



STATE

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

TEACHER PAY

- We urge the General Assembly to increase teacher pay to the National Average in the next three years.
- The General Assembly needs to study the implementation of pay bands to reward teachers with special skills and give districts more flexibility in recruiting for critical-needs areas.

EDUCATION REGULATIONS We ask the General Assembly to allow districts to designate more deregulated schools and allow high-performing schools to increase the number of non-certified teachers.

WORKFORCE HOUSING We support the passage of legislation that allows new, market-based avenues so local builders and developers to build critical housing for our workforce.

PROFESSIONAL LICENSING

- The General Assembly needs to immediately give the 2,800 young adults legally living in the Upstate under the DACA program the right to receive state licenses to work. We also support efforts for DACA recipients residing in South Carolina to receive in-state tuition.
- The General Assembly needs to require the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation and the boards that oversee professional licenses to carefully examine requirements to ensure they are necessary for public safety and not merely barriers to competition.

CHILDCARE The cost and accessibility of quality childcare is a major workforce barrier – the second-biggest barrier identified in our legislative survey. It is imperative that our state work on solutions to increase the accessibility of childcare and lower the cost to workers.

HIGHER ED We support the Higher Education Opportunity Act that will ensure a stream of new funding for our universities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Our region’s explosive growth strains the infrastructure that powers our economy. Growth alone will not take care of the expanding needs of our new residents.

MASS TRANSIT The state has not increased its share of transit funding in nearly three decades. We urge the General Assembly to increase state support for mass transit in our metro areas.

COMMERCIAL AVIATION The General Assembly needs to dedicate a stream of funding to our commercial airports so they can expand passenger and cargo service and boost our economy.

HIGH-SPEED RAIL South Carolina needs to examine possible routes for high-speed rail through our state.

TAXES AND REGULATION

EXPANSION OF RURAL BROADBAND

Expanding broadband access is the rural electrification of the 21st Century. We need to ensure all corners of the Upstate have access to broadband, which will benefit education and economic development.

The Spartanburg Chamber and the Upstate Chamber Coalition will work at the state and local levels to cut red tape for small business, make our region more economically competitive, and lower the barriers to entry for local entrepreneurs.

ANGEL INVESTOR TAX CREDIT EXPANSION The General Assembly needs to immediately reauthorize the successful Angel Investor Tax Credit program that encourages South Carolinians to fund our own high-impact start-up companies.

REGULATORY REFORM New regulations should require a public economic impact - not simply a state fiscal impact. Regulations above a certain economic impact should have public disclosure and a waiting period before being approved by the General Assembly.

OVERTURN “PLAINTIFF CHOOSES” The General Assembly needs to re-institute the “joint and several” protections in court cases involving multiple parties. We should ensure that businesses with a small impact on an injury do not shoulder 100% of the financial burden because they have deep pockets.

TAX REFORM

- We support efforts to reform our state’s income tax structure to make it more competitive with other states in our region.
- We support streamlining and standardizing the business license fee process, as long as the legislation does not intentionally harm municipal revenue.

HEALTHCARE

We ask the state to review market-based opportunities for the Medicaid program so it may take advantage of available federal dollars, increase insurance coverage, and improve population health outcomes.

PENSION CRISIS

Our state’s \$24 billion unfunded public pension liability is a fiscal crisis that will dramatically increase costs for the business community and decrease our competitiveness.

- The General Assembly needs to finish reforming the system by closing the state pension system to new employees and switching to a defined contribution plan.
- Government subdivisions should be allowed to leave the system so they may pay more competitive salaries.
- Any changes must preserve the promises made to those currently in the system.

ENERGY

The Upstate Chamber Coalition supports the orderly sale of Santee Cooper – or consider other solutions – to protect wholesale, retail, and industrial ratepayers, as well as provide continuous economic development support across the state.



FEDERAL

TRADE

International trade powers the Upstate’s economy. The Upstate Chamber Coalition supports trade deals that will expand our access to international trade and open markets for Upstate goods.

- We support the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank to help boost the Upstate’s export-driven economy.
- We support the passage of the US-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) free trade deal.
- We oppose tariffs levied on our nation’s allies.
- We support a fully-funded and staffed U.S. Commercial Service, which levels the playing field overseas for U.S. companies and attracts foreign investment into our country.

REGULATORY CLIMATE

Burdensome federal regulations cost our economy more than \$2 trillion each year – or about a quarter of a million dollars to the average American company. We will continue to support the ongoing administrative review of, and the reduction or elimination of, burdensome federal regulations.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Our nation’s crumbling infrastructure is both a drag on economic growth and an opportunity to transform our economy.

- We support the bipartisan calls for increased and long-term funding legislation to repair our crumbling infrastructure.
- We support the continued funding of the Charleston Port deepening project.
- We support Congressional action for funding the expansion of rural broadband access.

IMMIGRATION

Legal immigration is directly tied to economic growth. Immigration brings a disproportionate number of entrepreneurs into our economy and brings in young workers to offset the retiring population of Baby Boomers. We urge Congress to work on common sense immigration reform that addresses the long-term needs of the American economy.

- We ask Congress and the Trump Administration to expand legal immigration by reforming and expanding skilled worker programs such as the H-1B and L-1 visas.
- Congress needs to take immediate action to give DACA recipients legal status so they remain in the United States.

SPARTANBURG

FAIRNESS IN FUNDING

Five tourism areas are eligible for millions of dollars in state aid, known as the Destination- Specific Tourism Marketing Grant because they have private-sector funds to match with the state funds. These DMO’s include: Myrtle Beach, Charleston, Hilton Head, Greenville, and Columbia. Spartanburg now has dedicated private-sector funds which are projected to meet the threshold to qualify for the larger pool of state grants. Fairness in funding is essential in order for SC collectively to compete.

- We support changing the threshold and funding formula of those entities that can apply for Destination Specific Tourism Marketing Grants to include Spartanburg County and other areas that can raise at least \$500,000 in private-sector funds.
- We encourage the state to increase the total available funds for the qualifying emerging DMOS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATE WHITE-COLLAR INCENTIVES

Spartanburg has launched a comprehensive corporate development strategy to grow and diversify our economy by positioning Spartanburg County to attract and retain higher-wage jobs. The plan identifies target audience opportunities and actions to increase the competitiveness and marketability of Spartanburg County as a premier destination for corporate-related business.

- Given our state’s lagging per capita income, we encourage the General Assembly to support incentives and opportunities that assist in attracting higher wage jobs to South Carolina.