



Greenville Chamber
Spartanburg Area Chamber
Anderson Area Chamber
Greater Greer Chamber
Cherokee County Chamber
Greenwood Chamber
Laurens County Chamber
Clemson Area Chamber
Greater Easley Chamber
Simpsonville Area Chamber
Oconee County Chamber

2018

Legislative Report *South Carolina General Assembly*



A Year of Pro-Business Achievement



Jason Zacher
Executive Director



Katie Busbee
Director,
Legislative Affairs

As the 2017-2018 legislative session began, the Upstate Chamber Coalition set out an ambitious policy agenda, and we knew it could take several years to achieve. That was complicated by the sudden departure of Governor Nikki Haley and the uncertainty that surrounded the transition.

On the following pages is our third annual legislative report. We had many successes this year, and these successes will allow businesses of all sizes to continue to expand and power our region's booming economy for years to come.

We're proud to say that our two top priorities — the road funding legislation last year and the workforce expansion legislation this year — are now law. A stronger infrastructure means people can reach work, healthcare, and education easier, customers can get to stores, and businesses can move goods to market. Our workforce expansion legislation will help clean the records of low-level, non-violent offenders and boost our region's workforce. This will help businesses find the workers they need in this extremely tight employment market.

Two other Coalition priorities, the High-Impact Company Tax Credit legislation and the Tax Conformity legislation, were approved by the General Assembly late in the session. Tax Conformity was quickly signed by the governor, but the tax credit bill was vetoed. The veto was overridden in October.

The constant, relentless pressure from real businesses — real neighbors and real constituents — is making a difference in Columbia. Whether it was having Senators from the coast ask us to stop the phone calls from the Upstate on the infrastructure bill, or overcoming opposition to the workforce expansion legislation, the Upstate business community is flexing its muscle in the General Assembly, and the results are clear.

Thank you for everything you did to help these priorities become law in 2017 and 2018. We ask you to please vote this November, and use this guide to see how our incumbents supported pro-business initiatives.

We hope you will continue your activism in 2019 so the Upstate will continue to be the best place to start or locate a business. **Thank you for your continued support of your local, hometown chamber of commerce and our Upstate Chamber Coalition.**

2018
BUSINESS
ADVOCACY
PARTNERS



2017-2018 VOTING RECORD HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



		H. 3516 Road Funding Second Reading	H. 3516 Road Funding Conference Report	H. 3516 Veto Override	H. 3209 Workforce Expansion	H. 3209 Workforce Expansion Veto Override	S. 1043/404 Abandoned Bldgs/ Tax Credits	S. 1043/404 Abandoned Bldgs Veto Override	H. 3653 Nuisance Lawsuits	S. 105 Automatic Stay	H. 3146 Supt. of Education Const. Amend.	H. 5341 Tax Conformity	H. 3726 Pension Reform	S. 114 Non-Profit Alcohol	H. 3358 Real I.D. Concur w/ Senate	H. 3867 Affordable Housing
Allison, Rita	R-Lyman	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	X	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Anthony, Mike	D-Union	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Bannister, Bruce	R-Greenville	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Bedingfield, Eric ¹	R-Belton	NO	NO	NO	1	1	YES	YES	NO	1	YES	YES	YES	X	A	YES
Burns, Mike	R-Travelers Rest	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	X	YES
Chumley, Bill	R-Woodruff	NO	NO	NO	X	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	A	YES	X	NO	NO	YES
Clary, Gary	R-Clemson	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Cole, Derham	R-Spartanburg	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Collins, Neal	R-Easley	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Dillard, Chandra	D-Greenville	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Elliott, Jason	R-Greenville	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Forrester, Mike	R-Spartanburg	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Gagnon, Craig	R-Abbeville	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Hamilton, Dan	R-Greenville	NO	NO	X	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	X	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	A
Henderson, Phyllis	R-Greenville	YES	YES	YES	YES	X	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Henderson-Myers, Rosalyn ²	D-Spartanburg	2	2	2	YES	YES	YES	YES	2	NO	2	YES	2	2	2	2
Hill, Jonathon	R-Townville	NO	NO	NO	X	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	X	NO	YES	NO	YES
Hiott, David	R-Pickens	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	A
Loftis, Dwight	R-Greenville	YES	NO	X	X	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Long, Steven	R-Boiling Springs	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Magnuson, Josiah	R-Landrum	NO	NO	NO	A	YES	X	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
McCravy, John	R-Greenwood	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Mitchell, Harold ²	D-Spartanburg	YES	YES	A	2	2	2	2	A	2	YES	YES	YES	X	YES	YES
Moss, Dennis	R-Gaffney	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Moss, Steve	R-Blacksburg	YES	YES	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Parks, Anne	D-Greenwood	YES	YES	YES	X	YES	YES	YES	X	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	X
Pitts, Mike	R-Laurens	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Putnam, Joshua	R-Powdersville	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Robinson-Simpson, Leola	D-Greenville	YES	YES	YES	A	YES	A	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Sandifer, Bill	R-Seneca	YES	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	X	YES	YES
Smith, Garry	R-Simpsonville	NO	NO	NO	X	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	X	YES	YES
Stringer, Tommy	R-Greer	A	YES	X	YES	YES	YES	NO	A	YES	A	YES	YES	X	X	X
Tallon, Eddie	R-Spartanburg	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	A
Thayer, Anne	R-Anderson	NO	NO	NO	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Trantham, Ashley ¹	R-Greenville	1	1	1	YES	YES	YES	YES	1	YES	1	X	1	1	1	1
West, Jay	R-Belton	YES	YES	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
White, Brian	R-Anderson	YES	YES	YES	NO	X	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Whitmire, Bill	R-Walhalla	YES	YES	YES	X	X	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Willis, Mark	R-Fountain Inn	A	NO	NO	YES	X	A	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES

