

# April Newsletter



## Tariffs are Taxes

FROM KATHRYN HARVEY



Trump put in place the largest tax increase on the American people yesterday. Meanwhile, House Republicans ran out of D.C. early this week so they won't have to defend Trump's tax hike. Trump claims he will revitalize the American industries, but during his last term, tariffs led to higher costs, massive uncertainty, and job loss. Markets have suffered their worst day in years due to the 25% tariff on auto-manufacturing enacted today, one of South Carolina's signature industries.

The automotive sector has been the cornerstone of South Carolina's economy for decades, yet Republican lawmakers from South Carolina refuse to hold Trump accountable. Instead, they celebrate him. "President Trump is working hard to ensure U.S. businesses are on a level playing field in the global economy," Representative William Timmons said in an emailed statement. "He is using every tool in his toolbox

to achieve that simple and incredibly appropriate objective."

Does he not care that the Upstate's leading industry is manufacturing? Does he know that Spartanburg County is home to 217 international companies? That 75,000 South Carolinians work for an auto company, and the two largest employers are in the Upstate? That South Carolina is the leader in tire production in the United States? Does he care that prices will rise and jobs will be lost?

South Carolina's economy is built on the delicate equilibrium of international trade and domestic production. Trump is disrupting this successful balance which could do anything and everything from raising prices, deter future investments, cause economic growth to suffer, reduce tax revenues, and cost hard-working South Carolinians their jobs.

If you're fed up with the people who are governing you, then change it. Run for something, speak up, now is the time. I'm hosting an info session on April 9th in Spartanburg, join me and let's do it together.

## Join the Liberty Fund.

### Your Monthly Gift Can Shape Spartanburg's Future

Thanks to your generosity, we've kicked off this year stronger than ever—but our work is far from finished. Help us fight the extreme Trump agenda at the local level by joining the Liberty Fund with a recurring contribution of \$25 or \$50 a month.

Your support powers the core of our work—funding operations, expanding outreach and communications, and supporting candidates through impactful GOTV efforts. Every monthly gift brings us closer to a stronger, more representative Spartanburg. That's the power of people-powered progress.



# SPCDP Update

## Recapping the County Convention



### New Party Leaders

We elected new leadership for the Spartanburg County Democratic Party at our County Convention on March 22. The new slate of SPCDP leadership includes the following:

- **Kathryn Harvey**  
Chair
- **David Petty**  
First Vice Chair
- **Angelia Edwards**  
Second Vice Chair
- **Caleb Mickler**  
Third Vice Chair
- **Clemson Turregano**  
Executive Committeeman
- **Michael Woodcock**  
Alternate Executive Committeeman
- **Erica Brown**  
Executive Committeewoman
- **Darcell Davis-Williams**  
Alternate Executive Committeewoman
- **Irene Benson**  
Secretary
- **Ursula Hicklin**  
Treasurer
- **Helen Bennett**  
Rules & Credentials

### Meet Our Executive Committee

The SPCDP is governed by our County Executive Committee, comprised of one member from every precinct. If you're interested in serving as a Precinct Captain or Alternate, scan the QR Code to the right to complete the application.

- **Robin Ballenger**, Carlisle Fosters Grove
- **Irene Benson**, Ben Avon Methodist
- **Lauren "Wren" Blackstone**, Woodland Heights Recreation Center
- **Laura Brooks**, Wade Hampton
- **Spencer Cadwell**, Trinity Methodist
- **Darcell Davis-Williams**, Roebuck Bethlehem
- **Mary Deku**, Jesse Bobo Elementary
- **Gina Dragt**, Eastside Baptist
- **Caroline and Tony Ford**, Abner Creek Baptist
- **Philip Hodge**, New Prospect
- **Tammie Holbert**, Mt. Moriah Baptist
- **Dianne Granger Jackson**, Wellford
- **Wilma Jackson Moore**, Beacon
- **Mike Johnson**, Lyman
- **Thomas Kosmata**, Landrum
- **Riley Lanier**, Cornerstone Baptist
- **Justin Lawrentz**, Holly Springs-Motlow
- **Will Lovett**, Ben Avon Methodist
- **Caroline Lybrand**, Hope
- **Missy McChesney**, Woodruff Leisure Center
- **Lewis Mills**, Trinity Presbyterian
- **Kristie Oliver**, Beech Springs Intermediate
- **Greg Reels**, Lake Bowen Baptist
- **Tracy Regan**, Cudd Memorial
- **Alane Russell**, Broome High School
- **Danny Shelton**, Roebuck Bethlehem
- **Johnny Smith**, Reidville Elementary
- **Michael Woodcock**, Gable Middle School
- **Keirra Young**, Fairgrounds



