THE SOUTH CAROLINA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS

APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER



"A SEASON OF TRANSITION."

Welcome to the **April 2026 Newsletter** from the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus (**SCLBC**). Discover our latest initiatives, recent legislative efforts, and upcoming events shaping stronger communities across the state.

CHAIRWOMAN'S MESSAGE

Greetings to my Fellow Members and Constituents,

As we move into the vibrant month of May, I am filled with a sense of both urgency and reflection. This is a season of transition—a time when we celebrate the blossoming of our communities and the strength of the women who raised us, while also standing firm at the frontline of the legislative battles that define our future.

March and April Retrospective: Protecting the Foundation

The month of March was a whirlwind of activity under the copper dome. While we celebrated several milestones, we also faced significant challenges to the core of our democratic participation.

Specifically, I must address the troubling legislative maneuvers surrounding Article 2 of the South Carolina Constitution. There has been a concerted effort to “gut”; the essential protections this article provides regarding the right to vote and the conduct of elections. By shifting the power of election oversight and introducing restrictive “domicile” definitions, these changes threaten to disenfranchise the very people we are sworn to protect. We must remain vigilant; a constitutional right should never be subject to political convenience.

Standing with South Carolina State University

Our beloved **South Carolina State University** has recently been at the center of a storm. The Board’s decision-making process and the recent “debacle” regarding the Spring 2026 commencement speaker have raised serious concerns about the autonomy and cultural integrity of our state’s only four-year public HBCU.

The rescinding of the invitation to the Lieutenant Governor to serve as the graduation speaker was a direct result of the powerful, unified voices of the student body. While some have criticized this move, we must recognize it as an exercise of student organization. Our students deserve a commencement that reflects their values and honors their hard work without being overshadowed by political agendas that have often stood in opposition to the significance and mission of HBCUs and diversity initiatives. No one should be forced to listen to a speech from someone who has demeaned “mob” them. The Black Caucus continues to monitor the Board’s actions to ensure SCSU remains a sanctuary for Black excellence and academic freedom.

The Final Push: Sine Die

Looking ahead, the clock is ticking. The **South Carolina General Assembly** officially concludes its regular legislative year on **May 14, 2026.** This “Sine Die” deadline means that any bill not passed by both chambers will effectively die. We are working around the clock to ensure our priorities—from rural infrastructure to healthcare equity—are not left on the cutting room floor.

A Celebration of Mothers and Graduates

As we enter May, I want to extend a heartfelt **Happy Mother’s Day** to all the mothers, grandmothers, and mother figures in our lives. Your resilience is the backbone of our state. To the Class of 2026: you are our greatest hope. We are proud of your achievements and look forward to the leadership you will bring to our communities.

A Call to Action: Your Vote is Your Voice

Finally, we cannot speak of progress without speaking of the ballot. With the 2026 Primary Elections quickly approaching, I urge every citizen to check their registration status and prepare to vote. Hats off to the SC Legislative Black Caucus for staying on the move and fighting the good fight for all South Carolinians.

Important Dates to Remember:

- **May 8, 2026:** Deadline for In-Person Voter Registration.
- **May 10, 2026:** Deadline for Online, Fax, or Email Registration.
- **May 11, 2026**: Deadline for Mail-In Registration (Postmarked).

- **May 26 – June 5, 2026:** Early Voting Period.
- **June 9, 2026:** Statewide Primary Election Day.

We have come too far to turn back now. Let us finish this session strong and head to the polls with the determination to shape a South Carolina that works for **EVERYONE**.

In Service,

The Honorable Annie E. McDaniel

Chair, South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus

State Representative, District 41



“SINE DINE” THE FINAL PUSH

With only six legislative working days remaining before the mandatory **Sine Die** adjournment on **May 14, 2026**, the South Carolina General Assembly is in a "full sprint" to move high-priority items.

The following are the key bills and issues to watch as the session reaches its conclusion:

1. The State Budget (H. 5126)

The **$13 billion+ state budget** for fiscal year 2026-2027 is the primary focus.

- **Status:** The House and Senate have significant differences to reconcile, particularly regarding **Medicaid funding levels** and a **$35 million assistance package** for farmers impacted by recent droughts and tariffs.
- **The "Workaround":** Lawmakers are currently advancing a statutory change (**S. 238**) to allow the General Assembly to return after May 14 specifically to finalize the budget and the Capital Reserve Fund.

2. Voting Rights & Judicial Selection

- **Special Session for Redistricting:** Following the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Louisiana v. Callais* (April 2026), there is a strong push from some House and Senate members for a **Special Session** to redraw the **6th Congressional District** to eliminate what they term "race-based" gerrymandering.
- **Judicial Merit Selection Commission (H. 4755 / S. 696):** These bills aim to reform how judges are chosen by transferring the appointment process of the commission to the Governor and prohibiting sitting legislators from serving on the commission.

