reinsurance cap. The reinsurance cap shall be set at \$250,000 or less.
- (c) The coinsurance rate at which the board will reimburse an eligible health carrier for claims incurred shall be above the attachment point, and below the

reinsurance cap. The coinsurance rate shall be set by the board at a rate between 50 and 80 percent. Once the cap is reached the claims costs will no longer be eligible for reinsurance payment.

Section 38-105-60. Operations of the South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan board.

- (a) The board will propose to the commissioner the payment parameters for the following benefit year no later than January 15 of the year prior to the applicable benefit year.
- (b) The commissioner shall approve or reject the payment parameters fourteen days following the board's proposal. If the commissioner fails to approve or reject the payment parameters following the board's proposal, the payment parameters will be finalized and become effective.
- (c) If the funds in the account are not anticipated to adequately fund the approved payment parameters, the board and the commissioner shall propose payment parameters within the available appropriations. The commissioner must then permit an eligible health carrier to revise the rate and parameters for the following benefit year.

Section 38-105-70. Calculations of Reinsurance Payments are as follows:

- (a) Reinsurance payments must be calculated with respect to an eligible health carrier's incurred claims cost for an enrolled individual's benefits. If the claims cost does not exceed the attachment point, the reinsurance payment will be \$0. If the claims cost exceeds the attachment point, the reinsurance payment shall be calculated based on the coinsurance rate and the lesser of
 - a. the claims costs minus attachment point; or
 - b. the reinsurance cap minus the attachment point.
- (b) The board must ensure that reinsurance payments made to eligible carriers do not exceed the total amount paid. Meaning, the amount paid by the eligible health carrier through deductibles, coinsurance, or co-payments are submitted and made accessible.

Section 38-105-80. Eligible Carrier Requests for Reinsurance Payments.

- (a) An eligible health carrier may request reinsurance payments from the board when the eligible health carrier meets the requirements set in place in the previous section.
- (b) An eligible health carrier must make requests for reinsurance payments in accordance with requirements that have been established by the board.
- (c) Eligible health carriers must maintain documentation and records, either on paper or electronically, of all requests for reinsurance payments under this chapter for a period of at least five years. An eligible health carrier must also

make the documentations and records available upon request of the commissioner for verification, investigation, audit, or review purposes.

- (d) The board may have an eligible health carrier audited to assess the health carrier's compliance with the requirements under this section. The eligible health carrier must ensure that any contractors, subcontractors, or agents cooperate with audits specified under this section. If an audit results in findings of material weakness or significant deficiency, the eligible health carrier may provide a response to the proposed finding within 30 days. Within those 30 days the eligible health carrier must;
 - a. provide a written corrective action plan to the board for approval;
 - b. implement the approved plan; and
 - c. provide the board with written documentation of all corrective actions taken.

Section 38-105-70. Accounting, Reports, and Audits of the Association.

- (a) The board is required to keep an account for each benefit year of all;
 - a. funds that have been appropriated for reinsurance payments and administrative expenses;
 - b. requests for reinsurance payments received from eligible health carriers;
 - c. reinsurance payments made to eligible health carriers; and
 - d. administrative and operational expenses that have been incurred.
- (b) The board is required to submit a summarized report on operations for each benefit year to the commissioner and the public. The summary will be made available on November 1 of each year following the applicable benefit year.
- (c) The South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan will be subjected to auditing by the legislative auditor, and the board must ensure that all contractors, subcontractors, or agents cooperate with the audit.
- (d) The board must engage and cooperate with an independent certified public accountant (CPA) firm licensed or permitted under Title 40, Chapter 2 to perform an audit for each benefit year.
- (e) After receiving a completed audit, the board must;
 - a. provide the commissioner with the results of the audit;
 - b. identify any material weaknesses or deficiencies in the audit, with a written address to the commissioner on how the board intends to resolve the issues; and
 - c. make public the results of the audit, which will contain any material weakness or significant deficiency and how the board resolved such issues.
- (f) If the result of an audit finds any material weakness or significant deficiency, the board must;
 - a. provide a plan of action on how to correct the weaknesses and deficiencies to the commissioner within 60 days
 - b. implement the corrective action plan; and
 - c. provide written documentation to the commissioner of all corrective actions taken.

- d. By December 15 of each year, the board must submit a report to the standing committees of the legislature that has jurisdiction over health and human resources and insurance the audit and all weaknesses and deficiencies found.

Section 38-105-80. South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan Account.

- (a) The South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan account will be created and in the hands of the state treasurer. Any funds will be appropriated to the commissioner of health and human services annually, and all investment income and losses attributed to the reinsurance health plan account shall be credited to the premium account.
- (b) All funds received by the commissioner of health and human services or other state agencies pursuant to the state innovation waiver shall be deposited in the reinsurance health plan account.

Section 38-105-90. Rejection of the State Innovation Waiver.

If the state innovation waiver request under Title 24, Section 18052 is denied, the South Carolina Reinsurance Health Plan and its board of directors shall not administer the Reinsurance Health Plan or administer any payments to eligible health carriers.”

Section II: This bill will go into effect immediately, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the governor.

A Bill
Presented by Chance Kirby
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To require press releases in the event of incarcerated individuals' death behind bars.
- Whereas,** From 2015 to 2021, South Carolina has had seven hundred seventy seven people die behind bars across fifty two prisons, jails, and detention centers (Wasilczuk); and,
- Whereas,** None of the recorded deaths were from individuals on death row; and,
- Whereas,** Thirty-three deaths were found by Incarceration Transparency Group, that was not found by the SCDC. Three of which were found in the Richland County prison system, in Columbia SC; and,
- Whereas,** There is no current law requiring public reports from incarceration facilities in the event of prisoner death, only reports to the SCDC.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 24-9-35 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read: SECTION 24-9-35. Deaths of incarcerated persons, reports; penalty.

If a person dies while incarcerated or in the custody of a municipal, county, or multijurisdictional overnight lockup or jail, county prison camp, or state correctional facility, the facility manager or any other person physically in charge of the facility at the time death occurs immediately shall notify the coroner of the county in which the institution is located. The facility manager or other person in charge also shall report the death and circumstances surrounding it within seventy-two hours to the Jail and Prison Inspection Division of the Department of Corrections. The division shall retain a permanent record of the reports. Reports must be made on forms prescribed by the division.

(A)In addition to reporting the death and circumstances to the Jail and Prison Inspection Division of the Department of Corrections, all incarceration facilities must release a press release no later than seventy-two hours after filing a report to the Jail and Prison Inspection Division of the Department of Corrections."

A person knowingly and willfully violating the provisions of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than ~~one hundred dollars~~ *five hundred dollars*.

Any facility that knowingly and willfully violates the provisions of this section are subject to immediate investigation from the Division of the Department of Corrections.”

Section II: This bill will go into effect January 1st, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Sam Maloney
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To construct a regulatory framework for the legalization of sports betting and other addictive substances and services while drastically minimizing the risk of addiction.
- Whereas,** Sports betting is currently illegal in the state of South Carolina, although such controls are circumvented through mechanisms like daily fantasy football; and,
- Whereas,** Sports betting is, in moderation, a fun way to engage with sports and an important revenue source for the state; and,
- Whereas,** Regulating a non-addictive substitute for gambling with strict controls may actually limit the amount of gambling; and,
- Whereas,** Sports betting is highly addictive and people should not be able to lose all of their money on betting.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To strike Sections 16-19-130, 16-19-140, and 16-19-150 from the South Carolina Code of Laws
- Section II:** To add Section 16-19-130 to the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read:
- “Recording or registering bets on any trial or contest of skill, speed, power or endurance of an individual or a team, shall be legal provided that the following requirements are met:
- (a) The entity providing the bet shall receive valid identification from the bettor
 - (b) The entity providing the bet shall record the identity of the better and the bet made in the centralized clearinghouse in section 16-19-140
 - (c) The entity providing the bet shall refuse the bet if:
 - a. The bet would lead to the bettor having lost more than \$100 in the month, should the bettor lose this bet and all outstanding bets.
 - (d) The entity making the bet shall certify that it will have the funds to pay out upon a successful bet.
 - (e) The entity providing the bet has received a valid license from the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
 - (f) The entity providing the bet shall turn over either 10% of the gross revenues, or 50% of the profit of the bet, whichever is larger, to the

South Carolina Department of Revenue, which shall remit those funds to the General Fund.

