

SPARTANBURG DEMOCRATS Monthly Newsletter

February 2026 Edition



This is the Moment to Lead *Step Up. Run Local. Change the Future.*

We need to challenge every seat in Spartanburg County. In this past two years we have made incredible strides, and now it's time to move mountains. With over 20 local seats at play we need folks to step up for state house, county council and more.

Our future depends on who shows up to lead. Across South Carolina, we need everyday people ready to flip the future and be a game changer by running for office. Local races matter. Your voice matters. And your leadership could change everything.

All candidates are invited to speak at our local convention on March 7th from 10-12pm at the SCC Downtown Campus. We'll also use this time to organize precinct captains, our neighborhood contacts who will help the Upstate mobilize voters, engage with candidates and share critical election information with their communities.

In solidarity,

Kathryn Harvey

Chair, Spartanburg County Democratic Party

Join Us Each Month in 2026

Join the SPCDP the first monday of the month from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Dr. TK Gregg Community Center (650 Howard Street) in downtown Spartanburg. We'll be meeting at the TK Gregg Center all year in 2026.

2026 MEETING DATES

- February 2
- March 2
- April 6
- May 4
- June 1
- July 6
- Aug 3
- Sept 14
- Oct 5
- Nov 9
- Dec 7

20
26

Democratic
County Convention

2026 SPCDP CONVENTION

Our annual SPCDP Convention will be held March 7 from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon at the Spartanburg Community College Downtown Capus. Sign up using the link to the right.



Fuel the Fight for 2026: Join the Liberty Fund

In 2026, we're aiming to raise \$100,000 to power our field operations and Get Out the Vote efforts in a crucial midterm election year—and just \$25,000 of that will go toward our core operating budget to keep the lights on, the rent paid, and the doors of SPCDP open to our community. The most impactful way you can help is by becoming a recurring donor through our Liberty Fund, which provides the steady, reliable support we need to plan ahead, staff our office, and organize year-round. Scan the QR code on this page or visit our Liberty Fund link to start your monthly gift today—every recurring donation, no matter the size, helps build the foundation we'll stand on in 2026 and beyond.



National News Updates

Judge Condemns Federal ‘Cruelty’ as Voters Send a Message in Texas



The deal was backed by Sheikh Tahnoon bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who is the brother of the president of the United Arab Emirates and oversees more than \$1.3 trillion that includes the country's largest wealth fund. Tahnoon has wanted access to U.S. AI technology, but

the Biden administration blocked access out of concern it could end up in Chinese hands. The Trump administration, in striking contrast, has committed to allowing the United Arab Emirates to buy about half a million of the most advanced AI chips a year.

Federal agents acting for the Trump administration are trying to enforce the authority of those like Miller, tear-gassing, arresting, and killing American citizens. Thousands marched peacefully in Portland, Oregon, today but, as Alex Baumhardt of the Oregon Capital Chronicle recorded, “federal officers outside the ICE facility in Portland...indiscriminately threw loads of gas and flash bangs” at marchers, including children. Portland, Oregon, city councillor Mitch Green reported: “I just got tear gassed along with thousands of union members, many of whom had their families with them. Federal agents at the ICE facility tear gassed children. We must abolish ICE, DHS, and we must have prosecutions.”

Tim Dickinson of The Contrarian wrote: “Today I saw ICE gas little white kids in the streets of Portland with chemical weapons. Imagine what they’re doing to brown and black kids in the detention camps.”

And yet, in another echo of the 1850s, MAGA Republicans are reversing victim and offender, blaming the people under assault for the violence. Trump officials insist that community watch groups and protesters are engaging in “domestic terrorism.” Greg Jaffe and Thomas Gibbons-Neef of the New York Times flagged that Representative Eli Crane (R-AZ) told right-wing podcaster Benny Johnson on Monday that those people protecting their neighbors from the violence of federal agents want “revolution.” “They want to fundamentally remake and tear down the institutions and the culture of this country.”

In an order requiring the release of five-year-old Liam Conejo Ramos and his father, asylum seeker Adrian Conejo Arias, from detention, U.S. District Judge Fred Biery noted that in their crusade against undocumented immigrants, U.S. officials are ignoring the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. “[F]or some among us,” the judge wrote, “the perfidious lust for unbridled power and the imposition of cruelty in its quest know no bounds and are bereft of human decency. And the rule of law be damned.”

Judge Biery signed the order after saying he was putting “a judicial finger in the constitutional dike.” Under his signature, he posted the now-famous image of the little boy detained in his blue bunny hat and Spiderman backpack, along with the notations for two



biblical passages: “Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these,’” and “Jesus wept.”

Tonight, voters flipped a seat in the Texas Senate from Republican to Democratic in a special election. Democrat Taylor Rehmet, an Air Force veteran and machinist, defeated right-wing Republican Leigh Wambsganss for a seat that Republicans have held since the early 1990s. Robert Downen of Texas Monthly noted that in the final days of the campaign, the Wambsganss campaign spent \$310,000 while Rehmet spent nothing, and Daniel Nicheanian of BoltsMag posted that overall, Wambsganss spent nearly \$2.2 million more than Rehmet in the campaign. Both Texas governor Greg Abbott and Trump himself publicly supported Wambsganss.

