



# South Carolina Commission for the Blind

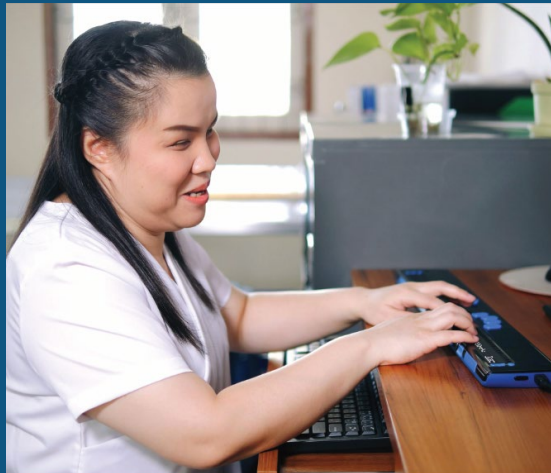
**FY 2026-27 BUDGET HEARING**

# Agency Officials

- ▶ Darline Graham, Commissioner
- ▶ Luis Mendoza, Deputy Commissioner
- ▶ Ken Burton, Finance Director
- ▶ Carol Anderson, Consumer Services Director
- ▶ Nikki Green, Consumer Services Lead
- ▶ Ryan Skinner, Business Enterprise Program Director

# South Carolina Commission for the Blind

## Mission



Employment



Independence



Prevention

To provide quality, individualized vocational rehabilitation, independent living, and prevention services that lead to competitive and integrated employment and/or social and economic independence for individuals who are blind and low vision.

# South Carolina Commission for the Blind

## Agency Overview

**EMPLOYMENT:** Offering **specialized and personalized services** that lead to employment and/or social and economic independence **for individuals who are blind or have low vision**

### ► Vocational Rehabilitation

- Helps eligible consumers find, maintain, or regain employment
- Includes a residential component
- Consumers may receive counseling and guidance, educational opportunities, vocational training, and assistive technology to prepare for career opportunities

### ► Business Enterprise Program

- Helps qualified individuals become self-employed vending or food service facility operators



# South Carolina Commission for the Blind

## Agency Overview

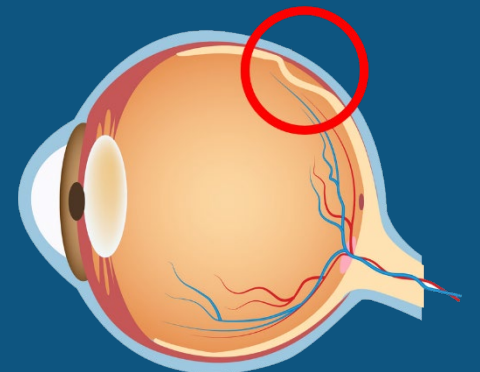
**INDEPENDENCE:** We help consumers remain independent within their homes and communities

### ► Children's Services

- Assists children ages 3 to 12,
- Ensures they have assistive technology available at home
- Helps with building confidence and self-sufficiency from an early age

### PREVENTION

- Financial assistance for sight-saving surgeries for individuals who meet financial need requirements
- Education on blindness prevention and eye safety



Retinal Detachment

# South Carolina Commission for the Blind Agency Overview

## ► Older Blind Services

- Assists those 55 and older not interested in employment
- Statewide low vision assessments
- Helps consumers remain independent by providing assistive technology, low vision devices, and specialized training



# Program Growth

# Business Enterprise Program

## Vending Operations Statewide

- ▶ Blind Vendors operate 56 vending facilities across the state, including
  - ▶ 8 Micro markets
    - ▶ 4 at State House
    - ▶ Department of Education
    - ▶ Department of Employment and Workforce
    - ▶ Savannah River Site
    - ▶ University of SC – Aiken
  - ▶ 1 Smart market
    - ▶ Veteran's Administration regional office



# Business Enterprise Program

## Fort Jackson

- ▶ SCCB oversees a nearly \$70M military dining contract at Fort Jackson
  - ▶ One of the largest in the country
  - ▶ Employs more than 900 individuals
- ▶ Average of 25,000 meals served daily



# Business Enterprise Program

## Upgrades and Recycling

- ▶ SCCB is responsible for purchasing, installing and maintaining vending equipment used across the state at locations including
  - ▶ 28 rest areas and welcome centers
  - ▶ Savannah River Site
  - ▶ 56 stands (more than 600 vending machines)
- ▶ Upgrades in FY26
  - ▶ Replace equipment at the end of its useful life
  - ▶ Renovations to rest areas
- ▶ Recycle replaced equipment
  - ▶ \$5,000 - \$8,000 per year
  - ▶ Funds used to help Older Blind program