# Our Path Forward

## *Strategic Vision & Planning*

Over the past three months, the Spartanburg County Democratic Party has undertaken its first-ever strategic planning initiative, beginning shortly after the 2024 election. Through this process, we've gathered insights from community leaders, candidates, elected officials, and over 50 SPCDP volunteers. These collective voices have shaped the Party's new vision and mission—our guiding compass for the next election cycle and well beyond. This holistic approach ensures that our forward momentum is not simply reactionary but deeply rooted in the aspirations of our community. We are building a blueprint for long-term success, not just a single campaign.

### Vision

**Creating a community where everyone is represented in their local government through electing Democrats, governing with balance, and lifting voices.**

Our vision emphasizes inclusivity and balanced governance, ensuring every voice is heard and empowered. We strive for a government that reflects Spartanburg County's diverse perspectives, fosters collaboration, and prioritizes equitable access to opportunities, resources, and civic engagement

### Mission

**To engage and inform the community around progressive issues, mobilize voters, and enlist and enable quality candidates to win elections.**

Our mission is to recruit, mentor, and equip high-quality candidates while mobilizing voters through targeted outreach and advocacy. We provide year-round training, messaging workshops, and policy education to build a strong Democratic presence in Spartanburg County, ensuring both candidates and voters are informed, engaged, and empowered.

### Key Drivers of Strategy

We've identified eight strategic principles that will guide every action, campaign, and partnership. Each of our upcoming initiatives—whether it's a countywide voter registration drive, an issue-based forum, or a training workshop for future candidates—will reflect these core tenets.

- We seek balanced governance
- We advocate through community voice
- We win through compassion and strength
- We hold ourselves and our elected officials accountable
- We connect and engage with voters where they are
- We educate the community on the local impact of politics
- We inspire, recruit and enable progressive candidates
- We plan thoroughly and execute boldly



# Federal News



## Corey Booker Breaks Filibuster Record

25 hours and four minutes! That's how long US Senator Cory Booker spoke truth to power on the Senate floor, sounding the alarm about the "grave and urgent" danger that Trump poses to democracy and the American people. He has now broken the record set by South Carolina's own Strom Thurmond, who spoke for just over 24 hours to try and block the Civil Rights Act of 1957. Now, instead of standing in the way of progress, Senator Booker is standing up for it.

## Tariffs will be Catastrophic for the Upstate

Markets have suffered their worst day in years due to the 25% tariff on auto-manufacturing enacted last week, affecting one of South Carolina's signature industries.

The automotive sector has been the cornerstone of South Carolina's economy for decades, yet Republican lawmakers from our state refuse to hold Trump accountable. Instead, they celebrate him. "President Trump is working hard to ensure U.S. businesses are on a level playing field in the global economy," Representative William Timmons said in an emailed statement. "He is using every tool in his toolbox to achieve that simple and incredibly appropriate objective."

Does he not care that the Upstate's leading industry is manufacturing? Does he know that Spartanburg County is home to 217 international companies? That 75,000 South Carolinians work for an auto company, and the two largest employers are in the Upstate? That South Carolina is the leader in tire production in the United States? Does he care that prices will rise and jobs will be lost?

## Federal Grand Jury Convenes to Investigate Spartanburg County Sheriff, Sources Say

According to a recent FITSNews report, a federal grand jury is set to convene in an investigation involving the Spartanburg County Sheriff. While few details have been made public, sources close to the matter suggest that the inquiry may center on allegations of misconduct or mismanagement within the sheriff's office. The U.S. Attorney's Office has not issued any official statement on the proceedings, leaving many Spartanburg residents with questions about the scope and seriousness of the probe.

