

SPARTANBURG DEMOCRATS Monthly Newsletter

April 2026 Edition



Historic Momentum for South Carolina Democrats



Dear Friends,

This year, South Carolina Democrats have done something truly historic: for the first time in 50 years, we have a Democratic candidate running in every State House seat across South Carolina.

That is more than an exciting milestone. It is a powerful statement about who we are and what we believe. It means

Democrats are showing up in every part of this state to offer voters a choice, to share our values, and to make clear that no community should be taken for granted or left behind.

This moment deserves to be celebrated.

We also know that contesting races matters. When Democrats run, it strengthens the entire ticket. In 2020, the presence of Democratic candidates in state legislative races meaningfully increased Democratic vote share up and down the ballot. Simply having a Democratic candidate on the ballot increased turnout for the top of the ticket by anywhere from 0.4% to 2.3% compared to districts where Republican candidates ran unopposed. That means every race we contest helps build visibility, engagement, and momentum for our party.

Here in Spartanburg County, we were proud to do our part. The

Spartanburg County Democratic Party paid more than \$4,000 in filing fees to help Democratic candidates get on the ballot in 2026. We made that investment because we believe in building a stronger bench, supporting candidates at every level, and ensuring that voters across South Carolina have a Democratic choice on Election Day.

Now, we need your help to keep that work going.

One of the most important ways you can support the Spartanburg County Democratic Party is by joining our Liberty Fund, our monthly giving program. These recurring contributions provide the steady support we need to sustain party operations, strengthen our local infrastructure, and help candidates out in the field as they build their campaigns.



Monthly giving allows us to plan ahead, respond quickly, and continue making strategic investments in the future of our county and our state. It helps keep our office running, supports voter outreach and organizing, and ensures we can continue standing with candidates who are willing to step up and serve.

This historic year is a reminder that progress does not happen by accident. It happens because people decide to show up, invest, and build together.

Thank you for standing with the Spartanburg County Democratic Party. Thank you for believing in the power of local organizing. And thank you for helping us sustain this work through the Liberty Fund as we support Democratic candidates and continue building for 2026 and beyond.

In solidarity,

Kathryn Harvey

Chair, Spartanburg County Democratic Party

Rahm Emanuel Kicks Off Education Tour in Spartanburg

Rahm Emanuel launched his "Education Tour" in Spartanburg April 1 organized by Chair, Kathryn Harvey. The former Ambassador to Japan visited SCC, USC Upstate and Wofford where he discussed the current political landscape with Craig Melvin as part of Wofford's Candid Conversation series.



State Legislative Updates

Key bills moving through Columbia and what they mean for South Carolina families, freedoms, and the future of our state.



Bills of Concern

Republican lawmakers continue to push legislation that would limit personal freedom, target vulnerable communities, and make life harder for working families.

S. 1095 – TOTAL ABORTION BAN

One of the most alarming developments this session is Senate Bill 1095, introduced by Senator Richard Cash, which would impose a near-total abortion ban in South Carolina. Like earlier proposals, the bill would ban abortion in almost all cases, including cases of rape and incest, restrict access to medication abortion, and punish those who help someone seek care. This bill is part of a broader effort by Republican lawmakers to strip away personal freedom and reproductive healthcare access.

H. 4061 – SNAP RESTRICTION BILL

Lawmakers are also continuing attacks on working families through H. 4061, a bill that would restrict how SNAP benefits can be used. Supporters are framing the bill as reform, but opponents argue it would make it harder for struggling families to put food on the table while doing nothing to address the real causes of hunger and poverty.

H. 4764 – IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT MANDATE

On immigration, H. 4764 has advanced to the Senate. This proposal would require local jails to partner with federal immigration authorities, forcing local governments to use their own staff and resources to carry out federal immigration enforcement. Critics warn that this would place new burdens on local communities while increasing fear and mistrust in immigrant communities.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION – ATTACK ON MARRIAGE EQUALITY

South Carolina Republicans are also continuing their assault on LGBTQ rights. A newly introduced concurrent resolution calls for overturning *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the Supreme Court decision that legalized same-sex marriage nationwide, and promotes a discriminatory definition of marriage that excludes same-sex couples. It is a direct attack on marriage equality and on the dignity and freedom of same-sex couples and families across our state.