And yet, as G. Elliott Morris of Strength in Numbers noted, voters flipped a district that Trump won in 2024 by 17 points to Rehmet, electing him by a 14.4-point margin. After removing the minor-party candidates in the vote, the swing from the Republican in 2024 was 32 points toward the Democrats. In Texas.

Heather Cox Richardson is a historian and author of the widely-read daily newsletter “Letters from an American,” where she analyzes contemporary politics through the lens of American history. She is a professor at Boston College.

Contact Your Representatives

Hold Our Elected Officials Accountable

Federal Representatives

SENATE

Sen. Lindsey Graham
Senior Senator
(202) 224-5972
lgraham.senate.gov

Sen. Tim Scott
Junior Senator
(202) 224-6121
scott.senate.gov

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Rep. William Timmons
4th Congressional District
(202) 225-6030
timmons.house.gov

Rep. Ralph Norman
5th Congressional District
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Lee Bright
Senate District 12

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Sarita Edgerton
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Steven Long
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stevenlong4@gmail.com

U.S. Congress

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South Carolina News Updates

Last Month in the Statehouse



This past month, there were hearings for top priorities of the Republican supermajority, including:

H. 4756, “the bathroom bill.” Republicans are very concerned about who can use which bathroom. This bill requires a person to use the restroom of the gender they were assigned at birth. The consequence of this bill: you’ll have people who have undergone gender transition in the wrong bathroom – that is, grown men with big beards in the same bathroom as little girls. How will this bill be enforced? Will someone inspect your private parts before you can go to the bathroom? Maybe TSA can set up security checkpoints outside every toilet stall.

This bill was passed by the Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, so you can expect the debate on the House floor as soon as next week for the first “Wicked Wednesday” of the year.

H. 3643 and H. 3310, which are two competing versions of the same idea: establishing closed primary elections by requiring you to register as a member of a political party in order to vote in that party’s primary. Under current South Carolina law, voters do not register with a party, so voters can choose to participate in either party’s primary elections. Voter turnout in primaries is already very low – and these proposals would further reduce the number of people who participate. With fewer moderates and independents voting, that means more and more extreme candidates will win

Republican primary elections... Have I mentioned that you should run for office?

These bills were not passed out of subcommittee on Wednesday. As one bill is backed by the Republican establishment and the other bill is backed by the far right “Freedom” Caucus, I’ll be sure to keep you updated on their infighting.

H. 4760, a ban on medication abortion. If it’s January at the South Carolina State House, that means Republicans are pushing yet another abortion ban – even though our abortion ban law is one of the strictest in the country. This is an attack on women’s freedom to make their own medical decisions and this bill is especially egregious because it will prevent survivors of rape and incest – who have up to 12 weeks to get an abortion under current law – from getting the safe, discrete care that they need. Additionally, it will restrict access to medications that are prescribed to treat conditions like high blood sugar, stomach ulcers, arthritis and more.

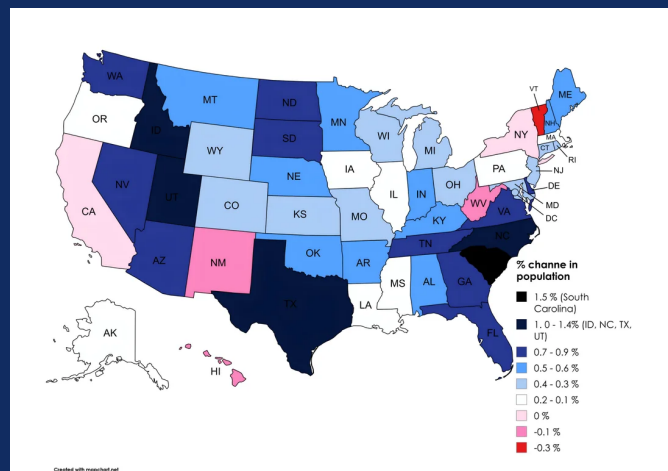
The new abortion ban was passed Wednesday evening by the Judiciary Committee, so expect to see it on the House floor soon – and you can count on House Democrats to fight back.

Nick Sottile is the Executive Director of the South Carolina House Democratic Caucus.

Census: SC Remains Fastest Growing State Despite National Slowdown

South Carolina continues to lead the nation in population growth, according to newly released Census Bureau data. The state’s population increased by 79,958 residents between July 2024 and July 2025, representing a 1.5% growth rate. Greenville County saw the largest influx of residents relocating from other states between 2019 and 2023.

This growth comes even as the nation experiences a significant slowdown, with overall U.S. population growth dropping from 1.0% in 2024 to just 0.5% in 2025. Census officials attribute the national decline primarily to lower international migration rates, while births and deaths remained steady. Only five states—California, Hawaii, New Mexico, Vermont, and West Virginia—experienced population losses during this period.



SC Republicans Push Mandatory ICE Cooperation for Local Jails

South Carolina's State Law Enforcement Division has significantly expanded its immigration enforcement partnership with ICE, nearly doubling its roster of federally authorized agents from 47 to 82 since last spring. Once additional agents complete training, over 12 percent of SLED's workforce will have federal immigration enforcement powers. This expansion is part of President Trump's mass deportation effort, which has intensified nationwide and drawn protests following the deaths of two Americans shot by federal agents during confrontations in Minneapolis.