In the meantime, no charges have been filed, and it remains unclear whether the investigation will ultimately lead to criminal indictments or other disciplinary measures. Observers have noted that federal grand juries often operate under strict confidentiality, meaning specific information about the case may not surface until the process concludes. Local leaders and community members are watching closely, aware that any findings could have significant implications for public trust in law enforcement.

## Senate Republicans' Budget Plans to Add \$5 Trillion to the Budget Over 10 Years

Senate Republicans have passed a budget framework that could add \$5 trillion to the federal deficit over the next decade, largely by extending Trump-era tax cuts and introducing new reductions. Critics warn the plan relies on unrealistic projections and could significantly increase the national debt.



# Contact Your Representatives

Holding our elected officials accountable is essential to protecting our communities and values. Contact your representatives often to demand they stand up against harmful state and federal actions.

## Federal Representatives

### Senate

**Sen. Lindsey Graham**

*Senior Senator*

(202) 224-5972

[lgraham.senate.gov](mailto:lgraham.senate.gov)

**Sen. Tim Scott**

*Junior Senator*

(202) 224-6121

[scott.senate.gov](mailto:scott.senate.gov)

### House of Representatives

**Rep. William Timmons**

*4th Congressional District*

(202) 225-6030

[timmons.house.gov](mailto:timmons.house.gov)

**Rep. Ralph Norman**

*5th Congressional District*

(202) 225-5501

[norman.house.gov](mailto:norman.house.gov)

## State Representatives

### State Senate

**Tom Corbin**

*Senate District 5*

(864) 834-9915

[corbinlawn@bellsouth.net](mailto:corbinlawn@bellsouth.net)

**Shane R. Martin**

*Senate District 13*

(864) 804-8499

[shane@senatormartin.com](mailto:shane@senatormartin.com)

**Josh Kimbrell**

*Senate District 11*

(864) 553-0606

[josh@exodusaircraft.com](mailto:josh@exodusaircraft.com)

**Harvey S. Peeler, Jr.**

*Senate District 14*

(864) 489-3766

[hpeeler@peelerco.com](mailto:hpeeler@peelerco.com)

**Roger Nutt**

*Senate District 12*

(864) 706-1557

[roger@rogernutt.com](mailto:roger@rogernutt.com)

### State House of Representatives

**Dennis Moss**

*House District 29*

(864) 487-2121

[dennismoss@schouse.gov](mailto:dennismoss@schouse.gov)

**W. Scott Montgomery, IV**

*House District 32*

(864) 237-4499

[scott@votescottmontgomery.com](mailto:scott@votescottmontgomery.com)

**William “Bill” Chumley**

*House District 35*

(864) 303-2726

[billchumley1@gmail.com](mailto:billchumley1@gmail.com)

**Josiah Magnuson**

*House District 38*

(864) 420-7933

[j@magnusonsc.com](mailto:j@magnusonsc.com)

**M. Brian Lawson**

*House District 30*

(864) 809-3501

[blawsonsc30@gmail.com](mailto:blawsonsc30@gmail.com)

**Travis Moore**

*House District 33*

(864) 680-0441

[TAMoore2002@gmail.com](mailto:TAMoore2002@gmail.com)

**Robert J. Harris**

*House District 36*

(864) 542-5036

[rob@harrisforsc.com](mailto:rob@harrisforsc.com)

**Rosalyn Henderson-Myers**

*House District 31*

(803) 212-6965

[rozm2012@gmail.com](mailto:rozm2012@gmail.com)

**Sarita Edgerton**

*House District 34*

(864) 381-8225

[saritaforsc@gmail.com](mailto:saritaforsc@gmail.com)

**Steven Long**

*House District 37*

(864) 978-3104

[stevenlong4@gmail.com](mailto:stevenlong4@gmail.com)

## U.S. Congress

To find your federal representative, scan the QR code to the right.



## State Legislature

To find your state legislators, scan the QR code to the right.





# State News

## SC House GOP Passes First-in-the-Nation Trump-Style DEI ban.

That was the message Republicans sent moments after passing H. 3927 on Wednesday, April 2. Democrats fought back during a debate on the House floor that lasted over 8 hours – only to have Republicans put up an amendment that completely rewrote the bill near the very end of the debate. This means that the legislation passed by the House circumvented the basic steps of the legislative process – public testimony, discussion by the Education and Public Works Committee, a study of its fiscal impact – instead receiving just 6 minutes of debate before being voted on. Rep. Hamilton Grant (D-Columbia) told the Post and Courier: “I’ve seen the fiscal impact on the original bill. I’ve seen the fiscal impact on the amended bill. This bill? I don’t know how much it’s going to cost. Nobody knows.”