¹ Rep. Trantham was elected on 1/16/18 to fill the unexpired term of Rep. Bedingfield.
X Did not vote A Excused Absence

² Rep. Henderson-Myers was elected on 9/26/17 to fill the unexpired term of Rep. Mitchell.

2017-2018 LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES

H. 3516 — Road Funding Legislation

(House Votes #103, #620, #655; Senate Votes #347, #396, #417)

After many years of advocacy on this bill, the first gas tax increase since 1987 became law in 2017 after the General Assembly overrode Governor McMaster's veto. The bill will raise \$633 million in revenue by increasing the gas tax by two cents per year over the next six years (for a total of 12 cents). The legislation also increases the sales tax

cap on vehicles, places new fees on electric and hybrid vehicles, and boosts fees on driver's licenses.

This legislation includes substantial DOT reform and tax cuts, including a reduction of the manufacturing property tax rate from 10.5% to 9%, an increase in the tuition tax credit to \$1,500 for both two- and four-year schools, and a bump in the two wage-earner

	H. 3516 Road Funding Second Reading	H. 3516 Road Funding Conference Report	H. 3516 Veto Override	H. 3209 Workforce Expansion	H. 3209 Workforce Expansion Veto Override	S. 1043/404 Abandoned Bldgs/ Tax Credits	S. 1043/404 Abandoned Bldgs/ Veto Override	H. 3653 Nuisance Lawsuits	S. 105 Automatic Stay	H. 3146 Supt of Education Const. Amendment	H. 5341 Tax Conformity	H. 3726 Pension Reform	S. 114 Non-Profit Alcohol	H. 3358 Real I.D.	H. 3867 Affordable Housing
Alexander, Thomas R-Walhall	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Allen, Karl D-Greenville	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Cash, Richard ¹ R-Powdersville	1	1	1	YES	YES	X	YES	YES	1	YES	YES	1	1	1	YES
Corbin, Tom R-Travellers Rest	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	A	YES	NO	YES	NO
Gambrell, Mike R-Honea Path	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	A
Martin, Shane R-Pauline	NO	NO	NO	YES	A	A	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Nicholson, Floyd D-Greenville	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Peeler, Harvey R-Gaffney	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Reese, Glenn D-Spartanburg	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	X	NO	YES	YES	YES	X	YES
Rice, Rex R-Pickens	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Talley, Scott R-Spartanburg	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Timmons, William R-Greenville	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	X
Turner, Ross R-Greenville	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Verdin, Danny R-Laurens	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	X	NO	YES	A	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	X

¹ Senator Cash took over for Kevin Bryant when he became Lieutenant Governor in early 2017.