Should any of these requirements be violated, the entity making the bet shall be fined no less than triple the revenues made as a result of such violation. Should the requirements be violated intentionally, the entity may lose its license from DLLR or the person who directed such a decision shall be guilty of a felony punishable by a fine of up to \$100,000 or imprisonment for not more than two years.”

Section III: To add section 16-19-140 to the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read:

“Licensing Board for Gambling Monopoly

- (a) The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, or any appropriate successor to said department, shall license up to three providers to issue sports bets as allowed in section 16-19-130.
- (b) The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, or any appropriate successor to said department, shall issue and codify regulations to license sports betting providers.
- (c) \$20,000,000 per year is appropriated shall be appropriated from the South Carolina General Fund for SC DLLR to establish an office to manage and regulate these betting licenses.
- (d) SC DLLR may, subject to a vote of disapproval by the General Assembly, update the maximum betting dollar amount in Section 16-19-130 c ii to adjust for inflation.
- (e) SC DLLR shall maintain, or designate another state agency to maintain, a database to record the bets made by each South Carolina resident pursuant to the requirements of section 16-19-130. \$10,000,000 shall be appropriated each year to maintain this database.”

Section IV: To add section 16-19-150 to the South Carolina Code of Laws, which shall read:

“Circumvention of controls.

Any person who either travels out of South Carolina or uses an electronic device to circumscribe the controls in Section 16-19-130 for the purpose of placing a bet on a contest shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and fined not more than one thousand dollars and may be imprisoned for not more than a week.”

Section V: This bill will go into effect January 1st, 2027 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor. The appropriations in the bill shall begin at the start of the 2026 fiscal year.

**A Bill
Presented by Zach McClure
University of South Carolina**

- Purpose:** To expand the right to vote in South Carolina.
- Whereas,** American revolutionaries revolted against the British with the rallying cry “No taxation without representation”; and,
- Whereas,** The right to vote has been continuously expanded throughout American history, notably to people of all races, women, and young adults; and,
- Whereas,** According to NPR, incarcerated people are counted in censuses and for the purpose of drawing legislative districts, even those who are not currently permitted to vote; and,
- Whereas,** Under current South Carolina law, even those incarcerated for a misdemeanor cannot vote; and,
- Whereas,** The right to vote is the cornerstone of a democratic society.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 7-5-120, subsection (B) of the South Carolina Code of Laws is amended to read:
- (B) A person is disqualified from being registered or voting if he:
- ~~(1) is mentally incompetent as adjudicated by a court of competent jurisdiction; or~~
- ~~(2) is serving a term of imprisonment resulting from a conviction of a crime; or~~
- ~~(3) is convicted of a felony or offenses against the election laws, unless the disqualification has been removed by service of the sentence, including probation and parole time unless sooner pardoned.~~

Section II: To amend Section 7-5-170, subsection (2) of the South Carolina Code of Laws is amended to read:

(2) Form of application. - The application must be on a form prescribed and provided by the executive director and shall contain the following information: name, sex, race, social security number, date of birth, residence address, mailing address, telephone number of the applicant, and location of prior voter registration. The applicant must affirm that he is not under a court order declaring him mentally incompetent, ~~confined in any public prison, has never been convicted of a felony or offense against the election laws, or if previously convicted that he has served his entire sentence, including probation and parole time, or has received a pardon for the conviction.~~ Additionally, the applicant must take the following oath: "I, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a citizen of the United States and that on the date of the next ensuing election, I will have attained the age of eighteen years and am a resident of South Carolina, this county, and of my precinct. I further swear (or affirm) that the present residence address listed herein is my sole legal place of residence, that I claim no other place as my legal residence, and that, to my knowledge, I am neither registered nor intend to register to vote in another state or county." Any applicant convicted of fraudulently applying for registration is guilty of perjury and is subject to the penalty for that offense.

Section III: To amend Section 7-5-185, subsection (B)(5) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

(5) An application submitted pursuant to this section must contain the applicant's name, sex, race, social security number, date of birth, residence address, mailing address, telephone number of the applicant, and location of prior voter registration. The applicant must affirm that he is not under a court order declaring him mentally incompetent, ~~or confined in a public prison, has never been convicted of a felony or offense against the election laws, or if previously convicted, that he has served his entire sentence, including probation and parole time, or has received a pardon for the conviction.~~ Additionally, the applicant must attest to the following: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a citizen of the United States and that on the date of the next ensuing election, I will have attained the age of eighteen years and am a resident of South Carolina, this county, and of my precinct. I further swear (or affirm) that the present residence address listed herein is my sole legal place of residence and that I claim no other place as my legal residence." An applicant convicted of fraudulently applying for registration is guilty of perjury and is subject to the penalty for that offense.

Section IV: To amend Section 7-15-320, subsection (A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

(A) Qualified electors in the following categories who are unable to vote during early voting hours for the duration of the early voting period, and during the hours the polls are open on election day, must be permitted to vote by absentee ballot in an election:

(1) persons with employment obligations who present written certification of the obligations to the county board of voter registration and elections;

(2) persons who will be attending sick or physically disabled persons;

(3) persons confined to a jail, *prison*, or pretrial facility ~~pending disposition of arrest or trial~~; or

(4) persons who are going to be absent from their county of residence.

Section V: This bill will go into effect July 1, 2025, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Maddi Nagel
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To protect South Carolinians from predatory tipping practices.
- Whereas,** According to USA Today, guilt tipping, the pressure to tip for services that traditionally do not receive tips, is on the rise with the average American spending nearly five hundred dollars a year due to this feeling; and,
- Whereas,** More businesses are including tip options for their transactions, expanding the practice past traditional restaurants and into services that have historically never asked for tips; and,
- Whereas,** South Carolinians deserve an easy option to decline paying gratuity, in the form of a "no tip" button.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 39-5-820 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
- "SECTION 39-5-820.** Definitions.
- (13) "Payment Terminal" means an electronic device used to process card payments between consumers and providers, also known as a card reader or point of sale terminal.
- (14) "Gratuity Prompt" means the pre-set values programmed into payment device, either in percentages or dollar amounts. "
- Section II:** To amend Section 39-5-840 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
- "SECTION 39-5-840.** Compliance with requirements for providers.
- (7) If the provider solicits, charges, or receives a tip, gratuity, or other donation from a consumer, the provider shall:
- (a) clearly and conspicuously disclose to the consumer immediately prior to each transaction that a tip, gratuity, or other donation amount may be zero and is voluntary;
- (i) for credit card payment using a payment terminal, one of the selected gratuity prompts must read "NO TIP" or "ZERO" conspicuously displayed on the device."
- Section III:** This bill will go into effect July 1, 2025 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Matthew Peiser
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To reduce automobile-related fatalities and injuries in South Carolina.
- Whereas,** According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, South Carolina ranked last in the nation for road safety with 1.85 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles in 2022, and;
- Whereas,** According to the National Safety Council, speeding was a factor in 29% of all traffic fatalities in 2022, and;
- Whereas,** In a study conducted by the London School of Economics from 1992 to 2016, it was found that traffic-related fatalities were reduced by 58% to 68% when speeding cameras were installed.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 56-7-35 from the South Carolina Code of laws to read:
- ~~“(A)(1) A law enforcement officer who issues a uniform traffic ticket for a violation of a local ordinance or traffic laws relating to speeding must do so incident to and contemporaneous with a traffic stop.~~
- (1) A copy of the citation ~~must be~~ can be given directly to the offender by the law enforcement officer issuing the citation at the time of the traffic stop for the offense or sent via mail to the vehicle's registered address.*
- ~~(32) A law enforcement agency may not is allowed to utilize the United States mail, a parcel delivery service, electronic means, or otherwise to send to the operator or owner of a motor vehicle or motorcycle, as defined in Section 56-3-20, a uniform traffic citation alleging a violation of a local ordinance or the traffic laws relating to speeding. This subsection does not prohibit the law enforcement agency from sending the operator or owner an additional copy of a uniform citation that was issued to the operator or owner during the traffic stop for the offense upon request of the operator or owner.~~
- ~~(43) A uniform traffic citation alleging the violation of a local ordinance or the traffic laws relating to speeding may not can be issued based in whole or in part upon photographic evidence, whether gathered in conjunction with radar speed detection devices and whether the camera or other electronic device capturing the photographic evidence was attended or unattended at the time it captured the photographic evidence. This section does not prohibit the use of photographic or video evidence at any hearing related to the offense to corroborate the testimony of a law enforcement officer who personally observed the offense.~~

(B)(1) A law enforcement officer who issues a uniform traffic ticket for a violation of a local ordinance or the traffic laws relating to disregarding a traffic control device must do so incident to and contemporaneous with a traffic stop.

