



The Bottom Line: S.831 SCDOT Modernization

This is the “SCDOT Modernization” bill that makes a broad set of structural and funding changes to how South Carolina plans, finances, and delivers transportation projects.

Key Structural Changes

The bill abolishes the SCDOT Commission effective January 1, 2027, transferring its powers to a Governor-appointed Secretary of Transportation. It establishes a Coordinating Council for Transportation and Mobility to oversee planning and policy. The chief internal auditor's role is strengthened with qualifications like CPA or CIA certification, and external audits are mandated every four years.

Funding and Revenue Measures

SCDOT gains authority for public-private partnerships, toll imposition on certain highways, and turnpike bonds with updated terms. It introduces development impact fees for new projects to mitigate congestion, increases alternative fuel user fees (e.g., for EVs), and adds a user fee on public EV charging stations. County transportation committees receive clarified powers over "C" funds from gas taxes.

Project Delivery and Operations

New methods like phased design-build and construction manager/general contractor are allowed for highway projects. The bill waives state immunity for certain agreements, enables reciprocal toll enforcement, and addresses delays in municipal projects by shifting costs. Non-essential roads can be identified and transferred.