X Did not vote

A Excused Absence

2017-2018 LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES (CONTINUED)

credit. Many thanks to House Majority Leader Gary Simrill for spearheading this effort and to Rep. Tommy Stringer of Greer for championing this issue for many years.

H. 3209 — Workforce Expansion (Expungement)

(House Vote #1511, #1516; Senate Vote #973, #1009)

H. 3209 is a bipartisan bill that will help one-time offenders who have kept a clean record to fully participate in our economy. The bill:

- Adds first offense simple possession and possession with intent to distribute drug convictions to the list of expungable criminal records.
- Allows for expungement of a crime no longer on the books if the person otherwise qualifies for expungement.
- Allows a set of minor convictions committed at the same time to be expunged jointly.
- **Does not** expand expungements for violent offenses, sex crimes, criminal domestic violence or DUI.
- Allows individuals that were convicted prior to June 2, 2010, and were a youthful offender as the term is defined but may not have been sentenced under the Youthful Offender Act (YOA), to be eligible for the above provisions.
- Protects employers that hire workers with expungements from frivolous lawsuits related to the expungement.
- Sets up an account at each solicitor's office to collect private donations to cover up to half of the \$250 fee required to process an expungement.

S. 1043/S. 404 – Economic Development Tax Credits

(House Vote #1530; Senate Vote #1017; VETO: House #1550; Senate #1023)

These two pieces of legislation were combined in the Senate and were both UCC priorities. S. 404 will help economic developers use the lu-

crative job development tax credits to entice headquarters and “back office” jobs to the state. Currently, our incentive packages are geared toward manufacturing, but we need to change the requirements so long-term lease agreements — and not just major capital investments — can qualify for tax credits. S. 1043 is the extension of a successful tax credit used to redevelop abandoned buildings.

H. 5341 — Tax Conformity

(House Vote #1412; Senate Vote #1022)

This legislation brings state tax code in line with the Federal tax reform that passed in late 2017. For businesses, there were several major items that are better termed “non-conformity”: preserving our more generous pass-through income tax deductions, deductions for interest expenses and foreign taxes paid, among other provisions.

H. 3653 — Nuisance Lawsuits

(House Vote #388; Senate Vote #503)

As the Upstate economy transitioned from textiles to advanced manufacturing, many industrial facilities were built miles from cities and towns. Our expanding economy means many industrial facilities now have homes as neighbors. This bill restricts frivolous litigation, minimizes legal expenses, and creates more certainty for both homeowners and businesses.

S. 105 — Automatic Stay

(House Vote #866; Senate Vote #108)

Under current law there is no timeline for when the Administrative Law Court must hold a hearing in a suit to stop development projects. This bill limits automatic stays, thus providing a timeline for these cases to be heard by the court.

2017-2018 RECORD GOVERNOR MCMMASTER



H. 3516	Road Funding	VETO — (Override)
H. 3209	Workforce / Expungement	VETO — (Override)
S. 1043	Economic Devel. Tax Credits	VETO — (Override)
H. 3653	Nuisance Lawsuits	SIGNED
S. 105	Automatic Stay	SIGNED
H. 5341	Tax Conformity	SIGNED
H. 3726	Pension Reform	SIGNED
H. 3358	Real I.D.	SIGNED
S. 114	Non-Profit Alcohol Donations	SIGNED

Governor Henry McMaster vetoed three of the Coalition's top priorities in 2017-2018. The first two — infrastructure funding and workforce expansion — were overridden by wide margins. The veto of S. 1043 will be considered later in 2018. We congratulate the Governor for signing our two major lawsuit abuse reform bills and the initial pension reform legislation. The Governor won his primary in June 2018 and faces Democrat James Smith in the November election as he seeks his first full term following the resignation of then-Gov. Nikki Haley. Haley resigned to become U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations in 2017.