(2) A copy of the citation ~~must~~ *can* be given directly to the offender by the law enforcement officer issuing the citation at the time of the traffic stop for the offense.

(3) A law enforcement agency ~~may not~~ *has the right to* utilize the United States mail, a parcel delivery service, electronic means, or otherwise to send to the operator or owner of a motor vehicle or motorcycle, as defined in Section 56-3-20, a uniform traffic citation alleging a violation of a local ordinance or the traffic laws relating to disregarding traffic control devices. ~~This subsection does not prohibit the law enforcement agency from sending the operator or owner an additional copy of a uniform citation that was issued to the operator or owner during the traffic stop for the offense upon request of the operator or owner.~~

(4) A uniform traffic citation alleging the violation of a local ordinance or the traffic laws relating to disregarding traffic control devices ~~may not~~ *can* be issued based in whole upon photographic evidence, whether the camera or other electronic device capturing the photographic evidence was attended or unattended at the time it captured the photographic evidence. This section does not prohibit the use of photographic or video evidence at any hearing related to the offense to corroborate the testimony of a law enforcement officer who personally observed the offense.

~~(C) The provisions of this section do not apply to:~~

~~(1) toll collection; or~~

~~(2) issuance of a uniform traffic citation alleging the violation of Section 56-5-2770.~~

~~(D) Speed capture devices, including cameras and radar, may be used by state or local authorities to issue speeding tickets by mail to the car's registered address without the car being stopped whether law enforcement is present or not. If the offender is a resident of South Carolina, the local and state law enforcement may enter the residence of the offender without a warrant at the registered address after 3 mailed letters to the address and after waiting 60 days from the date of delivery of the letter to detain the offender, if they have not complied. All offenders may be pulled over on any road at any later date within 3 months of the incident if identified by officers.~~

Section II: To strike Section 56-5-70 Subsection (E) and Section 56-5-710 subsection (B) from the South Carolina Code of Laws:

~~”(E) Citations for violating a local ordinance or the traffic laws relating to speeding or disregarding traffic control devices based in whole or in part on photographic evidence, whether gathered in conjunction with radar speed detection devices and whether the camera or other electronic device capturing the photographic evidence was attended or unattended at the time it captured the photographic evidence, only may be issued for violations that occur while relief from regulations pursuant to 49 C.F.R. 390.23 has been granted due to an emergency. A person who receives a citation for violating traffic laws relating to speeding or disregarding traffic control devices based in whole or in part on photographic evidence must be served in person with notice of the violation within one hour of the occurrence of the violation unless a collision occurred and fault cannot be determined immediately or the party who caused the collision is not immediately accessible due to medical treatment. The provisions of this subsection do not apply to toll collection enforcement.~~

~~”(B) Nothing in subsection (A) may be construed to permit a local authority to issue a uniform traffic citation for violating a local ordinance or the traffic laws relating to speeding or disregarding traffic control devices based in whole or in part upon photographic evidence whether gathered in conjunction with radar speed detection devices and whether the camera or other electronic device capturing the photographic evidence was attended or unattended at the time it captured the photographic evidence.”~~

Section III: To amend Section 56-5-1520, which shall read:

“Thirty miles an hour is the maximum speed in an urban district. "Urban district" means the territory contiguous to and including any street which is built up with structures devoted to business, industry, or dwelling houses situated at intervals of less than one hundred feet for a quarter of a mile or more. *Thirty miles an hour is also the maximum speed in all segments of streets containing sidewalks and segments on the same street within 1 mile of the sidewalks, segments within 1 mile of intersections with traffic lights, and within a half mile of any business employing 100 or more people. This Section does not apply to limited access roadways such as interstates and highways.*”

Section IV: This bill shall go into effect on January 1st, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Reagan Quast
The University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To rephrase South Carolina law to be more sensitive and inclusive to those living with mental illness.
- Whereas,** The phrase “committed suicide” implies that ending one’s life is a crime or makes one a criminal, thus ostracizing those who are living with thoughts of suicide, who have attempted suicide, or who know someone who has either died by suicide or lived through a suicide attempt; and,
- Whereas,** Using harmful language such as “commit suicide” or “successful suicide” counteracts efforts to destigmatize and demonstrate compassion to those with mental illness; and,
- Whereas,** Suicide has been decriminalized by the United States and other predominate countries, thus it is not a crime; and,
- Whereas,** Reporting On Suicide states that careful coverage of suicide can change perceptions of those living with mental illness, disprove myths about suicide, and explain the complexities of the topic; and,
- Whereas,** Accusatory language can make it more difficult for people to speak openly about their experiences with or around suicide; and,
- Whereas,** Academic use of the term “commit” in publications has decreased by about 20% since 2000.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 16-3-1090 subsection (B) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
- “It is unlawful for a person to assist another person in ~~committing~~ *dying by* suicide. A person assists another person in ~~committing~~ *dying by* suicide if the person:
- (1) by force or duress intentionally causes the other person to ~~commit~~ *die by* or attempt to ~~commit~~ *die by* suicide; or
- (2) has knowledge that the other person intends to ~~commit~~ *die by* or attempt to ~~commit~~ *die by* suicide and intentionally:
- (a) provides the physical means by which the other person ~~commits~~ *dies by* or

attempts to ~~commit~~ *die by* suicide; or

(b) participates in a physical act by which the other person ~~commits~~ *dies by* or attempts to ~~commit~~ *die by* suicide.

Section II: To amend Section 16-3-1090 subsection (F) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“(F) Injunctive relief may be sought against a person who it is reasonably believed is about to violate or who is in the course of violating subsection (B) by a person who is:

(1) the spouse, parent, child, or sibling of the person who would ~~commit~~ *die by* suicide;

(2) entitled to inherit from the person who would ~~commit~~ *die by* suicide;

(3) a current or former health care provider of the person who would ~~commit~~ *die by* suicide;”

Section III: To amend Section 17-30-125 subsection (B) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“(B) The supervising agent of SLED or the supervising law enforcement officer of a political subdivision of this State at the scene of an incident where there is reasonable cause to believe that:

(1) the incident involves immediate danger of death or serious bodily injury to a person or the danger of a prisoner's escape;

(2) a person is holding one or more hostages;

(3) the probability exists that a subject about to be arrested will resist with the use of weapons;

(4) a person has barricaded himself, is armed, and is threatening to ~~commit~~ *suicide and their life*; or”

Section IV: To amend Section 17-30-125 subsection (C) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

“(C) An officer of the court who is employed by SLED may issue an administrative subpoena to a telephone company, Internet service provider, or communications entity for the production of subscriber or customer information as described in subsection (F), not including the contents of any communications, if:

(1) SLED has reasonable cause to believe that the information is material to an active emergency incident involving at least one of the following situations:

(a) a threat of death or serious bodily injury to a person;

(b) the danger of a prisoner's escape;

(c) a person who is holding one or more hostages;

(d) the probability exists that a person about to be arrested will resist arrest with the use of weapons;

(e) a person who has barricaded himself, is armed, and is threatening to ~~commit suicide~~ *end their life*; or”

Section V: To amend Section 16-1-90 subsection (D) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

(C) An officer of the court who is employed by SLED may issue an administrative subpoena to a telephone company, Internet service provider, or communications entity for the production of subscriber or customer information as described in subsection (F), not including the contents of any communications, if:

(1) SLED has reasonable cause to believe that the information is material to an active emergency incident involving at least one of the following situations:

(a) a threat of death or serious bodily injury to a person;

(b) the danger of a prisoner's escape;

(c) a person who is holding one or more hostages;

(d) the probability exists that a person about to be arrested will resist arrest with the use of weapons;

(e) a person who has barricaded himself, is armed, and is threatening to ~~commit suicide~~ *end their life*; or”

Section VI: This bill will go into effect January 1, 2026 upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Derrick Wargo
The University of South Carolina

Purpose: To expand access for NIL compensation to high school athletes in South Carolina.