Republican lawmakers are pushing to broaden this collaboration further through legislation that would require all local governments with jails to participate in ICE's 287(g) program. Currently, almost half of South Carolina's sheriff's offices and 11 municipalities participate, but not all do so voluntarily. The proposed bill was referred to the House judiciary committee in January and has 47 Republican co-sponsors.

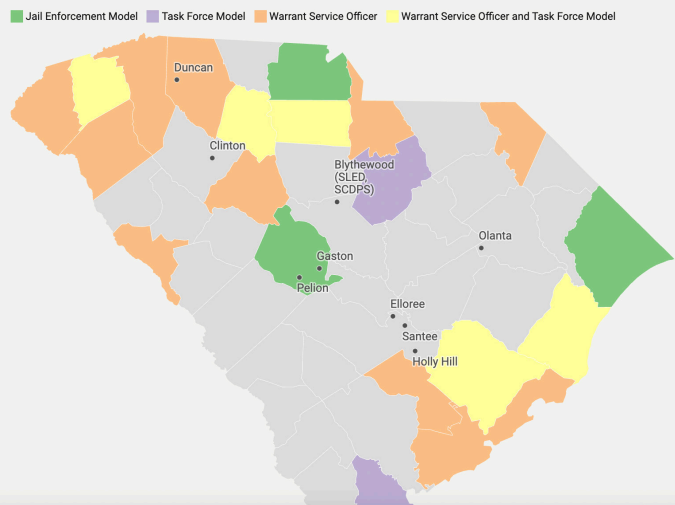
SLED is using the task force version of the 287(g) program, which allows agents to detain people on immigration charges even without state or local offenses. This controversial approach was previously disbanded in 2012 after a Justice Department investigation found it enabled racial profiling in Arizona. Critics, including the ACLU of South Carolina, argue that diverting state resources to immigration enforcement undermines public safety and erodes trust in immigrant communities.

The partnership has sparked local resistance, particularly in Beaufort County where residents packed meetings to protest the sheriff's decision to join the program. Concerns center on potential racial profiling, civil rights violations, and the chilling effect on law-abiding immigrants who may become reluctant to report crimes. Recent ICE tactics, including using administrative warrants rather than judicial warrants to enter homes by force, have intensified these concerns among legal experts and civil liberties advocates.

Under the federal program, ICE reimburses participating agencies for officer salaries, overtime, and bonuses based on locating undocumented immigrants. SLED has already received \$445,015 in federal reimbursements. While SLED maintains its use-of-force policies differ from the aggressive tactics seen in Minnesota, the agency's growing immigration enforcement role represents a significant shift in state law enforcement priorities and resource allocation.

S.C. Law Enforcement Agencies with 287(g) Agreements

As of Jan. 21, 20 sheriff's offices in South Carolina have joined ICE's 287(g) Program, as shown in this map. Additionally, SLED, SCDPS and the police departments in Clinton, Coward, Duncan, Elloree, Eutawville, Gaston, Holly Hill, Olanta, Pelion, Santee, and Scranton have signed Task Force Model agreements.