H. 3146 — Superintendent of Education as Cabinet Position

(House Vote #91; Senate Vote #999)

This bill allows voters to decide if the superintendent of education should be appointed by the governor. This has been a Coalition agenda item for years because education's direct influence on our workforce is an issue over which the governor should have control.

H. 3726 — Pension Reform

(House Vote #97; Senate Vote #115)

South Carolina currently has a \$24 billion unfunded liability in our state retirement system. This bill takes the first step towards solving this problem by increasing employer and employee contribution rates to make up for this shortfall. It is by no means a complete solution and much work remains to be done. A joint study committee did not produce the "Part 2" bill in 2018. We will continue to press for a long-term solution for shoring up the state pension system.

S. 114 — Non-Profit Alcohol Donations

(House Vote #625; Senate Vote #129)

In 2016, the Department of Revenue started enforcing a regulation that does not allow breweries and alcohol distributors to donate to non-profit organizations and events. S. 114 reversed this regulation. The bill was signed by the governor.

H. 3358 — Real ID

(House Vote #108; Senate Vote #144)

In 2005, the federal government passed the Real ID Bill, updating authentication and issuance of state driver's licenses for national security purposes. The General Assembly passed compliance measures this session so that South Carolina citizens may continue to board airplanes and enter government and military facilities with their driver's licenses.

BILLS LOSE, BUSINESS WINS

Chamber Advocacy is sometimes as much about stopping anti-business legislation as it is supporting our agenda. Here are a few bills that we watched — or took direct action to stop.

Budget — Anti-business amendments

We worked to fight amendments made to the budget that would have de-funded the Department of Commerce and cut funding to the S.C. Ports Authority's port deepening project.

H. 3029 — Right To Work Repeal

This annual exercise called for the repeal of the Right to Work.

H. 3012 — Bathroom Bill

We worked early on with legislative leadership to impede the progress of this bill, especially after witnessing the tremendous negative economic impact of HB2 on North Carolina's economy (\$3.76 billion by an AP study).

S. 88 — Concealed Weapon Liability

This creates a cause of action against businesses if a concealed weapons permit holder is injured in a shooting and a business prohibited firearms on the premises. We are wary of legislation that creates new causes of action against business.

H. 4949 — Parody Marriage

Like the Bathroom Bill, this legislation was a solution in search of a problem. This bill is in direct conflict with our values of promoting a diverse and inclusive business community.

2017-2018 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

H. 3867 — Affordable Housing

(House Vote #450; Senate Vote #997)

This bill would have allowed developers to partner with non-profits to build affordable housing for a burgeoning workforce. The bill passed the House and Senate by overwhelming bi-partisan votes, but did not make it out of the General Assembly before 5 p.m. on *sine die*.

H. 3650 — Business License Reform

(No 2018 Votes)

Streamlining and standardizing the business license fee process is imperative for businesses operating in more than one municipality. This legislation stalled after in-fighting by statewide groups halted negotiations.

H. 4035/S. 588 — Angel Investor Tax Credit

(No 2018 Votes)

The Angel Investor Tax Credit provides tax breaks to individuals who invest in growing businesses. This legislation was spearheaded by the UCC a decade ago, and the program will sunset in 2019. These bills would reauthorize the Angel Investor program for six years and expand the state's credit threshold. These bills were blocked in the House.

S. 118 — Magistrate Jurisdiction

(No House Vote; Senate Vote #57)

In the past, the Coalition has opposed large increases to the jurisdiction of Civil Magistrates Court because a dramatic increase will increase legal costs for small business. This is legislation that we successfully killed in 2016. In 2017, we worked on a smaller increase in the jurisdictional limits. This legislation increases the magistrate jurisdiction from \$7,500 to \$10,000. The House Judiciary Committee never considered the Senate bill.