H. 4756 – ANTI-TRANSGENDER BATHROOM BILL

At the same time, H. 4756, an anti-transgender bathroom bill, remains under consideration in the House. Debate on the bill has been paused until April 14, but advocates are urging lawmakers to reject the Senate's more extreme amendments. This bill remains part of a coordinated effort to marginalize transgender South Carolinians and score political points at their expense.

Encouraging Developments

At the same time, several proposals this session offer a more constructive vision focused on conservation, affordability, and long-term stewardship.

H. 5069 – SOUTH CAROLINA PROTECTED LANDS ACT

There were also a few encouraging developments this month. Representative Travis Moore’s South Carolina Protected Lands Act, H. 5069, advanced out of committee with a unanimous vote and now heads to the House floor. The bill would establish official state goals for land and water protection and marks an important step forward for conservation efforts in South Carolina.

S. 867 AND S. 902 – COMPETING DATA CENTER BILLS

Energy policy also remains a major focus at the State House. The Senate held hearings on two competing data center bills, S. 867 and S. 902, as lawmakers debate how to manage rapid growth in large-scale energy users. No formal action was taken last week, but amendments discussed for S. 867 appear to move in a better direction by addressing loopholes and concerns raised by consumer and environmental advocates.

H. 5484 – ENERGY AFFORDABILITY ACT

Meanwhile, Representative Jermaine Johnson introduced the Energy Affordability Act, H. 5484, which would create consumer and environmental protections for data center development, promote energy efficiency, and explore lower electric rates for low-income households. Supporters see it as a more comprehensive and forward-looking approach to energy policy in South Carolina.

H. 5216 – COMMERCIAL ENERGY BUILDING CODES BILL

Another positive step came with H. 5216, a bill to update commercial energy conservation standards, which advanced from the House Labor, Commerce, and Industry Committee to the House floor. Supporters say the proposal would modernize building standards and help create a smarter, cleaner, and more resilient energy future for South Carolina.

H. 4270 AND S. 983 – EVICTION RECORD SEALING BILLS

Two bills moving in Columbia could offer a meaningful step forward for housing fairness in South Carolina. H. 4270 in the House and S. 983 in the Senate would address a longstanding problem: eviction filings remain on public court records for life, even when a person was never ultimately evicted or when years have passed since the filing. As a result, many South Carolinians continue to face major barriers to securing safe and stable housing. These bills would allow eviction filings to be removed from public court records after five years, giving people a fairer chance to move forward. At a time when so many families are struggling with housing costs, these proposals represent a practical and compassionate reform.

Taken together, these bills reflect two very different visions for our state: one focused on restriction, division, and political attacks, and another focused on conservation, affordability, fairness, and long-term growth.

U.S. Congress

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



State Legislature

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



Download the SC State House App

Gain easy access to information from the South Carolina State Legislature on the go! Review bills filed in the State House and Senate, watch video recordings, find your legislator, and keep track of key legislation.



Meet Your 2026 Democratic Candidates

Learn More About the Democrats Stepping Up to Serve

U.S. Senate Candidates



DR. ANNIE ANDREWS

Dr. Annie Andrews is a pediatrician and public health advocate running for U.S. Senate to fight for South Carolina families, kids, and working people who've been left behind by politics-as-usual in Washington. Learn more or get involved at drannieandrews.com.



BRANDON BROWN

Brandon Brown is a fifth-generation South Carolinian, former higher-ed vice president, and longtime advocate for expanding opportunity, running for U.S. Senate on a platform of protecting democracy and investing in working families. Learn more at brandonpbrown.com.



KYLE FREEMAN

Kyle Freeman is a logistics professional and son of a military family, running for U.S. Senate to restore honesty, integrity, and accountability in government and to champion working families. Learn more at kylefreemanforsenate.com.



South Carolina Gubernatorial Candidates



DR. JERMAINE JOHNSON

State Representative Jermaine Johnson is running for governor to invest in infrastructure, mental health, education, and economic opportunity in communities that have been overlooked for too long. Learn more at johnsonforsc.com.