Sponsors

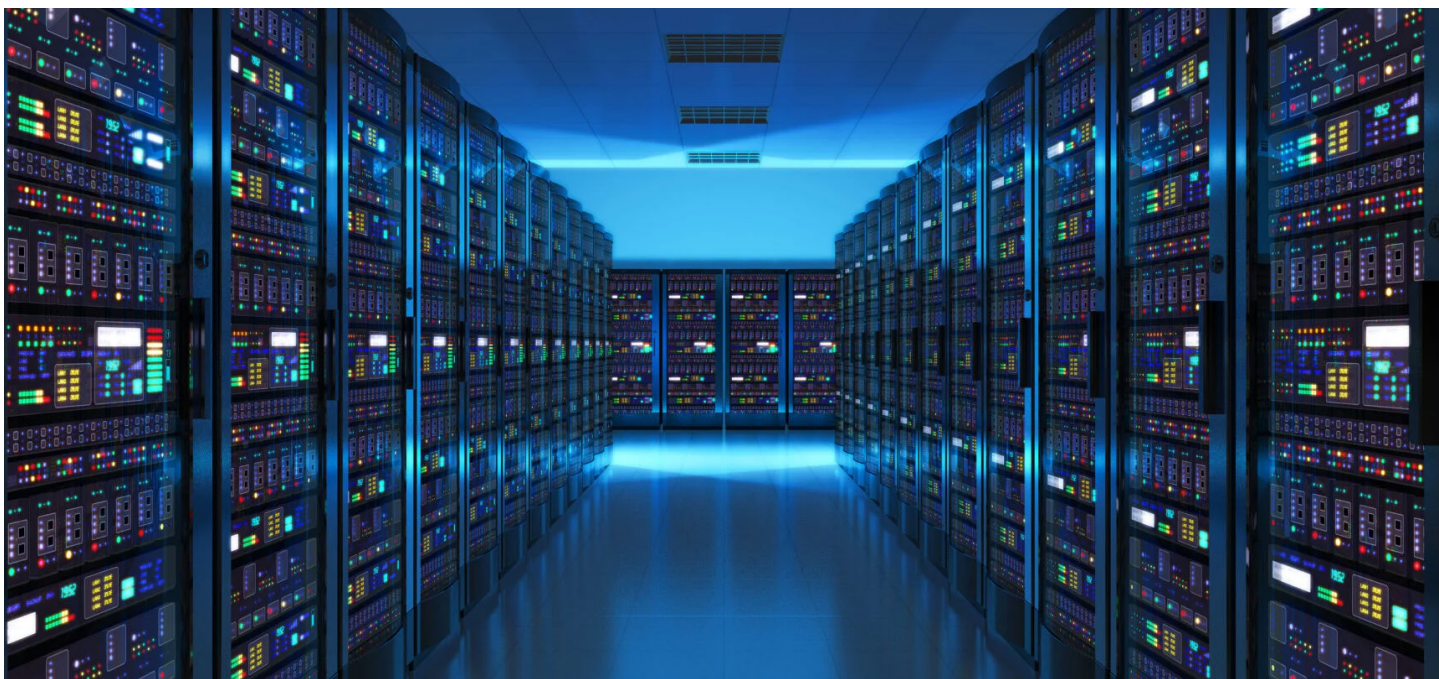
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|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Rep. Travis Moore [R] | Rep. Cody Mitchell [R] | Rep. Nathan Ballentine [R] | Rep. Jeffrey Bradley [R] |
| Rep. Gary Brewer [R] | Rep. Micajah Caskey [R] | Rep. Don Chapman [R] | Rep. Heather Crawford [R] |
| Rep. Sylleste Davis [R] | Rep. Adam Duncan [R] | Rep. Shannon Erickson [R] | Rep. Cally Forrest [R] |
| Rep. Craig Gagnon [R] | Rep. Gil Gatch [R] | Rep. Doug Gilliam [R] | Rep. Val Guest [R] |
| Rep. Kevin Hardee [R] | Rep. Charles Hartz [R] | Rep. William Hewitt [R] | Rep. Davey Hiott [R] |
| Rep. William Hixon [R] | Rep. Jeffrey Johnson [R] | Rep. Brian Lawson [R] | Rep. Randy Ligon [R] |
| Rep. Steven Long [R] | Rep. Phillip Lowe [R] | Rep. David Martin [R] | Rep. John McCravy [R] |
| Rep. Brandon Newton [R] | Rep. Weston Newton [R] | Rep. Melissa Oremus [R] | Rep. Fawn Pedalino [R] |
| Rep. Thomas Pope [R] | Rep. Luke Rankin [R] | Rep. Robby Robbins [R] | Rep. Carla Schuessler [R] |
| Rep. Heath Sessions [R] | Rep. Murrell Smith [R] | Rep. Marvin Smith [R] | Rep. Bill Taylor [R] |
| Rep. James Teeple [R] | Rep. David Vaughan [R] | Rep. Paul Wickensimer [R] | Rep. William Whitmire [R] |
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Details emerge about secretive Project Spero

TigerDC's \$3 billion data center sparks debate over environmental impact and tax incentives



Jerry Tang believes data centers provide the infrastructure to support life as we know it.

Google searches, Amazon purchases, photographs saved to the cloud, movies on streaming platforms — and, increasingly, artificial intelligence innovations, all depend on massive net-

works of highpowered computers.

Data centers also involve major financial investments that can mean significant tax revenues for local governments.

Tang is CEO of TigerDC, a New Yorkbased company that plans to build a data center in the Tyger River Industrial Park North, located along Highway 290 in Spartanburg County.

The project had been identified previously only by the code name Project Spero.

In November, Spartanburg County Council approved first reading of an ordinance that would allow a fee-in-lieu-of-taxes agreement reducing the company's property tax burden from the state's regular 10.5 percent rate to 4 percent.

Even with that incentive, TigerDC's close to \$3 billion investment would provide a hefty boost for public schools, fire departments, and other local government entities.

But weighing public opposition to the project, including a flood of comments on social media, council members decided to put off a second reading of the ordinance that would have revealed the company's name and other details.

Spartanburg Council Chairman Manning Lynch said on Jan. 22 that he does anticipate a vote at the next council meeting, that

was scheduled for Monday, Jan. 26, and isn't sure if there will be a vote in February, either.

"We are still trying to gather information as a group and individually," he said, adding that he hasn't made up his mind yet on whether to vote in favor of the tax incentive for Project Spero.

COMPANY LEADER GIVES OVERVIEW OF PROJECT SPERO PLANS

In the meantime, Tang decided to go ahead and provide information publicly about his company's plans.

"In terms of the physical structure, it will look a lot like a giant warehouse," he said in an interview with the HeraldJournal.

Unlike a warehouse for storing products to be sorted and later moved to retail chains or other industrial sites, the TigerDC plant will be packed with high-tech computers and other related equipment.

The company will hire about 50 employees, each earning six figure salaries, Tang said.