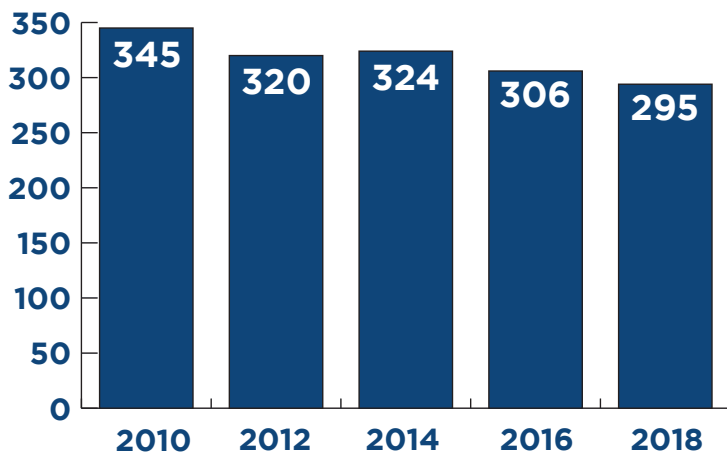
H. 4435 — S.C. DREAMers Act of 2018

(No 2018 Votes)

This legislation would have allowed anyone lawfully in the United States and allowed to work by federal law to be eligible for state occupational and professional licenses. Currently, DREAMers are prohibited from applying and working jobs such as teaching and nursing.

The Impact of a Shorter Session?

The General Assembly shortened the legislative session by three weeks last year. The number of ratified acts in 2018 (bills that made it through both the House and the Senate) was behind the 5-session average.



Source: www.scstatehouse.gov

NUCLEAR LEGISLATION



The UCC watched several utility bills this session that arose from the failed VC Summer nuclear plant. The Coalition did not take positions on these bills, but monitored them closely. Many of our Chambers were supportive of the consumer protections and oversight changes.

S. 954 – Public Service Commission Ruling Delay

Last Action: Signed by Governor.

This delayed the PSC potential ruling in the SCANA/Dominion merger.

H. 4375 – Utility Plants and projects, rates

Last Action: Signed by Governor. Pending legal action.

This legislation prospectively repeals the Base Load Review Act (where future projects are concerned), creates a utility consumer advocate in the Office of Consumer Affairs, strengthens ORS by granting them subpoena powers, and will temporarily reduce the nuclear surcharge for SCANA customers through the end of this year from \$27 to about \$5.

H. 4376 – Public Service Authority

Last Action: Passed House. Not considered in Senate.

Santee Cooper board reform.

H. 4380 – Public Service Commission

Last Action: No votes taken.

Full retroactive repeal of BLRA. Parts of the retroactive repeal were included in H. 4375.

H. 4377 – Public Service Commission Composition

Last Action: Passed House. Not considered by Senate.

This bill would relieve current PSC members of their duties. It would also put stringent requirements for future members of the PSC and give the legislature more oversight of the PSC.

H. 4378 – Utility Oversight Committee

Last Action: Passed House. Not considered by Senate.

This legislation ends the Public Utilities Review Committee (PURC). PURC's role would be filled by a new Utility Oversight Committee.

H. 4379 – Utilities Consumer Advocate

Last Action: Passed House and Senate. Not ratified.

Creates a utility consumer advocate in the Office of Regulatory Staff. This legislation also strengthens ORS by giving them the ability to subpoena documents from utilities. (See H. 4375.)



2018 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

The Upstate business community must do what we can to shape the direction of our community and the policies we need to extend our economic miracle in this age of political uncertainty. The Upstate Chamber Coalition will make it easier to do business in our region so our investors may grow and create jobs. We will keep that focus whether we are debating trade deals with distant countries, working on reforming our burdensome tax system, or working for more efficient transit to move our neighbors.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

The Upstate is one of the nation's fastest-growing regions, and our job growth is rapidly outpacing our available workforce. Our region needs to look at innovative ways to expand our workforce and educate the next generation of workers.

- **Expungement:** We support the final passage of H. 3209 — the expansion of expungement for one-time, non-violent drug offenders to expand our workforce.
- **Workforce Housing:** We support the passage of H. 3867 that allows new, market-based avenues so local builders and developers can more easily partner with non-profits to build critical housing for our workforce.
- **"K-16" Education Funding:** The Coalition urges the General Assembly to increase funding for education from K-12, to our technical colleges, and to our research universities. In a knowledge-based economy, we need affordable and accessible education options.
- **Licensing:** There are 7,000 ready, willing, and able workers in South Carolina who are permitted to work under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. With a shortage of workers across the state, the General Assembly needs to allow these students to receive state licenses for licensed professions.