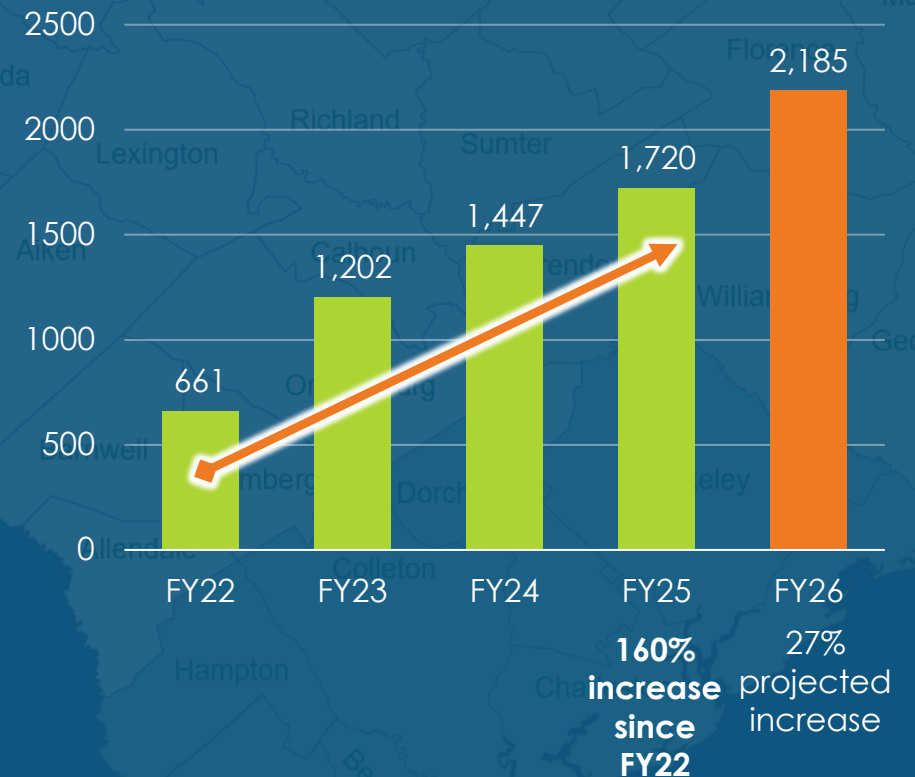


# Older Blind

## Increasing Older Population

- ▶ Vision and eye problems increase with age
  - ▶ Macular degeneration
  - ▶ Glaucoma
  - ▶ Diabetic retinopathy
  - ▶ Cataracts
- ▶ 1,720 consumers received Older Blind services in FY25
- ▶ 160% increase in consumers since FY22
- ▶ Serves most consumers of any SCCB program
- ▶ State assistance critical to help meet needs of increased consumers

Increase in Older Blind Consumers

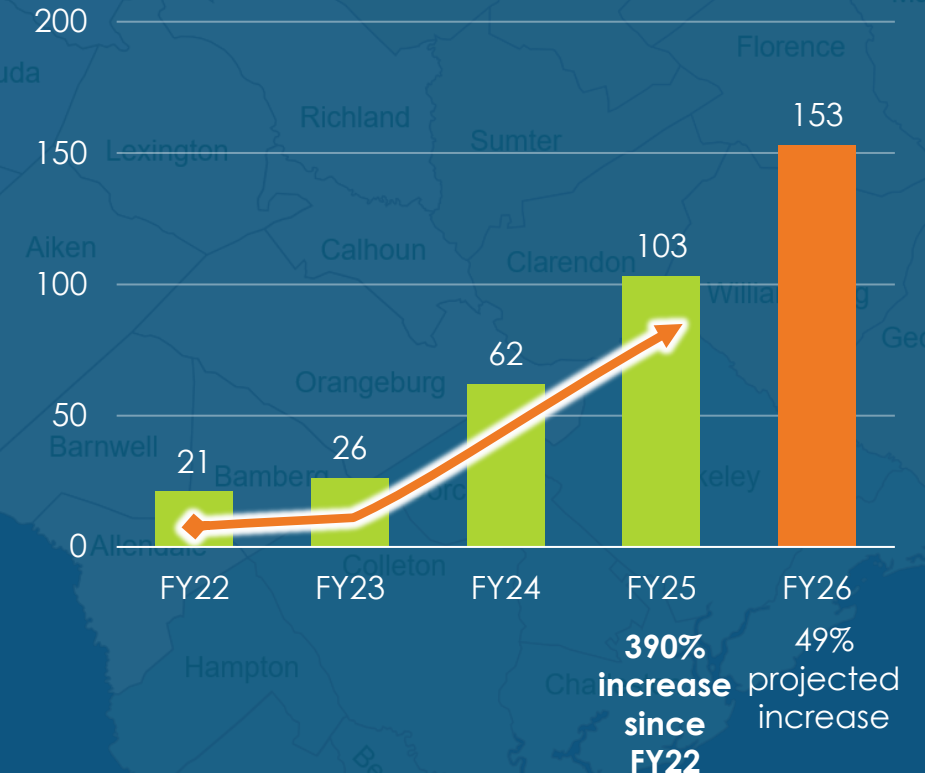


# Prevention

## Increase in Consumers

- ▶ Assists individuals who meet financial needs requirements in maintaining or improving their vision
  - ▶ Cataract removal
  - ▶ Retinal detachment repair
  - ▶ Other vision-related treatments
- ▶ 103 eligible South Carolinians received sight-saving procedures in FY25
- ▶ 66% increase in consumers since FY24