3. Public Health & Safety

- **The HALO Act:** A top priority for healthcare advocacy groups, this legislation would increase protections for first responders and ER staff from harassment or interference.
- **DUI Reform:** Legislation is moving to permit sentences that include both fines and mandatory incarceration for certain offenses.
- **THC Regulation:** Both chambers are debating bills to either ban or strictly regulate **hemp-derived THC drinks and edibles**, with the Senate recently passing a version to limit sales to liquor stores for those 21+.

4. Economic & Regulatory Reform

- **SCDOT Modernization:** A "massive" bill intended to encourage counties to take ownership of non-critical roads while expanding tolls and fees to fund the maintenance of the state's 41,000 miles of highways.
- **Data Center Standards:** This bill would mandate that high-energy data centers pay their own infrastructure costs and implement water-saving technologies to protect the local power grid and environment.
- **Income Tax Reduction:** While one major cut was signed in April, a second proposal to reduce the top marginal rate to **5.21%** is still under discussion.

5. Social & Parental Legislation

- **Parental Rights Act (H. 4757):** Aimed at affirming the "fundamental rights" of parents regarding their children's education and healthcare.
- **Abortion Legislation:** Two competing measures remain active: a House-passed bill reclassifying abortion pills as **Schedule IV controlled substances** and a Senate-level effort to move toward a "personhood" definition.

SCLBC MEETING FOR THE PEOPLE

Chairwoman McDaniel and the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus



Pictured: Members of the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus



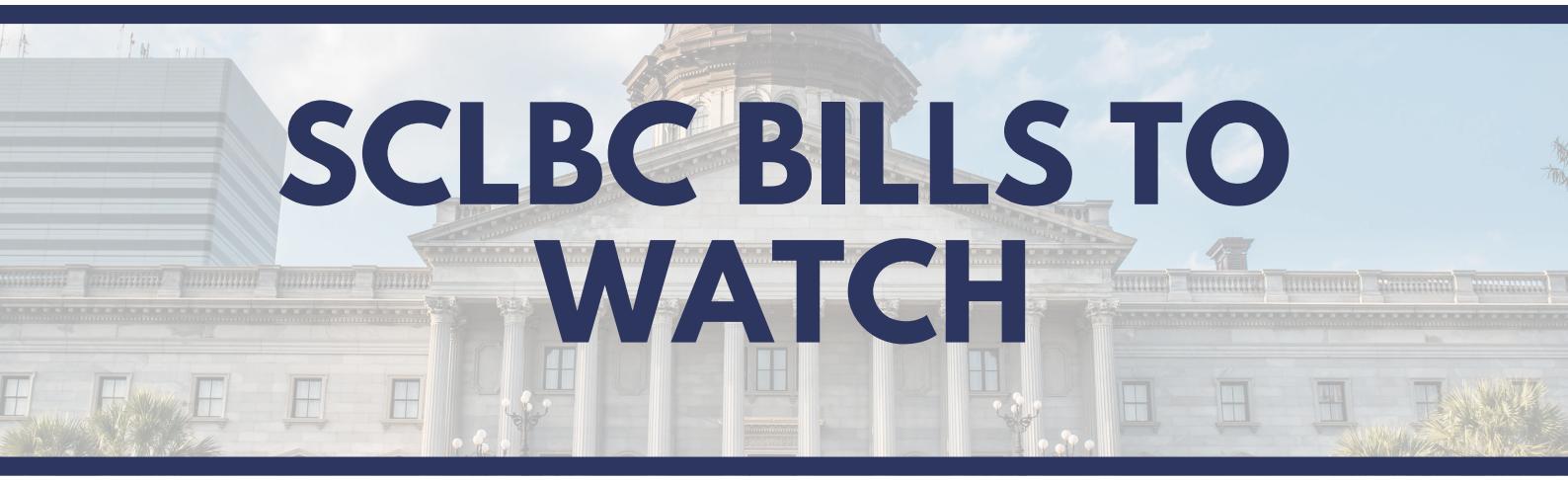
<u>Pictured:</u> Representative Courtney Waters and Representative J. David Weeks



<u>Pictured:</u> Chairwoman & Representative Annie E. McDaniel, Representative Keishan Scott, and Representative Leon Howard

Chairwoman Annie E. McDaniel and the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus has been continuing to meet in-person every Tuesday at 10:00am in the Solomon Blatt Building. Caucus Members remain committed to **using policy as a tool** to improve the daily lives of South Carolinians.

