



Senator Darrell Jackson

RICHLAND DISTRICT 21

2025 END OF SESSION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

On May 28, the General Assembly passed the state's budget. H. 4025, South Carolina's General Appropriations bill for the Fiscal Year of 2025-2026, provides funding for needed projects and state agencies. The budget, as adopted on May 28, 2025:

- Gives Income Tax Relief to residents by reducing the rate from 6.3% to 6%.
- Reduces property taxes for manufacturers from 10.5% to 6%.
- Strengthens the State Workforce by launching a new pay structure, guaranteeing all employees receive at least a 2% salary increase—plus, fully funds the State Employee Health Plan with no rise in premiums for employees, retirees, or educators.
- Makes Significant Investments in State Infrastructure, including:
 - \$200 million allocated for bridge maintenance and upgrades,
 - \$160 million for County Transportation Committees,
 - \$12 million directed to the Rural Infrastructure Fund,
 - \$15 million for the Statewide Water and Sewer Fund,
 - \$27.7 million toward repairs for high-risk dams and spillways.
- Preserves South Carolina's natural beauty and environment by supporting conservation programs.

The budget also prioritizes the health and safety of South Carolinians by allocating the following:

- \$350 million for the Neurological and Rehabilitation Center,
- \$4 million for opioid addiction treatment initiatives,
- \$25 million to modernize the Judicial Court Management System,
- \$250,000 to support the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

To build a brighter future for students, the budget includes:

- Increasing the starting salary for teachers to \$48,500,
- Fully funding all Merit-Based State Scholarships,
- Providing financial support to ensure every school has a School Resource Officer.

New Laws Enacted in 2025

Act 15 – South Carolina Conservation Education Act

Creates the South Carolina Conservation Fund to expand access for students to both classroom-based and outdoor learning opportunities focused on the state's natural beauty and environmental resources.

Act 41 – South Carolina Energy Security Act

It improves energy oversight and infrastructure by advancing the use of renewable energy, supporting nuclear innovation, and promoting energy efficiency. The act also reforms utility rate stabilization measures and mandates comprehensive energy planning to ensure a dependable energy future.

Act 42 – Alcohol Liability and Tort Reform

Modernizes laws related to liquor liability and torts by outlining fault distribution among responsible parties, requiring alcohol server certification, banning sales to visibly intoxicated individuals, setting liability insurance standards for alcohol vendors, and introducing rules for alcohol sales during college sports events.

Act 59 – Hands-Free Driving Law

Declares South Carolina a hands-free driving state, introducing a new traffic violation that carries two points for drivers using handheld devices aimed at improving road safety.

Act 61 – Fentanyl-Induced Homicide

Establishes a new felony offense for causing death through the unlawful distribution of fentanyl, reinforcing the state's stance on combating the opioid crisis.

Working for You...

This year, I proudly sponsored and co-sponsored legislation aimed at enhancing the safety, health, and prosperity of our communities:

• S.3 – Restoration of Voting Rights for Released Felons

I introduced this bill to automatically restore voting rights to individuals upon their release from prison, removing disqualification due to felony convictions. This legislation promotes reintegration and civic participation for formerly incarcerated individuals.

• S.4 – Housing Construction Streamlining Act

This bill seeks to reduce administrative and permitting costs and barriers to housing construction while maintaining safety and public health standards. It allows builders to hire certified third-party inspectors, aiming to address housing shortages and affordability issues.

• S.247 – Senator Clementa C. Pinckney Hate Crimes Act

I co-sponsored this legislation to establish additional penalties for crimes committed when the victim is intentionally selected based on race, religion, or other protected characteristics. This act honors Senator Pinckney and strengthens protections against hate crimes.

• S.340 – Prohibition of Smoking in Cars with Children Under 12

This bill prohibits smoking tobacco products inside a vehicle with a passenger under 12 years old, aiming to protect children from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke.

I look forward to continuing to support legislation that betters our communities when the Senate reconvenes in January.

CONTACT ME

My priority as your state Senator will always be to serve your best interests. Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding any matter that is important to you.

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