Development of the facility will also provide work for local contractors, he said.

DATA CENTERS HAVE DRAWN SCRUTINY OVER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Data centers require powerful HVAC cooling systems.

The overall energy consumption has made data centers a target of concern among those who worry about impacts on the environment.

In April, the Southern Environmental Law Center contacted the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services about possible air pollution impacts of the data center planned for development in the former Kohler plant on South Pine Street in Spartanburg.

That project, led by NorthMark Strategies, received a tax incentive package — the same reduction under consideration for Project Spero — from Spartanburg County Council.

Eric Allison is an administrator of the No Data Centers in Spartanburg Facebook group, which has attracted about 750 members.

He said he became interested in the issue after county council gave the go-ahead on the NorthMark project.

“I don’t think county council really knew what it had done” in approving tax incentives for NorthMark, Allison said.

He pointed to possible emissions from gas-powered back-up generators as well as noise pollution.

BIPARTISAN PUBLIC CONCERN HAS EMERGED ABOUT THE IMPACTS OF DATA CENTERS.

Frank Tiller, chairman of the Spartanburg County Republican Party, said he has been hearing from people about Project Spero. “They’re asking me, ‘What’s going on?’” he said. “I tell them, ‘I don’t know.’”

Tiller has been an advocate for greater transparency on the part of local government. And when it comes to Project Spero, he said he wants to know more about potential energy usage and noise caused by the constant operation of computer systems.

Michael Brown, a Democrat and former county council member, voiced opposition to Project Spero in a recent Herald-Journal op-ed.

Writing as president of the Spartanburg NAACP, he argued that data centers “demand staggering amounts of power” that “strain the electric grid and lead to higher energy costs that are passed directly onto everyday ratepayers.”

Brown also serves as president of the steering committee for the South Carolina Energy Justice Coalition. The group is calling for a moratorium on data centers until their potential impacts can be better understood by policymakers and community members.

“My intention is not to fear-monger,” Brown said. “But because we have developing examples of the kinds of challenges posed in other communities, I just want to make sure that the place I grew up in and continue to call home and love will be safest, healthiest place to live in and raise families in.”

CEO: DATA CENTERS HAVE “EVOLVED,” IMPACT WILL BE MINIMAL

Tang and others associated with Project Spero are working to assuage the public’s fears.

Tyger River Industrial Park’s owner, Pacolet Milliken, also controls Lockhart Power — the company that once supported Milliken & Company’s long-closed Lockhart Textile Mill in Union County.

Lockhart Power provides electricity for residential, commercial and industrial customers in Union, Spartanburg, Cherokee, Chester and York counties.

“Project Spero will not cause an increase in Lockhart’s customer rates,” said Bryan Stone, president of Lockhart Power, in a prepared statement.

Lockhart Power already has infrastructure in place at Tyger River Industrial Park, so TigerDC’s investment would “(result) in a more robust electrical grid,” Stone said.

Tang added that the facility’s “closed-loop” water recycling system will minimize water consumption.

On the whole, Tang said, many concerns about data centers are based on problems associated with older facilities.

“Data center design has evolved significantly over the past decade,” he said in a prepared statement. “Project Spero reflects those advances by addressing the concerns associated with older facilities and applying today’s best practices in efficiency, safety, and environmental protection.”

COMPANY ALSO AFFILIATED WITH LOCAL BIT-COIN MINING FACILITY

The TigerDC data center would be Tang’s second venture in Spartanburg County.

Another company he’s associated with — BV Power Alpha, LLC — opened a bitcoin mining operation in the Tyger River Industrial Park in 2022.

That project was hailed at the time by State Secretary Curtis Loftis as an important step “in supporting the growth of digital assets as an emerging industry. Having BV Power invest in our state further demonstrates that we are well-positioned to reap benefits not only for our people, but also for the larger state economy.”

Tang said the bitcoin operation has been successful so far and that the company hasn’t received complaints about environmental issues.

Tang has visited Spartanburg numerous times and said he is eager to launch another major investment in the county.

“I love the local community — the people are very nice,” he said.

COUNTY LEADER: KNOWING PROS AND CONS OF DATA CENTERS A MUST

Spartanburg County Council generally meets on the third Monday of each month.

Lynch said he isn’t sure when a vote on Project Spero will likely take place. But he said he recognizes that large-scale hightech computing facilities are part of a vast, fast-growing industry that county and state leaders need to grapple with from all angles.

“I really was just thinking to myself that most of the things we deal with are things we have experience with and understand,” he said. “This is so different. There’s so much passion on both sides. I’m not sure that I don’t think it might be even bigger and more important than any of us think.”

Baker Maultsby is a Transportation / Watchdog Reporter with The Greenville News.

Citizens Challenge Water Commission Appointment, Citing Conflicts of Interest

Three Spartanburg residents delivered pointed testimony to the Spartanburg Water Commission on January 27, following the delayed swearing-in of Dr. Octavia Amaechi, who won her seat in November's runoff election by a 21-point margin. Dr. Clemson Turregano, a Furman University professor, warned that having two Colliers International executives on the three-member board creates "textbook conditions for corruption." Charles Mann and Kathryn Harvey challenged the legitimacy of Commissioner Dillon Swayngim's appointment, which occurred at a hastily called December meeting where outgoing Commissioner Horace Littlejohn voted despite his term having expired. All three speakers called for transparency and demanded that one of the two Colliers executives resign to restore public trust.