### Increase in Prevention of Blindness Consumers



# Requests

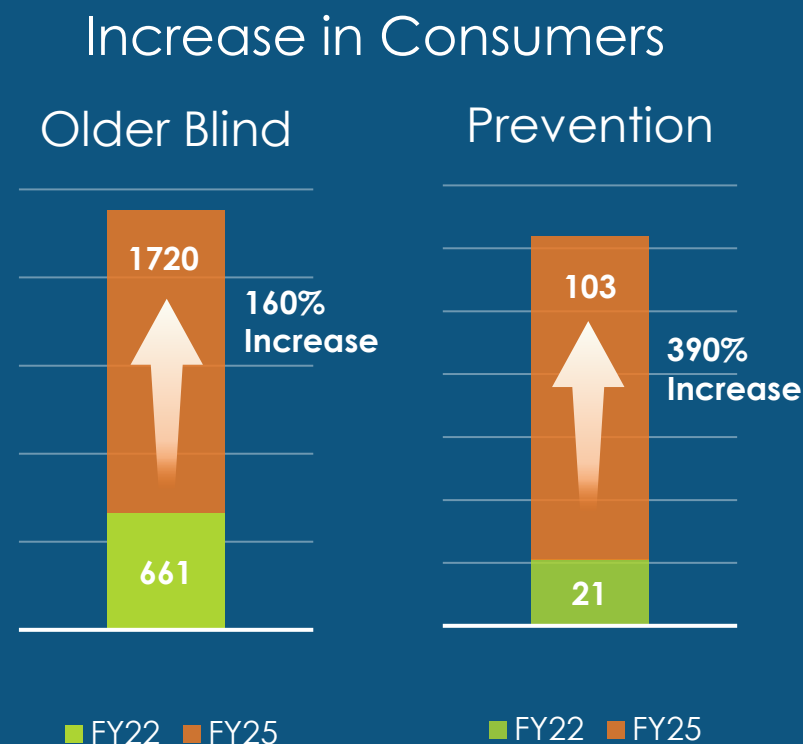
# Older Blind & Prevention

## Recurring

Priority  
1

**\$553,301**

- ▶ Recurring program funds to help provide increased individualized services and assistive technology to Older Blind consumers
  - ▶ 160% increase in consumers since FY22
  - ▶ Expect to serve more than 2,100 consumers in FY26
- ▶ Recurring program funds to help provide sight-saving / sight-restoring procedures/treatments for Prevention of Blindness consumers
  - ▶ 390% increase in consumers since FY22
  - ▶ Expect to serve more than 150 consumers in FY26



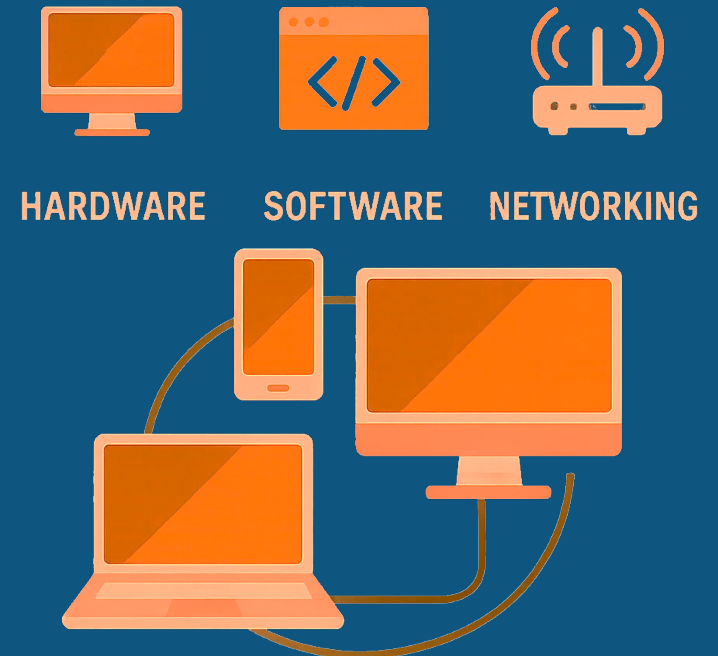
# Shared Services

## Increase in Cost of Services – Recurring

Priority  
2

**\$113,008**

- ▶ Shared Services provide
  - ▶ Firewall and security
  - ▶ Networking services
  - ▶ Maintain user IDs
  - ▶ Manage software subscriptions and updates for Microsoft Windows and apps
  - ▶ Web content filtering
  - ▶ Mobile device management
- ▶ Additional recurring funds for the 32% increase in cost of shared services