Whereas, The Name, Image, and Likeness market is worth \$1.67 billion (Opendorse); and,

Whereas, More than half of football recruits from South Carolina committed to out-of-state in the 2025 recruiting cycle; and,

Whereas, NIL is imperative to recruit players in all intercollegiate sports; and,

Whereas, LaNorris Sellers, the best Quarterback in the country, is a South Carolina native.

Therefore, Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following: (This stays the same)

Section I: This bill will be known informally as the Secondary Education Learning & Limitations on Earning Rights & Support (SELLERS) Act.

Section II: To amend Section 59-158-20 subsection (A) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (I) which shall read:

(A) An institution of higher learning or any officer, trustee, director, or employee may directly or through an agreement with a third party, identify, create, solicit, facilitate, and otherwise enable opportunities for a currently enrolled intercollegiate athlete to earn compensation for the use of the intercollegiate athlete's name, image, or likeness. An institution of higher learning may grant permission to intercollegiate athletes to use its trademarks and facilities.

(I) An institution of higher learning may extend to a high school student the opportunity to earn compensation from their name, image, or likeness if the high school student has signed a written letter of athletic aid with an institution of higher learning in the state of South Carolina, and the high school student competes on an interscholastic athletic team sponsored by a public school or a private school which competes against public schools. This compensation or an attempt at earning compensation may not affect the student's eligibility to continue to participate in athletics at the high school level.

Section III: To amend Section 59-158-10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (8), which shall read:

(8) “Interscholastic athletics” means an athletic extracurricular activity that a school or school district sponsors or participates in that includes participants from more than one school or school district.

Section IV: To amend Section 59-158-60 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to add subsection (C), which shall read:

(C) Any provisions in this chapter that apply to intercollegiate athletes that receive compensation are assumed to also apply to any high school students that receive compensation for their name, image, or likeness under the provisions of Section 59-158-20.

Section IV: This bill will go into effect on June 1st, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the Governor.

A Bill
Presented by Ryan Young
University of South Carolina

- Purpose:** To allow for same day voter registration in the state of South Carolina.
- Whereas,** South Carolinians are currently only eligible to vote in an election if they had registered at least 30 days prior; and,
- Whereas,** According to a 2014 study by the Nonpartisan Nonprofit VOTE, voter turnout in states with same-day voter registration is on average 10-14% higher than in states without same-day registration; and,
- Whereas,** Twenty-five states and the District of Columbia already offered same-day voter registration during the 2024 General Election.
- Therefore,** Be it enacted by the South Carolina Student Legislature in regular session assembled the following:
- Section I:** To amend Section 7-5-150 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:
- ~~SECTION 7-5-150. Closing registration books. ; registration of persons coming of age while books closed.~~
- ~~The registration books shall be closed thirty days before each election by 5:00 p.m. of the day of an election ; but only as to that election or any second race or runoff resulting from that election, and shall remain closed until the election has taken place, anything in this article to the contrary notwithstanding; provided, that the registration books shall be closed thirty days before the June primary and shall remain closed until after the second primary and shall likewise be closed thirty days before the November general election. They shall thereafter be opened from time to time in accordance with the provisions of this article. Any person eligible to register who has been discharged or separated from his service in the Armed Forces of the United States, and returned home too late to register at the time when registration is required, is entitled to register for the purpose of voting in the next ensuing election after the discharge or separation from service, up to 5:00 p.m. on the day of the election. This application for registration must be made at the office of the board of voter registration and elections in the county in which the person wishes to register, and if qualified, the person must be issued a registration notification stating the precinct in which he is entitled to vote and a certification to the managers of the precinct that he is entitled to vote and should be placed on the registration rolls of the precinct. Persons who become of age during this period of thirty days shall be entitled to register before the closing of the books if otherwise qualified.~~
- Section II:** To amend Section 7-5-155 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read:

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the following procedures may be used in the registration of electors in addition to the procedure otherwise provided by law.

(1) Subject to the provision of Section 7-5-150, any qualified citizen may register to vote by mailing or having delivered a completed state registration by mail application form or a completed national registration by mail application form prescribed by the Federal Election Commission not later than ~~thirty days~~ *seven days* before any election to his county board of voter registration and elections. The postmark date of a mailed application is considered the date of mailing. If the postmark date is missing or illegible, the county board of voter registration and elections must accept the application if it is received by mail no later than five days ~~after the close of the registration books before any election~~ before any election.

Section III: To delete Section 7-5-220 of the South Carolina Code of Laws:

~~SECTION 7-5-220. Certificates invalid at election within thirty days of issuance.~~

~~Except as provided in Section 7-5-150, registration made thirty days or less before any election is not valid for that election or any second race or runoff resulting from that election but such registration shall be valid in any other election.~~

Section IV: To amend Section 7-5-330 of the South Carolina Code of Laws to read the following:

SECTION 7-5-330. Completion, receipt, and disposition of voter registration application; discretionary removal of elector.

(A) In the case of registration with a motor vehicle application under Section 7-5-320, the valid voter registration form of the applicant must be completed at the Department of Motor Vehicles ~~no later than thirty days before the date of the election~~ *by 5:00 p.m. of the day of the election.*

(B) In the case of registration by mail under Section 7-5-155, the valid voter registration form of the applicant must be postmarked no later than ~~thirty days before the date of the election~~ *seven days before the date of the election.*

(C) In the case of registration at a voter registration agency, the valid voter registration form of the applicant must be completed at the voter registration agency no later than ~~thirty days before the date of the election~~ *5:00 p.m. on the day of the election.*

(D) In any other case, the valid voter registration form of the applicant must be received by the county board of voter registration and elections no later than ~~thirty days before the date of the election~~ *5:00 p.m. on the day of the election.*

Section V: This bill shall go into effect on January 1st, 2026, upon passage by the General Assembly and the signature of the governor.

The Bylaws of the South Carolina Student Legislature

Article I Meetings

Section 1. Notice of all meetings shall be given no less than two weeks prior to the meeting.

Section 2. Spring Session.

(A) Each Delegation in attendance is entitled to one vote for the following purposes:

1. Amendments or revisions of the Bylaws;
2. Election of Fall Session Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen in accordance with Article V of the Bylaws; and
3. Any other business deemed by the Executive Committee to be pertinent to the South Carolina Student Legislature.

Section 3. Fall Session.

(A) No more than two (2) of these delegates shall serve in the Senate and the remainder shall compose the House Delegation. Each serving delegate shall be entitled to one vote.

(B) Delegates must be present in order to cast a vote. A delegation's designated Senate Proxy may step in to vote for a missing Senator provided that the student pays his registration fees prior to voting in accordance with Article I, Section 3, Subsection E of this document.

(C) The Secretary of State and the Attorney General shall obtain from each member delegation a statement signed by the registrar of that institution listing the number of full-time undergraduate students.

1. The enrollment statement must be received before Fall Session ends on the final day in order for the delegation to receive its full quota of members.
2. The Secretary of State and the Attorney General shall calculate membership allowed for each delegation and inform the delegation chairmen of their findings regarding the populations and votes

allotted to each school. Reapportionment of the chairmen shall occur at every Fall Session.

3. The Secretary of State and the Attorney General shall make the number of voting members as well as the total number of full-time undergraduate students available to all of the delegations have membership in the South Carolina Student Legislature.
4. Any delegation tardy in the provision of its enrollment statement or found falsifying its enrollment statement shall be punished by the suspension of member votes. The Executive Committee shall determine the specific number.

(D) Legislation.

1. Legislation shall be turned in no later than the date appointed by order of the Executive Committee;
2. Any legislation not found in the Bill Book must:
 - i. Be approved by the Executive Committee before the last day of session.
 - ii. Approved legislation will only take place upon completion of all legislation found in the bill book.
 - iii. All legislation presented to the Governor will be signed or vetoed and returned to the chamber in which it originated prior to the time scheduled for adjournment of the Senate and House. Each chamber may, by a two-thirds vote, extend its session and consider only those pieces of legislation vetoed and returned by the Governor.
 - iv. Any legislation passed by the Senate and House and vetoed by the Governor, subsequent to the adjournment of the regular session of the Senate and House, may be sent to the chamber in which it originated during an extended session.
 - v. Any legislation passed by the Senate and the House and signed or neither signed nor vetoed by the Governor within a month after the final adjournment of the Senate and House, after the final adjournment of the Senate and House, including any extended session, shall be considered approved by the Governor and ordered printed in the "Journal of Acts and Resolutions."