INFRASTRUCTURE

We scored a major victory in 2017 with the passage of comprehensive infrastructure funding legislation. While we continue the implementation of that road funding plan, it is important to recognize that infrastructure is no longer simply lane miles and asphalt. We need to turn our attention to the rest of our infrastructure so we may continue to power our economy.

- **Commercial Aviation:** The General Assembly should create a Statewide Commercial Service Airport funding program to assist our state's airports in making key capital improvements and to support economic development. We suggest a steady, dedicated stream of funding — such as the tax on rental cars — be allocated to this program.
- **Mass Transit:** Transit is not a social service; it is an economic development and retention imperative. As the Amazon HQ2 project clearly stated, functioning mass transit is important to business. If our state is going to attract headquarter companies, and compete with larger metropolitan areas for jobs, it is critical that the General Assembly begin increasing state support for mass transit in our metro areas.
- **Capital Projects:** Our major cities are some of the fastest-growing in the nation. The General Assembly must give municipalities the ability to enact capital projects sales taxes by referendum — the same power currently given to counties — so they can fund critical infrastructure if the state is unwilling or unable to do so.

TAXES AND REGULATION

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.

- **High-impact company incentives:** South Carolina is aggressive in attracting manufacturing jobs — and we must continue to do so. The Coalition supports S. 404, which will re-vamp our corporate incentive programs to focus on the high-impact companies which do not qualify for traditional incentive packages that focus on costly infrastructure.
- **Business license fees:** The Upstate Chamber Coalition supports streamlining and standardizing the business license fee process. We oppose intentional efforts to negatively impact municipal revenue since cities do not have full taxing authority. We will also aggressively seek compromise on which entity manages an online payment portal.
- **Angel Investor Tax Credit Expansion:** The General Assembly needs to immediately reauthorize the successful Angel Investor Tax Credit program (H. 4035/S. 588) that encourages South Carolinians to fund our own high-impact start-up companies.

TORT REFORM

South Carolina is consistently rated in the bottom half of states for legal climate. While the General Assembly has undertaken some landmark reforms over the past decade, we need to undertake several reforms to make our legal system fairer to the business community.

- **Joint and Several:** The General Assembly needs to re-institute "joint and several" protections for businesses to reasonably reflect fault in tort actions — not simply penalize small businesses for having deep pockets.
- **Nuisance Lawsuits:** We support H. 3653, legislation that will protect existing, permitted manufacturing. This bill will lower legal costs and create more certainty for our manufacturers and homeowners.
- **Automatic Stay:** We support S. 105, legislation that will create a timeline for automatic stays in pending lawsuits against development projects. Currently, there is no timeline, and many stays are essentially indefinite.

PENSION CRISIS

Our state's unfunded public pension liability is a fiscal crisis that could dramatically increase costs for the business community. Reforms made in 2017 relieved some pressure on the system so that the General Assembly may tackle the system's systemic problems. The General Assembly must minimize the impact on local government — and private sector tax rates — because of the state's unrealistic pension expectations. Failure to address this crisis will mean fewer resources to apply to education, infrastructure, and public safety.

PUBLIC TRUST

South Carolina faces a crisis of public trust in our elected officials. The vast majority of our honest, hard-working public servants need to immediately close loopholes and tighten our ethics laws to restore faith in our state government.



24 Cleveland Street
Greenville, SC 29601

Jason Zacher
Executive Director
jzacher@greenvillechamber.org
864.239.3718

Katie Busbee
Director of Legislative Affairs
kbusbee@greenvillechamber.org
864.239.3748

Zachary Heltsley
Elizabeth Noland
Walker Seman
2017-18 Advocacy Interns



upstatechamber.org



[UpstateChamberCoalition](https://www.facebook.com/UpstateChamberCoalition)



[@UpstateChamber](https://twitter.com/UpstateChamber)



[UpstateChamberSC](https://www.instagram.com/UpstateChamberSC)