# Federal Authorization Increase

## Recurring

Priority  
3

- ▶ Federal grant awards typically increase annually
- ▶ Allow SCCB to fully utilize its federal grants for salaries, operating, case services, and fringe expenses
- ▶ Allow agency to increase capacity to provide services to consumers (such as rehabilitation technology devices and orientation and mobility training)

**\$7,053,880**

# Business Enterprise Program

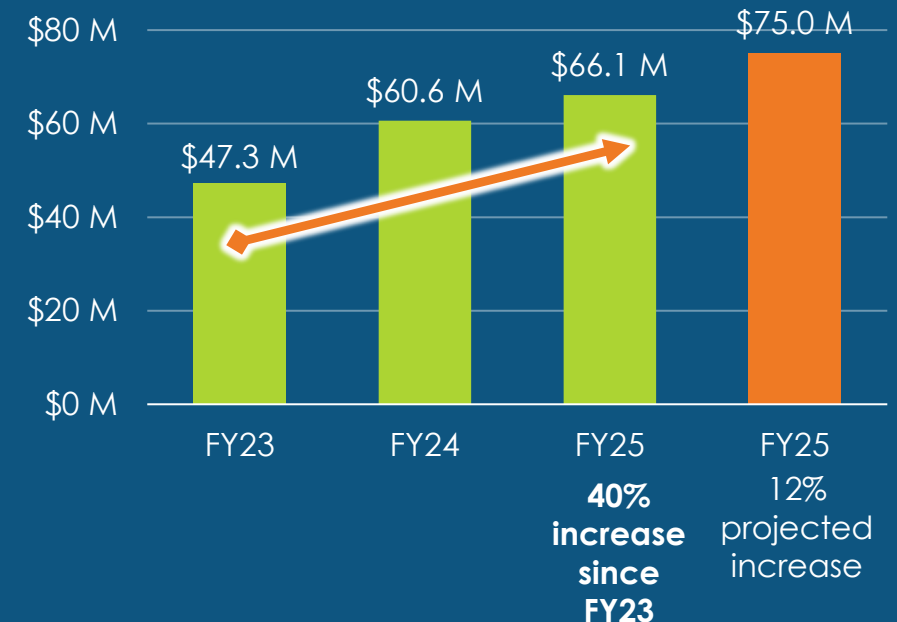
## Authorization Increase – Recurring

Priority  
4

- ▶ Funds provided through authorization are received from Department of Defense (DOD) to meet costs of federal dining contract at Fort Jackson
- ▶ DOD funds are
  - ▶ Received by State Treasurer's Office
  - ▶ Passed to SCCB
  - ▶ SCCB distributes funds to Blind Vendors operating 10 dining facilities at Fort Jackson
- ▶ SCCB does not utilize any of these funds

**\$26,000,000**

Increase in Cost of Fort Jackson Dining Contract



# Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

## Non-recurring

Priority  
**5**

- ▶ Non-recurring funds to allow ABVI to provide adjustment to blindness services to adults under 55 who are not employed or currently seeking employment
- ▶ Expected to serve 100-150 individuals statewide
- ▶ Assisting individuals with independence creates a foundation for future employment-related opportunities
- ▶ SCCB unable to serve this population

**\$361,450**

# Provisos

## New Provisos

### **Proviso I - Carry Forward**

- ▶ State Matching Funds Carry Forward
  - ▶ Vocational Rehabilitation
  - ▶ Business Enterprise Program
  - ▶ SCCB Training Center
  - ▶ Transition Services
  - ▶ Older Blind Services
- ▶ State-funded Programs Carry Forward
  - ▶ Prevention of Blindness
  - ▶ Children's Services

### **Proviso II - Grant Indirect Reimbursement**

# Summary of Requests

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- 1) Older Blind & Prevention – \$553,301
  - 2) Shared Services – \$113,008
  - 3) Federal Authorization Increase – \$7,053,880
  - 4) Business Enterprise Program (Authorization) – \$26,000,000
  - 5) Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired – \$361,450
- ▶ Two Provisos
    - ▶ Carry Forward
    - ▶ Grant Indirect Reimbursement

# SCCB Success Stories



Janet Beaudry



Marty M, Teacher

**Success stories provided**

# Wrap-Up

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Thank you for your time, attention and support.