## SC Republicans Want to Raise Your Taxes

Don’t let this get lost amidst the debate on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Last week, Republicans unveiled a ‘flat tax’ scheme that would raise state income taxes on 60% of South Carolinians. Led by Greenville’s Rep Bruce Bannister, the flat tax has stalled due to pushback this week, but they are determined to get it passed before the end of session. Let your reps hear from you NOW.

## Family-Planning Up for Debate this Week

These bills will shape the future of paid parental leave and reproductive rights in South Carolina. Click the links below to urge your legislators to:

- Support Senate Bill 11 to expand paid parental leave for state employees.
- Support House Bill 3108, which would permit doulas to be covered and reimbursed through health insurance.
- Oppose Senate Bill 32, which would funnel taxpayer dollars into misleading crisis pregnancy centers.

## Urge Lawmakers in the State to Fight for Medicaid

Federal budget proposals threaten major cuts to Medicaid, which would severely affect SC’s ability to serve children, the disabled and the elderly, unless the General Assembly used state funds to offset federal cuts. Learn more about medicaid expansion in SC and what we can do to educate our state legislators on these issues [here](#).

## Labor Unions Report Uneven Wage and Job Growth in South Carolina

A recent report commissioned by the AFL-CIO reveals that despite robust employment growth in South Carolina since the COVID-19 pandemic, one in five workers still earn less than \$15 per hour, a figure exceeding both national and regional averages. The study highlights that many of the state’s fastest-growing occupations, such as home health aides and warehouse stock movers, offer wages below the state median of \$20.30 per hour. Additionally, the report points to a geographic disparity in job creation, with over 77% of new positions concentrated in Charleston, Greenville, Myrtle Beach, and Columbia, leaving rural areas with fewer opportunities and increased commuting challenges.

## ‘Hands Off’ Rally in Spartanburg Draws Over 500 Protesters Opposing Trump Policies

On April 5, 2025, approximately 500 protesters gathered in Spartanburg for the “Hands Off” anti-Trump rally, expressing opposition to President Donald Trump’s policies and political influence. The event featured speeches from local activists and community leaders who criticized Trump’s actions and advocated for progressive policies. Organizers emphasized the importance of civic engagement and encouraged attendees to participate in upcoming elections to effect change.

The rally proceeded peacefully, with participants carrying signs and chanting slogans opposing Trump’s agenda. We extend a special thank you to Resist Spartanburg for helping to organize the event.

# GOP Reps: Shame. On. You.

BY STACEY MARS

It is a shameful reflection on the values of their party that Republicans in the SC House of Representatives have chosen to take their marching orders from Donald Trump and exclude anyone who does not look or act like them with their so-called merit-based, anti-DEI bill, H.3927. The GOP representatives from the Upstate, representatives Bannister, Huff, Vaughan, and Wickensimer decided that conformity is preferred instead of diversity; that prejudice and partiality are preferred instead of equity; and that omission, elimination, and exclusion are preferred instead of inclusion.

These four representatives have told their neighbors in Greenville and in South Carolina that if they are not straight, white males they do not matter. By ensuring that workplaces, schools and institutions of higher education are not diverse, equitable, and inclusive, they are proving that they do not care about women, people of color, disabled people, and our LGBTQ+ community. They are told that their very existence means nothing with the passing of this bill.

We live in a state that openly celebrates the “Lost Cause” but that refuses to recognize the history of the Suffrage movement, the Civil Rights movement, and so many other movements that demanded justice and equal rights for all.

Reps. Bannister, Huff, Vaughan, and Wickensimer support this bill because they believe that their demographic is being “illegally discriminated against”. The logic is laughable at best and downright shameful at worst.

Rep. Chandra Dillard proclaimed on the floor of the House that “colleges and universities are a microcosm of America which is diversity, equity, and inclusion, what we do matters! We have sent young people into a mental health spiral. They see it as an attack on their very opportunities,



their future, and what they will be able to do as they matriculate through higher education.” This hateful bill will reduce opportunities for students and make them rethink coming to South Carolina to further their studies. Shame on our representatives.