REMARKS FROM KATHRYN HARVEY

I object to the appointment of Dillon Swayngim to the Commission of Public Works. The process of his appointment has created suspicion in the community.

I speak for myself, but also as someone who has been active in the local community for the last decade. People come to me with their concerns. The appointment of Dillon Swayngim is very concerning.

Voters had their say in November. Dr Amaechi received 14% more votes in the general election than Swayngim, and 21% more in the runoff. The message couldn't be clearer. Voters do not want Dillon Swayngim on the CPW, I believe largely due to the fact that he works for the same organization as Commissioner John Montgomery.

We, the people do not want two people who work for the same development company on a 3-person commission, especially since the work they do is directly impacted by decisions made regarding our water system.

Whenever 2 members of a 3 member commission are together, there is a quorum, and that meeting must be public. Even the best intended public servants who believe they are committed to never discussing CPW business in private cannot expect us to believe that this will not happen.

Why was Dr. Amaechi's swearing-in was delayed until today, more than 2 months after she was elected to serve?

Outgoing commissioners Littlejohn and Viney were sworn in at December meetings. In fact, the Spartanburg water website had commissioner photos with captions stating their terms end in November of their outgoing years.

We are concerned that Swayngim's appointment was made by Commissioners Montgomery and Littlejohn, at a special meeting convened less than 48 hours after the regular December 2025 meeting. Horace Littlejohn's term ended November 2025. Yet he voted at the regular December meeting and the special meeting.



Why was it so important to John Montgomery to have Horace Littlejohn's term extended beyond 6 years to January, in order to have John's coworker sit on the commission giving Colliers two votes of the three. We have to be asking the question, why? What is coming down the pipeline?

We are still going through the repercussions of a sheriff's department with slippery ethics. We need no implication of corruption with the CPW.

We must think future-forward. Our county is under much pressure, both in residential growth and business. There are concerns about the new data centers and their need for water and the cost to us. A new Duke energy rate hike was just approved.

Be sure of this - we are going to hold all of our public servants accountable. At every meeting, and then again at the ballot box.

People are paying attention. You work for us. This is a public utility, probably the most important public utility. We citizens intend to protect it. And if you think our efforts end here today, you are wrong. We will continue to challenge you at every turn, and keep the information about this wrongdoing, and about any decisions you make, front and center.

We deserve - we demand - open process, transparency, and good governance.

Thank you.

REMARKS FROM CHARLES MANN

Several years ago, I spoke before this Commission to ask that you protect the integrity of our water.

Today I speak to you to ask that you protect the integrity of the Commission itself.

In the eyes of the community, your constituents, this Commission held a hastily called meeting on December 4, 2025. The quorum for that meeting was you, Mr. Montgomery, and Mr. Horace Littlejohn. By all accounts, Mr. Littlejohn's term had expired. That is not just my opinion, it was also yours. At that time, the

water system's website stated that Mr. Littlejohn's term expired in November of 2025. However, after that December 4th meeting, your website removed the November and just had 2025.

In the community's eyes based on your public information... Mr. Littlejohn's vote was illegal, improper because he was no longer a legitimate member of the Commission. That vote in the eyes of community was illegitimate. As a result, Mr. Swayngim, your selection is illegitimate and you are an illegitimate member of this Commission.

I am sure you have found a legal loophole to say... Mr. Littlejohn was a member and the vote was legit.

But in the community's eyes it was not. It was what we call... a fast one.

So, Mr. Swayngim, as you are deemed illegitimate you must step down... you must remove yourself from this body. Any vote taken by this body with your vote will forever be tainted.

And Mr. Montgomery you must resign due to misuse of public trust. Every decision going forward with the two of you will be viewed as insider dealing and not trusted by the people of Spartanburg.

This is a disgrace in the face of public elections.

REMARKS FROM CLEMSON TURREGANO

My name is Dr. Clemson Turregano. I live in Spartanburg County, and like every resident here, I am a co-owner of Spartanburg Water.

I hold a PhD in American Legislative Process, an MPA, a Masters in Bureaucratic Politics, and a Masters in Strategy. As a professor at West Point, The Naval War College, Dickinson College, and now Furman University, I've studied corruption, taught corruption in democracies, and observed corruption across political systems around the world, including Serbia, Afghanistan, South Africa, Angola and many others.

I never expected to stand here and say: I am now witnessing the conditions for corruption in my own hometown.

Transparency International, The Global Coalition Against Corruption, defines corruption (a)is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.

But it doesn't always begin with envelopes of cash. It begins with structure. With cloudiness and lack of transparency. When conflicts of interest are dismissed as harmless—until they are not.

Corruption erodes trust. It weakens democracy. It distorts markets.

And once it enters a public institution, it does not stay contained. It spreads—from commissions, to councils, to cities, to counties.

That brings us to the December appointment and to Colliers International.