MULLINS MCLEOD

Charleston attorney Mullins McLeod is running for governor with a focus on smart economic growth, accountability in state government, and a fairer future for South Carolina families. Learn more at mcleodscgov.com.



BILLY WEBSTER

Former White House staffer, education leader, and businessman Billy Webster is running for governor with a focus on expanding opportunity, strengthening public education, and bringing experienced leadership to state government. Learn more at websterforsc.com



South Carolina Superintendent of Education Candidates



LISA ELLIS

Veteran educator and 2022 Democratic nominee Lisa Ellis is running again for Superintendent of Education to strengthen public schools, support teachers, and ensure every child learns in a safe, well-resourced classroom. Learn more at ellisforsc.com.



SYLVIA WRIGHT

Lifelong educator Sylvia Wright is running for Superintendent of Education to restore the promise of free, high-quality public education for all students in South Carolina. Learn more at wright2026sc.com.



U.S. House Candidates



COURTNEY MCCLAIN – SOUTH CAROLINA’S 4TH DISTRICT (SC-04)

Spartanburg native and communications professional Courtney McClain is running in SC-04 to deliver fresh, local leadership in Washington and to make government work for everyday South Carolinians. Learn more at mcclainforsc.com.



ANDREW CLOUGH – SOUTH CAROLINA’S 5TH DISTRICT (SC-05)

Andrew Clough is an airline worker, stepfather, and community advocate running in SC-05 to put working families first and bring practical, people-focused leadership to Congress. Learn more at cloughforsc5.com.



MALLORY DITTMER – SOUTH CAROLINA’S 5TH DISTRICT (SC-05)

Brand strategist and small-business champion Mallory Dittmer is running in SC-05 to lower the temperature in politics and unite Democrats, Republicans, and independents around common-sense solutions. Learn more at dittmerforcongress.com.



South Carolina House Candidates



MARINA FRANCO

Candidate for SC House District 29



VIRGINIA MCLEAN

Candidate for SC House District 36



STEPHANIE HOLSTEIN

Candidate for SC House District 30



SETH SAUER-HART

Candidate for SC House District 37



ROSALYN HENDERSON-MYERS

Candidate for SC House District 31



TAMMY HAHN

Candidate for SC House District 38



MONIER ABUSOFT

Candidate for SC House District 31



Spartanburg County Council Candidates



IRENE BENSON

Candidate for SC House District 32



LEKESA WHITNER

Candidate for County Council Chair



CLEMSON TURREGANO

Candidate for SC House District 33



LEON WILES

Candidate for County Council Chair



SAVILLE WILLIAMS

Candidate for SC House District 34



GARRETT GIBSON

Candidate for County Council District 5



TATIANA SKIPPER

Candidate for SC House District 35



FRANKLAND WATTS

Candidate for County Council District 6



Party Updates

Important news, opportunities to get involved, and key dates for Democrats across Spartanburg County.

Congratulations to Caleb Mickler



This past weekend, the Young Democrats of South Carolina held their state convention, and we were proud to see our own Caleb Mickler recognized as Outstanding Young Democrat of the Year. This award honors an individual who has demonstrated strong leadership, service, and dedication to advancing Democratic values. It recognizes young leaders who are actively making a difference in their communities and within the organization. We are grateful for Caleb's hard work and proud to celebrate this well-deserved recognition.

Speak Before the Spartanburg County Legislative Delegation

Democrats across Spartanburg County are encouraged to make their voices heard by signing up to speak before the Spartanburg County Legislative Delegation at its upcoming meeting on Monday, May 4, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at Spartanburg County Council Chambers, 366 North Church Street, Spartanburg, SC 29303.

Anyone wishing to present must submit their agenda item request in writing to the Spartanburg County Legislative Delegation Office no later than Monday, April 20, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. Each request must include the topic and title of presentation, presenter's name, address, and contact telephone number. Approved presenters will have five minutes total, including questions and answers. Written requests may also be emailed to dculbreth@spartanburgcounty.gov.