Rep. Wendell Jones’ amendments showed how the bill violated the Constitution by denying freedom of speech and academic freedom, the equal protection clause of 14th amendment, and a clause in the Constitution that says that we cannot go back and retroactively cancel contracts that are made in good faith. The bill aims to penalize businesses that have DEI programs and tell them that they cannot do business in the state if they decide to keep these programs. Businesses will now rethink moving to South Carolina which will cause a loss of job creation because of this hateful bill. Shame on our representatives.

In a video update, Representative Jones mused that “our leadership is allowing Washington to dictate everything we do and have abdicated their responsibility to lead. Our leadership is allowing Washington to dictate EVERYTHING they do and it does not match our state.” I agree, Rep. Jones. GOP Representatives Bannister, Huff, Vaughan, and Wickensimer have abdicated their responsibility to their neighbors in Greenville by allowing Donald Trump to dictate everything they do. Shame on Rep. Bruce Bannister. Shame on Rep. Chris Huff. Shame on Rep. David Vaughan. Shame on Rep. Paul Wickensimer.

SHAME. ON. YOU.

The fight is not over though. This shameful bill will now move to the state Senate. So, let’s roll up our sleeves and start making calls and writing letters urging our senators to vote NO on this bill.

**STACEY MARS** is the newly-elected Chair of the Greenville County Democratic Party.



## Subscribe to Our Substack

Subscribe to our Substack for exclusive updates, in-depth analysis, and the latest news on Democratic efforts in Spartanburg County. Get event announcements, volunteer opportunities, and insights straight to your inbox—because staying engaged starts with staying informed!



# Take Action

## Step Up to Lead Your Precinct

Precinct development is the backbone of any effective grassroots “Get Out the Vote” (GOTV) strategy. By organizing and engaging voters at the neighborhood level, precinct leaders serve as vital links between the local party, candidates, and the community. They help recruit volunteers, share critical election information, register new voters, and conduct voter outreach that brings political issues directly to people’s doorsteps. Through this direct engagement, precinct leaders build trusted, lasting relationships that empower voters and volunteers, and strengthen the overall impact of the Spartanburg County Democratic Party’s GOTV efforts. If you’re interested in serving as a Precinct Captain, scan the QR Code to the right to complete the application.



## Run for Office in 2025

Local races have a profound impact on our communities, from shaping school policies to deciding how our towns and cities grow. Many of these nonpartisan seats, particularly school boards, have become targets for conservative extremists in recent years (e.g. Moms for Liberty). Recruiting candidates who share our Democratic values ensures that every level of government works to build a better Spartanburg County, protect public education, and support an equitable and inclusive future for all residents. These races also help us create a strong candidate pipeline for future races.

- **All School Districts**  
School Board
- **Town of Campobello**  
Mayor and Town Council
- **Town of Central Pacolet**  
Mayor and Town Council
- **City of Chesnee**  
Mayor and City Council
- **Town of Cowpens**  
Town Council
- **Town of Duncan**  
Mayor and Town Council
- **City of Greer**  
City Council and CPW
- **City of Inman**  
City Council
- **City of Landrum**  
Mayor and City Council
- **Town of Lyman**  
Mayor and Town Council
- **Town of Pacolet**  
Mayor and City Council
- **Town of Reidville**  
Mayor and Town Council
- **City of Spartanburg**  
Mayor, City Council, CPW
- **City of Wellford**  
City Council
- **City of Woodruff**  
City Council
- **Gowensville Fire District**  
Commissioner

If you’re interested in running or learning more, scan the QR code to the right to join our “**So You Want to Run for Office?**” event on April 9, where potential candidates can learn about campaign toolkits, fundraising, voter outreach, and more.



## Follow the Spartanburg Dems!

Stay connected with the Spartanburg County Democratic Party for the latest updates, events, and ways to get involved. Follow us on social media and help us build a stronger, more engaged community!