Colliers is a sophisticated real-estate and investment firm. Two of its executives—Commissioner Montgomery and Commissioner Swayngim—now sit together on a three-member Water Commission.

Inside Colliers, they work together. They strategize together. They

meet daily. And when they meet, even casually, they constitute a quorum—effectively excluding the third commissioner from the process. Who knows what might happen inside these informal sessions?

As SC House District 33 Representative Travis Moore rightly noted on Facebook about this very issue: Two people—regardless of who they are—should not have this much power.

And this is not about accusing individuals of wrongdoing. This is about recognizing three textbook conditions for corruption:

1. A vital public resource.
2. A powerful, undersized governing body.
3. And two commissioners whose private-sector incentives align perfectly with future water-intensive development.

Because water is not just a utility. It is the lifeblood of economic development. Data centers, logistics hubs, industrial expansion—all depend on massive water access. Colliers understands this better than most. And that is precisely why this structure is dangerous.

When the same firm that profits from industrial expansion helps control the gatekeeper of water allocation, the appearance of corruption becomes unavoidable. And appearance matters. Because trust, once contaminated, is harder to filter than any pollutant in our system.

Colliers is not a corrupt company. But brands are fragile. And no company benefits from being associated with a system that appears corrupt.

This malfeasance also corrupts the Water Commission. It casts shade over City Council, County Council, The Sewer District and every downstream decision that depends on water policy.

So what must we do?

- We must demand transparency, not last-minute meetings to elect friends.
- We must demand accessible bylaws, agendas, and documented decisions.
- We must demand a structure that protects the integrity of the process—Just like pure water, pure process matters.
- We must demand our lawmakers on the City and County Councils join us in officially requesting the resignations of one of the two Colliers Executives.

The only way to restore trust and remove the appearance of corruption is for either Mr. Montgomery or Mr. Swayngim to tender their resignation for the good of the process. Only then will Colliers, the water commission, the individuals involved and our process flow with justice.

With an informal quorum operating inside one of the areas largest industrial real estate firms, our process remains tainted with the faint odor of corruption.

- That is not good governance.
- That is not public service.
- And it is not acceptable for Spartanburg.

Thank you.

Take Action with the SPCDP

Civic Watch: Volunteer to Attend Local Public Meetings

Decisions that impact our community get made in public meetings, often with little public input in the room. SPCDP is building a small “Civic Watch” team to attend key local meetings, take notes for the party and the public, and sign up to speak during public comment when timely issues come up.

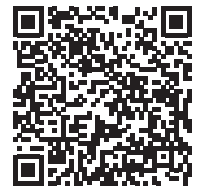
Sign up using the QR code to the right to attend a meetig (and get prep/talking points when needed).

Upcoming meetings to cover (times and procedures can change—watch for posted agendas and sign-up rules):



Learn More about Running for Office in 2026

2026 is an election year with major seats on the ballot in Spartanburg County, including statewide constitutional offices (Governor/Lt. Governor and more), U.S. Senate, U.S. House Districts 4 and 5, South Carolina House Districts 29–38, and key local races like Probate Judge, Auditor, Treasurer, and County Council Chair plus County Council Districts 2, 5, and 6—along with several special-purpose district boards. With primaries in June and the general election in November, now is the time to recruit and prepare candidates who reflect our communities. If you’ve ever considered running, complete this form to sign up to run for office.



20
26

Democratic
County Convention

Attend the Spartanburg County Democratic Convention

Join the Spartanburg County Democratic Party for their annual county convention on Saturday, March 7, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. All Democrats who are registered voters are welcome to participate. Help us elect county party leaders and organize to elect more Democrats.





SPARTANBURG COUNTY Voter Registration and Elections

John L. Baucom - Director

2026 Spartanburg County General Election Offices

| Office Title | Seats to Fill | Filing Deadline | Partisan (Y/N) |
|---|---------------|--|----------------|
| Governor & Lt. Governor | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| Secretary of State | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State Treasurer | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| Attorney General | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| Comptroller General | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State Superintendent of Education | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| Adjutant General | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| Commissioner of Agriculture | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| United States Senate | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| U.S. House of Representatives Dist 4 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| U.S. House of Representatives Dist 5 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 29 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 30 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 31 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 32 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 33 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 34 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 35 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 36 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 37 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| State House of Representatives Dist 38 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| Probate Judge | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| Auditor | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| County Treasurer | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| County Council Chair | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| County Council District 2 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| County Council District 5 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| County Council District 6 | 1 | March 30 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | Y |
| Soil & Water District Commission | 2 | July 15 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | N |
| Thicketty Creek Watershed Conservation Dist | 2 | File with SC SEC: (803)734-9060 | N |
| Woodruff Roebuck Water District Area B | 1 | August 17 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | N |
| Woodruff Roebuck Water District Area D | 1 | August 17 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | N |
| Sanitary Sewer District Commissioner | 3 | August 17 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | N |
| Cherokee Springs Fire District Commissioner | 3 | August 17 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | N |
| Hilltop Fire District Commissioner | 3 | August 17 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | N |
| Holly Springs Fire District Commissioner | 3 | August 17 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | N |
| Mayo Fire District Commissioner | 3 | August 17 th at 12:00 PM (noon) | N |
| Greenville County School District 18 | 1 | Contact Greenville County for Dates | N |

Upcoming Special Events

2026 Census Test

The 2026 Census Test will help improve how everyone is counted in the next census.