- (D) Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives may not serve in the opposite chamber unless they are their school's designated Senate Proxy. Each school will designate one member as its Senate Proxy. This proxy may step in for one of its Delegation's senators if that Senator is not on the floor. Each school will submit its Senate Proxy to the Secretary of State and President of the Senate on the first day of Session. However, the Senate Proxy may not vote or participate in debate on bills he has already debated and voted on in the House of Representatives.

Section 4. Interim meetings.

- (A) Interim meetings shall be called by the Executive Committee between sessions in order to carry on the business of the organization.
- (B) The executive committee shall call at least two Interim meetings a year.
- (C) On all items of business conducted at an Interim Meeting, each delegation in attendance shall be allowed one vote.

Section 5. Establishing quorum.

- (A) At the beginning of each Call to Order, a role call shall be done to establish quorum.
- (B) Quorum shall mean two-thirds of all voting delegates present at the Call to Order.

Article II
Supreme Court

Section 1. Election of members of the Supreme Court.

- (A) The members of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the Governor once vacancies open with the advice and consent of a majority of Delegation Chairs. No more than two justices shall be chosen from the same delegation.
- (B) The Supreme Court shall consist of exactly five members.

Article III
Committees

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall:

- (A) Consist of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, and the Speaker Pro Tempore of the House and shall be chaired by the Governor;
- (B) Approve all officers appointed by the Governor;
- (C) Call all meetings of the South Carolina Student Legislature;
- (D) Be responsible to plan all meetings of the South Carolina Student Legislature;
- (E) Review and approve an annual budget; and
- (F) Appoint one member from every delegation except the delegations of the Chief Justice and Attorney General to the Constitutional Committee.

Section 2. The Finance Committee shall:

- (A) Consist of the Treasurer, the Governor, and the Speaker of the House and be chaired by the Treasurer;
- (B) Prepare an annual budget no later than the last Interim meeting before Fall Session;
- (C) Set and levy registration fees;
- (D) Solicit funds for South Carolina Student Legislature;
- (E) Approve all disbursements and reimbursements; and
- (F) Review and revise the Treasurer Manual before Spring Session annually.

Section 3. The Trial Committee.

- (A) The committee shall consist of the Chief Justice of the Court and all Delegation Chairmen of the member schools, and shall be chaired by the Chief Justice of the Court.
- (B) The committee shall hear all parties involved in an impeachment and shall convict or acquit the accused;
- (C) In the event that the Chief Justice of the court is unable to serve under this provision, the remaining committee members shall replace him with an Associate Justice to be confirmed by the Executive Committee.

- (D) In the event that a Delegation Chairman is unable to serve, the Vice-Chairmen from his delegation shall replace him.
- (E) Quorum for the Trial Committee will be three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the member schools.
- (F) The Chief Justice of the Court shall call all meetings of the Trial Committee and shall give notice as prescribed in Article VI, Section 1.
- (G) The accused and the Attorney General shall submit a list of witnesses to the Chief Justice of the Court, who shall summon them to the trial.

Section 4. The Constitutional Committee shall:

- (A) Consist of the Chief Justice of the Court, the Attorney General, and one member at large from every delegation except the delegations of the Chief Justice and Attorney General and shall be chaired by the Chief Justice of the Court:
 - 1. While each delegation, except those of the Chief Justice and Attorney General, has the right to be represented in the Constitutional Committee, they may waive their right to be represented in the Committee with the consent of the Governor.
 - 2. Any school may waive their right to be represented in the Constitution Committee by signing a form which reads: "I hereby waive my right to participate in the Constitutional Committee of South Carolina Student Legislature for the meeting held on [insert date]."
 - 3. Any school that waives their right by signing the aforementioned form will not be included in quorum calculations for the Committee, which is a majority of possible members of the Constitutional Committee.
- (B) Not allow any of the members-at-large to be from the same school as the Chief Justice of the Court or the Attorney General.
- (C) Review, prepare, and circulate any needed amendments or revisions to the Constitution and the Bylaws.

Section 5. The Election and Awards Committee.

- (A) The committee shall consist of the chairmen of each member delegation.

- (B) The committee shall be chaired by the most senior delegation chair by number of sessions attended.
- (C) No member of the Committee who is running for office shall continue to serve on the Committee. In this case, the respective Vice Chair of the delegation will take his place on the Committee. In the Case that the Vice Chair is also running for office, the replacement shall be appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Executive Committee.
- (D) Any member of the Committee who has been nominated for an award may not vote on the award(s) that they have been nominated for. In this case, the Committee member will step away to allow for discussion on their nomination. In the event that any member of the Committee belongs to a delegation who is eligible for an award as an entire delegation, the Committee member may not vote for their delegation and will step away to allow discussion on the nomination of their delegation.
- (E) The Secretary of State shall assist the Committee in making preparations and shall deliver the results to the Governor.
- (F) The Secretary of State shall count the ballots in all elections. They are also allowed to appoint one Committee member at large to help with this, with the majority consent of the Committee.
- (G) The committee shall oversee the qualification for awards in accordance to Article XIII of the Constitution of the South Carolina Student Legislature
- (H) The committee shall submit a teller's report as discussed in Section 44 of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised through the Secretary of State and the Committee Chairman. This report shall be delivered to the Executive Committee and shall be available to any delegation upon request.

Section 6. The Conference Committee shall:

- (A) Consist of seven members, three Senators and four Representatives, appointed by their respective presiding officers; and
- (B) Resolve all differences between legislation passed by both chambers.

Section 7. The Fall Session committees.

- (A) The Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the seven committees shall be elected at Spring Session in accordance with Article V of the Bylaws.

- (B) The Fall Session committees shall consider all legislation and shall report on the legislation to the respective officers of the House and Senate.
- (C) The Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of each committee shall rank all legislation passed through their committee for review by the officers of the chambers.

Article IV Budget

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall ensure, through the operating budget presented, that the annual expenditure of the South Carolina Student Legislature does not exceed the organization's annual revenue. The budget shall include all annual expenditures greater than 25 dollars.

Section 2. The Treasurer shall make available for review an annual financial report upon request. The review shall be available by Fall Session.

Section 3. The presentation of the operational budget shall be at the first joint session of the first full eight-hour day of Fall Session. The new operating budget must be passed by the South Carolina Student Legislature General Assembly prior to the conclusion of Fall Session.

Section 4. In the event any one of (1) the operating budget, (2) actual revenues, or (3) actual expenditures exceeds \$15,000, the Comptroller General shall provide for and obtain an annual external audit of the finances of the South Carolina Student Legislature by a reputable certified public accountant for so long as the budget continues to exceed \$15,000 or as long as the Executive Committee deems it necessary. The auditor's report shall be emailed to all delegation chairs within two days of its receipt and shall be presented and explained by the Comptroller General to the General Assembly as the first order of business at the first joint session of the first full day of the next Fall or Spring Session. The audit report shall also be made available on the South Carolina Student Legislature website.

Article V Nominations

Section 1. Nominations shall be by the Secretary of State each day of Spring Session for Chairman and Vice Chairman of each committee listed in Article III. The candidates will be listed on the Ballot in alphabetical order by last name. Chairmen and Vice Chairmen shall be elected by secret ballot. Each Delegation shall be given one vote for each chair and vice chair position. Ballots shall be distributed, collected, counted, and certified by the Secretary of State, the Chief Justice, and the Attorney General on the last day of Spring Session. Results of

these elections shall be announced to the delegates before the conclusion of Spring Session.

Section 2. The officers shall be elected by secret ballot, which shall be given to the chair of each Delegation to be completed in accordance with such rules as may have been adopted by the Delegation. The completed ballot shall be submitted to the Election and Awards Committee during the first joint session on the last day of the session as prescribed the Election and Awards Committee.

Section 3. Ballots may be distributed electronically through an internet poll. In the case that internet is not available, ballots will be distributed by paper.

Article VI Discipline of Officers and Appointments

Section 1. Impeachment.