- **Facebook:** @spartanburgdemocrats
- **Twitter/X:** @SpartanburgDem
- **Instagram:** @spartanburgdemocrats
- **Tik Tok:** @spartanburgdems
- **Bluesky:** @spartanburgdems.bsky.social







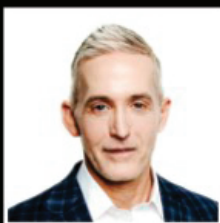
WOFFORD COLLEGE

---

# A CANDID CONVERSATION

**WITH TREY GOWDY AND BAKARI SELLERS  
MODERATED BY BILLY WEBSTER**

Join us for the first installation of A Candid Conversation, a discussion featuring perspectives from both sides of the aisle to foster civil discourse and share critical information.



**Trey Gowdy** is the host of Sunday Night in America with Trey Gowdy on Fox News and The Trey Gowdy Podcast. Gowdy served four terms as a U.S. representative for the SC-04 district after work as a federal prosecutor and a district attorney in Spartanburg and Cherokee counties.



**Bakari Sellers** is an attorney with Strom Law Firm LLC, a political commentator and the host of the Bakari Sellers Podcast. At 22, Sellers became the youngest African American elected official in the nation when he was elected S.C. representative for House District 90 in 2006.



**Billy Webster** was the former chief of staff to U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley and served as assistant to President Bill Clinton.

**APRIL 29 | 6 P.M.  
JEROME JOHNSON RICHARDSON THEATRE**

*A cocktail reception will follow the discussion.  
Sponsored by the President's Office.*





AND YOUNG DEMOCRATS  
OF SPARTANBURG COUNTY

PROUDLY PRESENT

# FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM

A NIGHT WITH

Rep. Justin J. Pearson

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CELEBRATING THE  
ACHIEVEMENTS OF

Young Democrats

IN SPARTANBURG COUNTY

PURCHASE TICKETS AT

THURSDAY, MAY 29  
6:00 TO 8:00 P.M.

CHAPMAN CULTURAL CENTER  
200 E ST JOHN ST, SPARTANBURG



Community nominations are now open to recognize and celebrate the outstanding contributions of young people (aged 40 & under) from our region who are working to make our community better. Nominate someone you know by scanning the QR code to the right.





# Calendar of Events

**APRIL 9**

## **“So You Want to Run for Office” Candidate Info Sessionw**

**6:00 PM – SPCDP Headquarters**

Join the Spartanburg County Democratic Party and our Emerge South Carolina Executive Director, Allison Terracio, for an information session on running for office and upcoming races. Learn what it takes to run for local and statewide races in the current political climate.



**APRIL 12**

## **Fundraiser with Indivisible SC**

**9:00 AM to 2:00 PM – Grateful Brew, Greenville**

IUSC is hosting a fundraiser and blood drive for One Blood to help increase the supply and save lives.



**APRIL 21**

## **Candidate Info Session with Upstate Action Alliance & League of Women Voters**

**5:30 to 7:30 PM – SPCDP Headquarters**

**APRIL 23**

## **Mahjong Class for Dem Women at SPCDP HQ**

**5:30 to 7:30 PM – SPCDP Headquarters**

Join the Spartanburg Dem Dames for a Mahjong class at the SPCDP Headquarters (505 East Main St.). We'll gather to discuss organizing the Spartanburg Dem Dames as a group, and learn a new skill playing Mahjong! Tickets are \$45 and will include wine and food. Proceeds will benefit future Dem Dames activities.



**APRIL 29**

## **A Candid Conversation with Bakari Sellers and Trey Gowdy**

**6:00 PM – Jerome Johnson Richardson Theater, Wofford**

**MAY 7**

## **SPCDP Monthly Meeting**

**6:00 PM – Dr. T.K. Gregg Community Center**

**MAY 29**

## **Fight for Freedom Fundraiser Supporting Young Dems, with special Guest Rep. Justin J. Pearson**

**6:00 to 8:00 PM – Chapman Cultural Center**



**MAY 31**

## **SCDP Convention – Columbia, SC**

[SPARTANBURGDEMOCRATS.COM](http://SPARTANBURGDEMOCRATS.COM) | (864) 585-6957 | [INFO@SPARTANBURGDEMOCRATS.COM](mailto:INFO@SPARTANBURGDEMOCRATS.COM)

PAID FOR BY THE SPARTANBURG COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY. NOT AUTHORIZED BY ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE'S COMMITTEE.