Your community has been selected to participate. The 2030 Census results will shape your community for the next decade—and a successful 2026 Census Test is a key step.

Starting in March, you can respond online, by phone, or by mail. In some areas, census takers will visit homes to count people in person.

Your response helps build a better census for the future.

We're testing improvements to:

- How people respond on their own.
- How we collect data in person.
- How we process the information we collect.



Play A Role!



Learn more:
census.gov/2026test



Local jobs are available in the test site areas.
Apply today at
census.gov/2026jobs.

Become a Census Taker



2026 Census Test jobs provide:

- ✓ \$17.75–\$19.50 per hour.
- ✓ Flexible hours.
- ✓ Job openings in Spartanburg.
- ✓ Training included.
- ✓ Weekly pay.

**Apply
Now!**

Go to:
census.gov/2026jobs
or scan the QR code



United States
Census
Bureau

For more information or help
applying, call:
1-833-893-2026

The U.S. Census Bureau
is an Equal Opportunity
Employer.



Women Giving FOR SPARTANBURG

invites you

to a Community Forum and Panel Discussion on

Educational Challenges Facing Spartanburg County's Students Living in Poverty



Wednesday, February 25th 2026

8:00am to 10:00am

The Barnet Room, Converse University

Use the QR code to RSVP, or let us know by emailing
info@womensgivingspartanburg.org

Women Giving for Spartanburg
is a special project of the



Spartanburg
County
Foundation

Presented By

Women Giving for Spartanburg
in Partnership with
Converse University



GVL Rapid Response Hotline

Upcoming Verifier Trainings

Stand With Our Immigrant Community:
Become a Volunteer Verifier



2025/2026

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| DEC 23 | Taylors 6PM |
| JAN 5 | Easley 630PM |
| JAN 13 | Greenville Downtown 4PM |
| JAN 21 | Greenville Furman 6PM |
| FEB 2 | Central-Clemson 630PM |
| FEB 10 | Greenville 7PM |
| FEB 18 | Greenville Berea 6PM |

Sign Up Here –



[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/MPFJCJ6A](https://tinyurl.com/MPFJCJ6A)

GVLHOTLINE@PROTON.ME



JESSE JACKSON JR.

U.S. Congress, Candidate

THE SOUTH CAROLINA *Fundraiser*

For Jesse Jackson Jr. & Brandon Brown

Saturday, February 7th

4:00 PM

Greenville, SC

\$100 Ticket | \$1,500 Host
tinyurl.com/Jackson-Brown



BRANDON BROWN

U.S. Senate, Candidate

JESSE JACKSON JR.
FOR U.S. CONGRESS

BRANDON BROWN
FOR U.S. SENATE

CAMPAIGN KICKOFF

Canvassing

LOCATIONS:
Greenville Spartanburg

Sign up via Mobilize for location


Saturday, February 21

COURTNEY McCLAIN
FOR CONGRESS


WOFFORD COLLEGE

A CANDID CONVERSATION

WITH ADAIR FORD BOROUGHS AND THE HON. SHERRI LYDON



Boroughs served as the U.S. attorney for South Carolina from 2022-25 during the Biden administration. She is now a professor at the University of South Carolina Joseph F. Rice School of Law.



Lydon is the U.S. district judge for the District of South Carolina. In 2018, during the first Trump administration, she became the first woman appointed by a president to serve as the U.S. attorney for South Carolina.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2026 | 6 P.M.
JEROME JOHNSON RICHARDSON THEATRE,
ROSALIND SALLENGER RICHARDSON
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

*A reception will follow the conversation.
The Candid Conversation series is sponsored by the
Wofford College President's Office.*

Calendar of Events



| | |
|---------------------|--|
| FEBRUARY 2 | Spartanburg Delegation Meeting, 366 North Church Street |
| FEBRUARY 3 | District 7 School Board Meeting |
| FEBRUARY 5 | A Candid Conversation at Wofford: 'The Rule of Law' |
| FEBRUARY 7 | Stop the Violence Workshops 11am-3pm CC Woodson Center |
| FEBRUARY 10 | Anti-ICE Community Training - Greenville |
| FEBRUARY 16 | Presidents Day Protest Falls Park Greenville + Downtown Spartanburg |
| FEBRUARY 16 | Spartanburg County Council Meeting |
| FEBRUARY 25 | Educational Panel with Women Giving (8:00 to 10:00 a.m., Converse University) |
| FEBRUARY TBD | Town Hall with Rep. Rosalyn Henderson Myers, Congressman Jackson & Rep. Jermaine Johnson |
| MARCH 7 | SPCDP Contention |
| MARCH 16-30 | Filing for 2026 Races |
| MARCH 28 | National No Kings Protest |
| APRIL 21 | SPCDP Spring Fundraiser, Chapman Cultural Center |
| MAY 29 | Blue Palmetto Dinner |
| MAY 30 | State Convention |
| JUNE 9 | Democratic Primary |