- (A) An impeached officer or appointee shall remain in office and he shall have until the next meeting of the members to prepare a defense. The Executive Committee will determine the time between the two meetings thus stated. The officer or appointee in question will have a minimum of 72 hours to prepare a defense.
- (B) Following impeachment charges, a hearing consisting of no less than three quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the members, shall be held to consider all charges made against the impeached officer or appointee.
- (C) At the hearing all charges and evidence shall be brought forth in front of the Trial Committee. The impeached officer or appointee shall be afforded a maximum time allotted to deliver a defense, and shall have final remarks before a vote is taken.
- (D) Upon a three quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) vote of the Trial Committee present, the impeached officer or appointee shall be removed from office.
- (E) Any vacancies by the discipline of the Trial Committee shall be filled according to the method laid out in the Constitution and Bylaws of the South Carolina Student Legislature.

Article VII Personal Liability

Section 1. Agents in Due Course.

- (A) An agent of SCSL, who having been given written authority by the Governor or the Executive Committee to contractually obligate the

organization, shall sign all contracts in the name of South Carolina Student Legislature. South Carolina shall indemnify and hold harmless any agent acting on this authority.

Article VIII State of Emergency

Section 1. In the case of a natural disaster, pandemic, epidemic, or any other act of God, the Governor may call a State of Emergency and cancel Fall or Spring session.

- (A) The State of Emergency ordered can be overruled by a three-fourths vote of Delegation Chairs.
- (B) The Governor may call a State of Emergency retroactively for a session that was cancelled prior to the ratification of this amendment.

Section 2. In the case of a cancelled Spring Session:

- (A) The Constitution Committee, Executive Committee, Delegation Chairs, or any other committee listed in the Constitution and Bylaws may meet to conduct business virtually or in a manner deemed safe by the Governor and Committee Chair.
- (B) Legislative Committee Chairs will be appointed by the Executive Committee with a three-fourths confirmation vote of Delegation Chairs.
- (C) Delegates may use the cancelled Spring Session towards their session requirement to run for office.

Section 3. In the case of a cancelled Fall Session:

- (A) Any Constitutional amendments passed by the Constitution Committee that did not have the chance to be passed by the body may be passed provisionally by a two-thirds vote of Delegation Chairs. These amendments will be provisionally enacted until the entire legislative body meets again. Provisional amendments must be ratified by the body pursuant to Article XV, Section 2 of the Constitution to become permanent.
- (B) Elections will be held virtually with virtual caucuses and campaigning. The Election and Awards Committee will create a plan for how the virtual campaigning is to be run.
- (C) Each member delegation will get one vote for each Executive Committee position.

- (D) Delegates may use the cancelled Fall Session towards their session requirement to run for office.
- (E) The Treasurer shall present a budget to the Delegation Chairs. The budget must receive two-thirds approval of the Delegation Chairs to pass.

The Constitution of the South Carolina Student Legislature

Article I Name

Section 1. This organization shall be called the South Carolina Student Legislature.

Article II Purpose

Section 1. This organization shall be formed to provide a forum in which students may experience the full range of legislative activity, to promote student input into public policy-making in South Carolina, and to educate students about the functions of democratic government.

Section 2. The motto of this organization shall be “Our Freedom, Our Future, Our Responsibility.”

Article III Membership

Section 1. The membership of the South Carolina Student Legislature shall be composed of delegates from South Carolina’s universities and colleges.

Section 2. Each delegation shall select its members from the student body of the institution that it represents.

Section 3. For the purpose of this document, “students” means all those with the privileges of an undergraduate student at the member institution. No student shall serve as a delegate for more than five years.

Section 4. Delegations may dismiss a delegate during session when he has violated the delegation and/or school conduct rules, has been arrested for a crime while at session, has become ill or injured and must return home, or in case of emergency.

Section 5. A delegation shall obtain membership upon registration with the Governor, approval of the state officers, and payment of registration fees.

Section 6. Upon approval of the registration and the receipt of the dues, the Governor shall issue the delegation an official letter recognizing it as a member delegation.

Section 7. All memberships are for the calendar year and shall expire upon the thirty-first day of December.

Article IV
Officers

Section 1. The elected officers of the organization shall be the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, the Speaker Pro Tempore of the House, and the Comptroller General. These officers, with the exception of the Comptroller General, shall be members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The Governor shall, with the consent of the Executive Committee, appoint a Secretary of State, an Attorney General, a Treasurer, and a Chief Justice of the Court. For the purpose of this document, “consent of the Executive Committee” means a majority of the members of the committee.

Section 3. The Governor shall, with the consent of the Executive Committee, have full power to create and fill any other officer that the Governor deems necessary to the South Carolina Student Legislature.

Section 4. No person shall hold more than one office at a time.

Section 5. Officer terms shall coincide with the calendar year.

Section 6. Each candidate for office shall be a student in good standing with the institution he attends.

Section 7. A candidate for Governor shall have attended at least two sessions prior to the session in which the election is being held, including at least one Fall Session. The Fall Session during which the election is being held shall not count towards the two-session requirement.

Section 8. A candidate for Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, or Comptroller General shall have attended at least two sessions prior to the session in which elections are being held, and the session in which elections are being held shall not count towards the two-session requirement. A candidate for Lieutenant Governor shall be a member of the Senate during which the election is being held. A candidate for Speaker of the House shall be a member of the House during the session in which the election is being held.

Section 9. A candidate for President of the Senate and Speaker Pro Tempore shall have attended at least one session prior to the session in which the election is being held. The Fall Session during which the election is being held shall not count towards the one-session requirement.

Section 10. In the event that the office of President of the Senate or Speaker Pro Tempore shall become vacant, the Governor shall nominate a qualified replacement. The replacement shall be confirmed by the Executive Committee and shall begin fulfilling the duties of the office immediately.

Article V
Powers and Duties of Officers

Section 1. The Governor shall:

- (A) With the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, have the power to form a cabinet, which includes the following positions and any others deemed by the Governor as necessary to the operations of the South Carolina Student Legislature:
 - 1. A Secretary of State;
 - 2. An Attorney General;
 - 3. A Chief Justice;
 - 4. A Treasurer; and
 - 5. Four Associate Justices;
- (B) Have full power, with the consent of the Executive Committee, to create and fill any other office which the Governor deems necessary to the South Carolina Student Legislature; With the advice of the Executive Committee, have full power to establish and maintain an “Office of the Governor” for his assistance and to perform the duties designated by the Governor as necessary to the operations and execution of the powers of the Governor of the South Carolina Student Legislature;
- (C) Have full power to appoint a Chief of Staff to manage and coordinate the operations of the Office of the Governor;
- (D) Represent South Carolina Student Legislature throughout the State of South Carolina and the United States;
- (E) Present the “Journal of Acts and Resolutions” to the governor and the General Assembly of South Carolina;
- (F) Report to the South Carolina Student Legislature at the Fall Session on the state of the Organization;
- (G) Preside over all Interim meetings;

- (H) Serve as a member of the Finance Committee; and
- (I) Sign or veto all legislation that has passed the House and the Senate during Session.

Section 2. The Lieutenant Governor shall:

- (A) Assume the duties of the Governor in the event that the Governor has vacated the office or is incapable of fulfilling the duties of the office;
- (B) Serve as a member of the Executive Committee;
- (C) Preside over the Senate, but shall have no vote except in the event of a tie;
- (D) With the consent of the Senate, appoint three members of that body, no two of whom shall be from the same school, to serve on the Conference Committee;
- (E) Serve as a member of the Finance Committee;
- (F) Publish the “Journal of Acts and Resolutions”;
- (G) Compile and publish the Bill Book; and
- (H) In conjunction with the Speaker of the House, organize and distribute a legislation calendar for Fall Session.

Section 3. The Speaker of the House shall:

- (A) Assume the duties of the Governor in the event that the Governor and Lieutenant Governor have vacated the office or are incapable of fulfilling the duties of the office;
- (B) Serve as a member of the Executive Committee;
- (C) Preside over the House as a member of the House;
- (D) With the consent of the House, appoint four members of that body, no two of whom shall be from the same school, to serve on the Conference Committee;
- (E) Serve as a member of the Finance Committee; and
- (F) In conjunction with the Lieutenant Governor, organize and distribute a legislation calendar for Fall Session.