Individuals interested in serving through a commission appointment must complete a State Board Application Form and return the original to the Delegation Office no later than Monday, April 27, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. Applications are available online, at the Delegation Office at 366 N. Church Street, Room 1210, or by calling 864-596-2529.

To learn more and connect with local organizing efforts around this meeting, use the SPCDP Mobilize link to the right.



Important Voter Registration Deadlines for the Primaries

Voters planning to participate in the primaries should pay close attention to these important registration deadlines:

- **May 8** — Deadline to register to vote in person
- **May 10** — Deadline to register to vote online, by fax, or by email
- **May 11** — Deadline to register to vote by mail (must be postmarked by this date)

Make sure you, your family, and your community are registered and ready to vote.

Serve as a Precinct Captain

The Spartanburg County Democratic Party is continuing to build strong local infrastructure across the county, and one of the most important ways to get involved is by serving as a Precinct Captain. Precinct Captains help strengthen neighborhood-level organizing, connect with voters, share information, and support turnout efforts in their communities.

Individuals interested in serving can complete the interest form by scanning the QR code to the right.



Ways to Engage

Join us for upcoming events, connect with Democratic leaders and candidates, and find your place in the work ahead.

Young Democrats SPARK Awards May 8

The Young Democrats of Spartanburg County will host their annual Spark Awards on Friday, May 8 from 6pm to 8pm at SCC-Downtown campus. The Spark Awards™ is an awards ceremony which celebrates the outstanding contributions of young people (aged 40 & under) from our region who have “that spark” to making our community better. Awards will be presented in seven categories: 1) Education 2) Community Advocacy 3) Civil Service 4) Creativity 5) Entrepreneurship 6) Athleticism 7) Justice.

Nominate a young person by April 10 at 5:00 p.m.



Purchase tickets for the event here.



**THE FUTURE
OF PUBLIC
EDUCATION**

SYLVIA WRIGHT

Meet Sylvia Wright

Meet Democratic Candidate for Superintendent of Education, Sylvia Wright on April 18 from 11-1pm at Fretwell. This is a kid-friendly meet and greet, so you can hear about Sylvia’s plan for the future of education in South Carolina, get lunch, and let your kids burn off some energy all in one. Complimentary light snacks will be provided for the kids. Learn more at the QR code below.



ASK TOWNHALL 3/6

**COURTNEY
McCLAIN**
4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CANDIDATE

APRIL 13TH
6PM


T.K. GREGG
CENTER
650 HOWARD ST
SPARTANBURG, SC

**MUST
RSVP**



**COURTNEY
McCLAIN**
POLITICIAN

**COMMUNITY
FISH
FRY**



Mt.Moriah Baptist Church
445 S Church St, Spartanburg, SC 29306
Saturday, April 25th | 12pm - 2pm

**COURTNEY
McCLAIN**

Calendar of Events



APRIL 13	Ask Courtney Town Hall (6pm at the Dr. T.K. Gregg Community Center)
APRIL 18	Meet Sylvia Wright (11am to 1pm, Fretwell)
APRIL 18	Spartanburg Worker's Assembly Mttg (12 noon to 1:30pm, C.C. Woodson)
APRIL 25	Fish Fry with Courtney McClain (12 noon to 2pm, Mt. Moriah)
MAY 4	SPCDP Monthly Meeting
MAY 4	Spartanburg County Legislative Delegation Meeting
MAY 8	YDSPC SPARK Awards
MAY 8	Deadline to register to vote in person for Primaries
MAY 10	Deadline to register to vote online for Primaries
MAY 11	Deadline to register to vote by mail for Primaries
MAY 11	Rep Henderson Myers Town Hall with SCEA
MAY 26 - JUNE 5	Early Voting for Primary Elections
MAY 29	Blue Palmetto Dinner
MAY 30	South Carolina Democratic Party State Convention
JUNE 1	SPCDP Monthly Meeting
JUNE 9	Democratic Primary



Save the Date!

We are currently finalizing the date, location, and special guest for this year's Democracy for All Ball, our biggest event of the year. The event is expected to take place on May 11 or 13, and full details will be announced within the next few days.



SPARTANBURGDEMOCRATS.COM | (864) 585-6957 | INFO@SPARTANBURGDEMOCRATS.COM

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