In the month of April, the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus has welcomed several professional organizations: Jack and Jill of America, Incorporated, Alpha Phi Alpha, Fraternity Incorporated, and Psi Sigma Gamma Rho, Sorority Incorporated. The participation of these groups underscores the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus' commitment advancing equity, representation, and opportunity for all.



In April 2026, the South Carolina General Assembly passed legislation on issues including intercollegiate NIL compensation, coastal permits, road construction, and various technical acts. Notable action included a major road funding bill, a ban on a specific hemp product, and updates to the state's abortion-inducing drug regulations. The 126th General Assembly (2025-2026) is in its second session.

Bills Ratified/Passed in April 2026

I. Act 119 (H4902): This Act establishes regulations for intercollegiate athletes; compensation for Name, Image, or Likeness (NIL) (Effective 04/01/26).

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/4902.htm

II. Act 116 (H3931): This Act concerns Coastal Tideland and Wetlands Permit Applications. (Effective 04/06/26).

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/3931.htm

III. Act 117 (H3967): This bill defines "biomass" and relates to Forest Products (Effective 04/06/26).

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/3967.htm

IV. Act 118 (H5089): This bill relates to Beaufort County voting precincts. This bill redesignates the map number on which these precincts are delineated. (Effective 04/06/26).

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/5089.htm

V. H. 3650: This bill increases penalties for discharging firearms into structures or vehicles. Bill passed both Chambers, awaits Governor's signature.

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/3650.htm

VI. H. 5018: This bill places the Governor and Lieutenant Governor's salaries under the Agency Head Salary Commission. Bill passed the House, currently residing in the Senate.

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/5018.htm

VII. H. 5201: This bill establishes a multi-jurisdictional school safety task force. Bill passed the House, currently residing in the Senate.

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/5201.htm

VIII. H. 4270: This bill allows for the purging of old eviction records under specific conditions. Bill passed the House, currently residing in the Senate.

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/bills/4270.htm

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- **May 5 -** The SCLBC will convene every Tuesday at 10:00 AM in Room 305 of the Blatt Building
- **May 10 -** Mother's Day.
- **May 12** - SC Legislative Black Caucus Reception and Fundraiser @Optus Bank - 5:30pm - 7:00pm
- **May 13 -** South Carolina First Steps is hosting a legislative breakfast at the Blatt Building (8:00 AM).
- **May 14:** The SC Cable and Broadband Association is hosting a legislative lunch at the Blatt Building (11:30 AM).
- **May 22–24:** Original Gullah Festival in Beaufort, celebrating Gullah Geechee culture and heritage.
- **May 25:** Memorial Day (State and Federal Holiday).
- **May 22–31:** Spoleto Festival USA begins in Charleston.

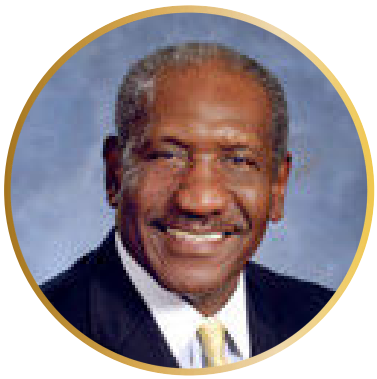
HISTORIC DATES IN MAY

May 2026 is a pivotal month for South Carolina, dominated by the conclusion of the legislative session and a series of historical and cultural anniversaries.

- **May 2, 2000:** Governor Jim Hodges signed the bill making **Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday** an official state holiday in South Carolina.
- **May 13, 1862: Robert Smalls** liberated himself and 16 others by piloting the Confederate ship The Planter out of Charleston Harbor to Union forces.
- **May 13, 1872:** Birth of **Dr. Matilda Evans** in Aiken, the first African American woman licensed to practice medicine in South Carolina.
- **May 17, 1954:** The U.S. Supreme Court ruled on **Brown v. Board of Education**. The first of the cases involved in this landmark suit was Briggs v. Elliott from **Clarendon County, SC**.

- **May 23, 1900: Sgt. William H. Carney** became the first African American awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his valor at Fort Wagner, SC.