Section 4. The President of the Senate shall:

- (A) Assume the duties of the Lieutenant Governor in the event the Lieutenant Governor has vacated the office or is incapable of fulfilling the duties of the office;
- (B) Assume the duties of the Governor in the event that the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House have vacated the office or are incapable of fulfilling the duties of the office;
- (C) Serve as a member of the Executive Committee; and
- (D) Preside over the Senate in the absence of the Lieutenant Governor.

Section 5. The Speaker Pro Tempore shall:

- (A) Assume the duties of the Speaker of the House in the event the Speaker of the House has vacated the office or is incapable of fulfilling the duties of the office;
- (B) Serve as a member of the Executive Committee; and
- (C) Preside over the House in the absence of the Speaker of the House.

Section 6. The Secretary of State shall:

- (A) Assist and advise the Governor in all matters in which the Governor needs aid;
- (B) Prepare the minutes and records of interim meetings and Spring Session;
- (C) In conjunction with the Attorney General, reapportion the votes of each delegation prior to Fall Session;
- (D) Assist the Election and Awards Committee as that committee may deem appropriate; and
- (E) Receive the certified results from the Election Chair of the Election and Awards Committee.

Section 7. The Attorney General shall:

- (A) Act as Prosecutor in a Senate Trial;

- (B) Be replaced as Prosecutor if impeached;
- (C) Serve as a member of the Constitutional Committee;
- (D) In conjunction with the Secretary of State, reapportion the votes of each delegation prior to Fall Session; and
- (E) Advise the General Assembly on the constitutionality of legislation whose constitutionality has been called into question on the floor under the Constitution of the State of South Carolina.
 - 1. The legislation shall be tabled for review by the Attorney General.
 - 2. Within one hour of receiving the legislation in question, the Attorney General shall recommend a course of action to the body based on his review.
- (F) Assist and advise other officers in Supreme Court cases.

Section 8. Chief Justice of the Court shall:

- (A) Serve a one-year term;
- (B) Preside over any session of the Supreme Court as outlined in Article VII;
- (C) Preside over Senate trial proceedings;
- (D) Serve as Chairman of the Constitutional Committee; and
- (E) Obtain and distribute the case to be used in the Supreme Court hearings at session no later than 30 days prior to session.

Section 9. The Treasurer shall:

- (A) Keep a current account of all funds of the South Carolina Student Legislature;
- (B) Serve as Chairman of the Finance Committee; and
- (C) Prepare and present the annual operating budget.

Section 10. The Fall Session Committee Chairmen shall:

- (A) Chair their respective committees at Fall Session.

Section 11. The Comptroller General shall:

- (A) Perform an annual internal audit of the organization and prepare an audit report;
- (B) Present the audit report to the General Assembly as the first order of business at the first joint session of the first full day of Fall Session;
- (C) Coordinate with external auditors in the case of an external audit of the organization; and
- (D) Give documented approval for disbursements of more than \$25.
 - 1. Email or written notation is sufficient documentation.
 - 2. A documented unanimous vote of the Finance Committee may override disapproval from the Comptroller General.

Section 12. The Associate Justices of the Supreme Court shall:

- (A) Serve one-year terms; and
- (B) Participate in any session of the Supreme Court.

Section 13. Delegation Chairs.

- (A) Each school shall designate its own Delegation Chair/Co-Chairs.
- (B) Schools with multiple delegation chairs shall have only one vote in a delegation chair vote.
- (C) A Delegation Chair shall:
 - 1. Participate in any meetings, votes, or responsibilities laid out in the Constitution or the Bylaws of the South Carolina Student Legislature;
 - 2. Be the spokesperson for his respective delegation;
 - 3. Lead and guide their delegation during its meetings; and
 - 4. Represent his delegation's interests at the state-level of the South Carolina Student Legislature.

Section 14. The Parliamentarian shall:

- (A) Rule on questions of Robert's Rules of Order on the floor.

Article VI
Executive Committee

Section 1. The Governor shall call all meetings.

- (A) Meeting times must be approved by the Executive Committee and Delegation Chairs.
- (B) The Executive Committee shall propose the order of business and business to be conducted.
- (C) The meetings shall be:
 - 1. Spring Session;
 - 2. Fall Session; and
 - 3. Interim meetings.

Section 2. Spring Session:

- (A) Spring Session shall be presided over by all presiding officers of the Executive Committee.
- (B) Legislation shall be turned in no later than the date appointed by the order of the Executive Committee.
- (C) Any legislation not found in the Bill Book must:
 - 1. Be approved by the Executive Committee before the last day of session.
 - 2. Approved legislation will only take place upon completion of all legislation found in the Bill Book.
- (D) The Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House shall, in conjunction with the President of the Senate and the Speaker Pro Tempore, form calendars of legislation for the chambers.

- (E) A bill or resolution passing the joint session shall be presented to the Governor for Approval.
- (F) All legislation signed by the Governor or neither signed nor vetoed by the Governor within a month after it has been presented to him shall be included in the “Journal of Acts and Resolutions.”
- (G) Member dues will be collected at the beginning of session at the discretion of the Finance Committee.
- (H) The Governor may not serve as a legislator for Spring Session.

Section 3. Fall Session:

- (A) Fall Session shall be an annual student legislature, modeled after the General Assembly of South Carolina and shall be comprised of a Senate, a House of Representatives, and a Supreme Court.
- (B) Elections for the offices of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, and Speaker Pro Tempore of the House shall be held as the first order of business at the first joint session on the last day.
- (C) Each member school shall be represented by a delegation consisting of:
 - 1. A Chair;
 - 2. Up to two delegates per school;
 - 3. One delegate for each 200 full time undergraduate students for the first 1,000 students (five possible);
 - 4. One delegate for each 1,000 full time undergraduate students from 1,000 to 10,000 (nine possible); and
 - 5. One delegate for each 3,000 full time undergraduate students from 10,000 up.
 - 6. All numbers shall be rounded up if the numbers exceed the previous population bracket by more than fifty percent.
- (D) Legislation:
 - 1. The Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House shall assign each bill or resolution to a committee.

2. Legislation which passes committee shall be assigned to its chamber by the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House.
 3. The Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House shall, in conjunction with the President of the Senate and Speaker Pro Tempore, form calendars of legislation for their respective chambers.
 4. Once a bill or resolution passes one chamber, it shall be transferred to the calendar of the opposite chamber.
 5. A bill or resolution passing both chambers shall be presented to the Governor for approval.
 6. All legislation signed by the Governor or neither signed nor vetoed by the Governor within a month after it has been presented to him shall be included in the “Journal of Acts and Resolutions.”
 7. All legislation passed in differing forms in the chambers shall be reviewed and revised by the Conference Committee.
- (E) Both chambers shall abide by their respective rules, which shall be amended or revised as the first order of business when the chambers convene.
- (F) Only voting members of the Senate and House may be present on their respective floors unless presenting legislation or appearing before the body.
- (G) Registration fees will be collected at the beginning of session at the discretion of the Finance Committee.
- (H) The Governor may not serve as a legislator for Fall Session.

Article VII

The Supreme Court

Section 1. The Supreme Court in general.

- (A) The Supreme Court shall consist of a Chief Justice and four Associate Justices, any three of whom shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The Chief Justice shall preside, and in his absence, the senior Associate Justice. In all cases decided by the Supreme Court, the concurrence of three of the Justices shall be necessary of the judgment below.

Section 2. Jurisdiction.

- (A) The Supreme Court shall have power to review the trial case presented by the Chief Justice. The ruling of the Supreme Court will determine brief awards which are outlined in Article XII of the Constitution of South Carolina Student Legislature.
- (B) The Supreme Court shall constitute a court for the correction of errors at law under such regulations as the General Assembly may prescribe.
- (C) If legislation is passed and signed into law but its constitutionality under the United States Constitution, the Constitution of South Carolina, or the SCSL Constitution is contested, by petition for Writ of Certiorari, the Chief Justice may coordinate with the Governor to schedule a session of the Supreme Court to review the contested law at the next Session of the South Carolina Student Legislature. If for whatever reason the Chief Justice and Governor deem it necessary to review the contested law during the session in which it is contested, the Chief Justice may coordinate with the Executive Committee to schedule a special session of the Court to review the contested law. The review process will allow the delegate who has questioned the constitutionality of legislation to present his argument before the Supreme Court and the legislation author to refute these arguments. The legislation author may receive help from his delegation for his defense. The Supreme Court shall publish a decision no later than one week following the hearing.
- (D) The Supreme Court shall have sole jurisdiction to hear cases concerning constitutionality. If any delegate or group of delegates believes that the Constitution is being violated, they may petition the Supreme Court to take up the case by producing a written brief and presenting it to the Chief Justice. Upon receipt of the brief, the Chief Justice shall allow the challenged party a reasonable amount of time to file a written response. Oral arguments, either in person or virtual, may also take place if a majority of the Court believes them to be necessary or beneficial in deciding the case. After considering all relevant information, the Court shall release a decision in written form detailing their decision and reasoning. Justices who disagree with the majority decision, either in part or entirely, may write concurring or dissenting opinions in addition to the opinion of the Court. The opinion of the Supreme Court on issues of constitutionality shall be final and binding. Opinions of the Court must be preserved and easily accessible, and any applicable past Court rulings should be considered in future cases and questions of constitutionality.

- (E) The Chief Justice shall have the power to set procedure for any court cases arising from their jurisdiction in this Article, so long as it does not violate the provisions of this Constitution or the Bylaws.

Article VIII Committees

Section 1. The Fall Session Committees shall consist of:

- (A) The Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources;
- (B) The Committee on Education;
- (C) The Committee on Judiciary;
- (D) The Committee on Labor, Commerce, and Industry;
- (E) The Committee on Medical, Municipal, Military, Transportation, and Public Administration;
- (F) The Committee on Miscellaneous; and
- (G) The Committee on Ways and Means.

Article IX Finances

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall, each year, through the office of the Treasurer, provide the South Carolina Student Legislature with an annual operating budget. The Treasurer shall present the operating budget to the General Assembly during Fall Session.

Article X Elections

Section 1. An officer shall be elected by a majority of the legal ballots cast.

Section 2. The Senate and the House of Representatives shall elect the Governor and the Lieutenant Governor.

Section 3. The Senate shall elect the President of the Senate.

Section 4. The House of Representatives shall elect the Speaker of the House and the Speaker Pro Tempore of the House.

Section 5. The Chair of the Election and Awards Committee shall preside over the elections. In the event that the Chair of the Election and Awards

Committee is running for office, he shall resign as Chair of the Election and Awards Committee, and the next most senior delegation chair shall replace him as Chair.

Section 6. The Elections shall be conducted as follows:

- (A) All candidates shall be listed on an official election ballot(s) as deemed official by the Election and Awards Committee.
- (B) All Ballots shall be handed out to the respective delegation chairs proceeding the last joint session of the Session.
- (C) Ballots for Each Official Delegate will be given either electronically or by paper to Delegation Chairs to hand out to their respective Delegates. Delegates will then personally submit their own ballot to the Secretary of State.
- (D) A delegate can only place his name on the ballot for a single office and cannot be listed more than once.
- (E) The candidates will be listed on the Ballot in alphabetical order by last name.
- (F) Ballots which do not clearly identify the preference of the vote shall not be counted.

Article XI Discipline of Officers

Section 1. Any elected or appointed officer may be removed from office for the following reasons:

- (A) Failure to discharge the duties of his office; or
- (B) Behavior determined by the body to be demeaning to the integrity of the South Carolina Student Legislature.

Section 2. Specific Charges against the officer must be presented either at a formal meeting of Delegation Chairs, Spring Session, or Fall Session. The impeachment and removal process is as follows:

- (A) Upon a majority passage of Articles of Impeachment in the House of Representatives, and a 2/3 Conviction of the Senate, the officer in question shall be removed from office. The officer in question and Attorney General will each be provided 10 minutes to testify in front of the Senate

before the Senate Vote. The Senate Trial will be presided over by the Chief Justice; or

- (B) Upon unanimous vote of Delegation Chairs to impeach and convict, the officer in question shall be removed from office. The officer in question and Attorney General will each be provided 10 minutes to testify in front of Delegation Chairs before the Delegation Chair Vote. The Delegation Chair Trial will be presided over by the Chief Justice.

Article XII

Awards

Section 1. The Carlisle Award is given annually at Fall Session in honor of the founder of the South Carolina Student Legislature, Dr. Douglas Carlisle. The Carlisle Award is awarded to the delegate or officer who, in the opinion of the Election and Awards Committee, best represents the ideals of the South Carolina Student Legislature.

Section 2. The Best Senator Award is given annually at Fall Session to the Senator who shows himself to be an accomplished speaker and conscientious statesman. The Senators shall nominate candidates for the Best Senator Award, and each Senator shall cast one vote for a nominee. The Lieutenant Governor shall cast a vote in case of a tie. The Election and Awards Committee shall administer the ballots.

Section 3. The Best Representative Award is given annually at Fall Session to the Representative who shows himself to be an accomplished speaker and conscientious statesman. The Representatives shall nominate candidates for the Best Representative Award, and each Representative shall cast one vote for a nominee. The Speaker of the House shall cast a vote in case of a tie. The Election and Awards Committee shall administer the ballots.

Section 4. The Best Legislation Award is given annually at Fall Session to the author whose legislation, in the opinion of the Election and Awards Committee, best manifests thorough research, topicality, and excellent use of language. The award may go to legislation presented in either chamber.

Section 5. The Best Delegation Award is given annually at Fall Session to the small, medium and large delegations that, in the opinion of the Elections and Awards Committee, best exemplified cohesion and activity.

- (A) A small delegation shall be defined as a delegation whose school has a current population of 2,000 students or less.
- (B) A medium delegation shall be defined as a delegation whose school has a current population between 2,001 and 8,000 students.

- (C) A large delegation shall be defined as a delegation whose school has a population over 8,001 students.

Section 6. The Chad M. Beatty Award is given annually at Fall Session to the outstanding non-state officer senior as decided by the Election and Awards Committee.

Section 7. The Blake Alexander Campbell Memorial Award is given annually at Fall Session to a freshman Representative or Senator who, in the opinion of the Election and Awards Committee and the Executive Committee, shows himself to be a positive representative for the future of our organization through statesmanship, honor, courage and integrity.

Section 8. The Best Written Brief award is given at Fall and/or Spring Sessions in which the Supreme Court presides over a case to the delegate(s) who, in the opinion of the Justices of the Supreme Court, shows exceptional legal writing skills.

Section 9. The Best Oral Argument award is given annually at Fall and/or Spring Sessions in which the Supreme Court presides over a case to the delegate(s) who, in the opinion of the Justices of the Supreme Court, shows excellent use of language skills, communication skills, and the art of advocacy.

Section 10. The Palmetto Award for Best Overall Delegation will be awarded to the Best Delegation out of the winners for best Small, Medium, and Large Delegation. This award is presented to the delegation who, in the opinion of the Election and Awards Committee, best represents the ideals of our organization through legislation, activity, cohesion, and commitment.

Article XIII Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order; Newly Revised* shall govern the South Carolina Student Legislature in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and any special rules this organization may adopt.

Section 2. The parliamentary authority prescribed in their respective rules shall govern the Senate and House.

Article XIV Equality

Section 1. Any occurrence of pronouns throughout this document shall not be deemed gender specific.

Section 2. No delegate shall be discriminated against in any way on the basis of gender, race, religion, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, or age.

Article XV
Amendment of the Constitution and Bylaws

Section 1. Any member may present amendments to the Constitution or the Bylaws at any joint meeting at either Fall or Spring Sessions.

Section 2. Constitutional amendments approved by a majority of the Constitutional Committee must be ratified by two-thirds of quorum of the General Assembly, unless under State of Emergency provisions as outlined in Article VIII of the Bylaws. Upon approval, the Secretary of State shall declare such amendments to be in effect.

Section 3. Bylaws amendments approved by a majority of the Constitutional Committee must be ratified by either:

- (A) a majority vote of the Delegation Chairs when the South Carolina Student Legislature is out of session; or
- (B) a two-thirds vote of quorum of the General Assembly.

Article XVI
Preemption of Constitution and Bylaws

Section 1. Members of the South Carolina Student Legislature are bound by the Constitution and Bylaws. The Constitution shall hold precedence over the Bylaws in all matters. The Bylaws shall not preempt or supersede the Constitution.