MAY MEMBER BIRTHDAYS



Representative William "Bill" Clyburn
May 19



Representative Annie E. McDaniel
May 28



South Carolina: Election Tools, Deadlines, Dates, Rules, and Links:

https://www.vote.org/south-carolina/

South Carolina State House

Learn how to contact your state representative, keep up with legislative bills, view the Senate and House when they are in session, find out committee meeting schedules.

https://www.scstatehouse.gov/index.php or download the SC State House App

South Carolina Legislative Manual

Access the SC Legislative Manual online and learn about the state.
https://www.scstatehouse.gov/man24/manual24.php

Energy Assistance & Rebate Programs

Find energy assistance programs for your home.

https://energy.sc.gov/home/ebill

South Carolina Education Association

Find learning resources for your child.

https://www.thescea.org/student-success

South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs

Provides certification for minority businesses.

https://cma.sc.gov/small-business-resources

South Carolina Department of Commerce

Start your own business.

https://scbizdev.sccommerce.com/#StartYourBusiness

MyscVOTES

Register to vote online.

https://vrems.scvotes.sc.gov/ovr/start

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Learn how your small business can be brought to the table that is dominated by big businesses.

https://sustainableagriculture.net/our-work/issues/rural-economic-development/

USDA Rural Development

Find out how to access loans and grants for home, businesses, communities, etc.

https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/rural-business development-grants-21#:~:text=Rural Business Development Grant money, check eligible areas.

South Carolina Association for Rural Economic Development

Learn how to get grants for community development initiatives.

https://www.scaced.org/rural-resource-coalition-of-sc

National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women (NOBEL) Empowers Black Women legislators with world-class leadership development.

https://www.nobelwomen.org/

National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL)

Dedicated to promoting educational, research, and training initiatives that assist its members to make informed decisions.

https://nbcsl.org/about/

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation

Dedicated to promoting educational, research, and training initiatives that assist its members to make informed decisions.

https://www.cbcfinc.org/

SOUTH CAROLINA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS

Solomon Blatt Building – Suite 207

Columbia, SC 29201

Office Hours: Tues – Thurs 10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

sclbc2025@gmail.com

2025-2026 SCLBC Executive Committee

Chairwoman

Representative Annie E. McDaniel

District 41 - Chester, Fairfield & Richland Counties

Chair-Elect

Representative Michael Rivers

District 121 – Beaufort & Colleton Counties

Secretary

Representative Wendell Jones

District 25 – Greenville County

Treasurer

Representative Robert Williams

District 62 – Darlington & Florence Counties

Parliamentarian

Representative Heather Bauer

District 25 – Richland County

Chaplain

Representative Carl Anderson

District 103 – Berkeley, Georgetown & Horry Counties

CORPORATE ROUNDTABLE SPOTLIGHTS

South Carolina Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association

The South Carolina Beer Wholesalers Association (SCBWA) represents and supports the state's independent beer wholesalers through leadership, advocacy, and industry programs. The organization works to promote responsible beer consumption while representing its members' interests before government leaders and the public.

South Carolina beer wholesalers operate within the **three-tier distribution system** established after the repeal of Prohibition under the 21st Amendment, with wholesalers serving as the link between brewers and retailers. This system helps ensure fair regulation, proper tax collection, and accountability within the alcohol industry while providing consumers with an efficient and reliable marketplace.

Headquarters

SC Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association
1114 College Street
Columbia, SC 29201

The **South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus** extends its sincere gratitude to the **South Carolina Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association** for their steadfast support and sponsorship. As a vital pillar of our state's economy, the Beer and Wine Wholesalers do more than support local jobs; they

invest in the mission of this Caucus. Their partnership ensures we have the resources to continue advocating for equity, justice, and economic opportunity for all South Carolinians.

On behalf of **Chairwoman Annie E. McDaniel** and our entire membership, we thank you for your commitment to our communities and for being a dedicated partner in our work to move South Carolina forward.

CORPORATE ROUNDTABLE PARTNERS

The South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus (SCLBC) acknowledges the invaluable contributions of our Corporate Roundtable Partners, whose active participation and generous support have been instrumental to our success. SCLBC is set apart from other political-based caucuses because of its status as a non-partisan, non-profit 501(c)(4) advocacy organization.

The SCLBC purpose focuses on addressing critical issues, providing impactful services, and providing public policy solutions to challenges and issues facing Black and minority communities in South Carolina. We are deeply grateful for the support of our Corporate Roundtable Partners, who play a vital role in helping us achieve our shared vision of advancing equitable policies and empowering communities across South Carolina. Together, we are making a lasting impact.

South Carolina Beer Wholesalers Association

BlueCross BlueShield

Dominion Energy®

DUKE ENERGY®

NUCOR®

SCR SOUTH CAROLINA REALTORS®

K12®

SCOPA South Carolina Optometric Physicians Association

MAYNARDNEXSEN

SUPPORT THE SCLBC BY JOINING THE CORPORATE ROUNDTABLE

Please email sclbc2025@gmail.com for information on how to become a 2026 SCLBC Corporate Roundtable Partner.

SCLBC WEBSITE

A PRINTABLE VERSION IS AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE