

NO. 63

JOURNAL
of the
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
of the
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



REGULAR SESSION BEGINNING TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025

FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2026
(STATEWIDE SESSION)

Friday, May 15, 2026
(Statewide Session)

~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~

Indicates New Matter

The House assembled at 11:00 a.m.

Deliberations were opened with prayer by Rev. Jeff Lingerfelt as follows:

Our thought for today is from Psalm 135:5-6: “For I know that the Lord is great; our Lord is above all gods. He does all that pleases him in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and in all their depths.”

Let us pray. O Lord Most High and our benevolent Father: O Lord, Yhwh, You alone are the true and living God, the eternal king who reigns over heaven and earth. You sovereignly direct all things according to Your divine purposes. Though Your ways are beyond our finite understanding, we know that Your wisdom is perfect and Your counsel unfailing. For Your ways are higher than man’s ways, and You accomplish all things according to Your perfect will. We, are Your servants and administrators in the divine institution of government, called to carry out Your divine plan in each of our lives. We are here because You ordained that we gather this day to accomplish Your sovereign purposes. In times of uncertainty, may we remember that You orchestrate Your eternal decrees according to Your perfect divine will and plan. Your ways are beyond our understanding. We, Your servants, need Your help and guidance! “Who is like you, O Lord, who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? Now to the Lord our God, the one enthroned on high, ruler of heaven and earth be honor, glory and majesty, now and forevermore. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. Amen.

Pursuant to Rule 6.3, the House of Representatives was led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America by ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT.

After corrections to the Journal of the proceedings of yesterday, ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT ordered it confirmed.

MOTION ADOPTED

Rep. REESE moved that when the House adjourns, it adjourn in memory of Evelyn Eichelberger Dowdy, which was agreed to.

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In Memory of Evelyn Eichelberger Dowdy

Today, when we adjourn, I ask that we adjourn in memory of Evelyn Eichelberger Dowdy. She was born in 1940, at Good Samaritan Waverly Hospital here in Columbia, South Carolina, and raised in Irmo by the late Reverend Lewis and Rubye Eichelberger.

Evelyn was an exceptional student who attended the former Richlex High School in Irmo, South Carolina, graduating in 1957. She went on to attend Benedict College, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Education and becoming a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Later, she furthered her studies at Indiana University, where she received a Master of Science degree in Business Education in 1963.

A devoted member of Red Hill Baptist Church in Gadsden, Evelyn served faithfully as past president of the Missionary Society, past superintendent of Sunday School, and pianist.

She also shared her musical gifts by teaching piano lessons to many students throughout the Lower Richland community. She was widely known as an exceptional cook, known for her warm hospitality, and a beacon of light who shared her radiant smile, generosity, and joyful spirit with others. And, mostly notably for me, she was my junior high school guidance counselor.

She is lovingly remembered by her devoted husband, Deacon Allen Dowdy; her two daughters, Dr. Allyson Dowdy Rudolph (Dr. Gerald Rudolph) and Allene Naomi Dowdy, both of Columbia, South Carolina; and her four beloved grandchildren, Bryan Rudolph, Naomi Rudolph, Noah Rudolph, and Rubye Rudolph, all of Columbia, South Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, again, I ask that when we adjourn today, that we adjourn in memory of Mrs. Evelyn Eichelberger Dowdy.

Rep. Robert Reese

SILENT PRAYER

The House stood in silent prayer for Don “DJ” Keller and all other fallen officers.

COMMUNICATION

The following was received:

**State of South Carolina Executive Department
Office of the Governor**

[HJ]

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Executive Order No.2026-09

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2026, the regular annual session of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina adjourned *sine die* in accordance with section 2-1-180 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has not yet adopted, enrolled, or ratified a General Appropriations Act for the 2026–2027 fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has enrolled a joint resolution to continue funding state government’s recurring expenses at the same level as the 2025–2026 fiscal year at the end of the current fiscal year on June 30, 2026, *see* S. 769, 126th Gen. Assemb. (S.C. 2026). Such a continuing resolution, however, fails to accomplish the State’s important budget priorities for the coming fiscal year, including additional funding for roads and infrastructure and raising the starting salary for our teachers to at least \$50,000; and

WHEREAS, because “[m]oney shall be drawn from the treasury of the State or the treasury of any of its political subdivisions only in pursuance of appropriations made by law,” S.C. Const. art. X, § 8, the absence of a General Appropriations Act for the upcoming fiscal year is a matter that requires the immediate attention of, and action by, the General Assembly prior to its next regular session; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly began debating South Carolina’s congressional districts in light of the United States Supreme Court’s decision in *Louisiana v. Callais*, 608 U.S. ___, Nos. 24-109, 24-110 (U.S. Apr. 29, 2026), but that debate was not concluded when the General Assembly adjourned *sine die*. An issue of such public importance and interest should be not only debated but also decided by the People’s representatives; and

WHEREAS, the undersigned has determined that it is necessary and appropriate for the General Assembly to convene in advance of its next regular session for purposes of promptly adopting a General Appropriations Act and finishing its debate on South Carolina’s congressional maps ahead of the 2026 election cycle, both of which are independent, extraordinary circumstances to convene an extra session; and

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WHEREAS, article IV, section 19 of the South Carolina Constitution provides that “[t]he Governor may on extraordinary occasions convene the General Assembly in extra session” and further provides that “[s]hould either house remain without a quorum for five days, or in case of disagreement between the two houses during any session with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such times as he shall think proper, not beyond the time of the annual session then next ensuing”; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to article IV, section 19 of the South Carolina Constitution and in accordance with the authority and discretion conferred therein, the undersigned has determined that the foregoing circumstances constitute “extraordinary occasions” such that it is necessary and appropriate to convene the General Assembly in extra session at the earliest practicable opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the undersigned has concluded that 11:00 AM on Friday, May 15, 2026, is the earliest practicable opportunity to convene the General Assembly in extra session.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of South Carolina and pursuant to the Constitution and Laws of this State and the powers conferred upon me therein, I hereby call an extra session of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina to convene at the State House in Columbia, commencing at 11:00 AM on Friday, May 15, 2026. This Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect unless and until modified, amended, or rescinded by subsequent Order.

Henry Dargan McMaster
Governor

Received as information.

ROLL CALL

The roll call of the House of Representatives was taken resulting as follows:

Alexander	Anderson	Atkinson
Bailey	Ballentine	Bamberg
Bannister	Bauer	Beach

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Bowers	Bradley	Brittain
Burns	Bustos	Calhoon
Caskey	Chapman	Chumley
Clyburn	Cobb-Hunter	Collins
Cox	Crawford	Cromer
Davis	Dillard	Duncan
Edgerton	Ford	Forrest
Frank	Gagnon	Garvin
Gibson	Gilliam	Gilliard
Gilreath	Govan	Grant
Guest	Guffey	Haddon
Hager	Hardee	Harris
Hart	Hartnett	Hartz
Hayes	Henderson-Myers	Herbkersman
Hewitt	Hiott	Hixon
Holman	Hosey	Howard
Huff	J. E. Johnson	J. L. Johnson
Jones	Jordan	Kilmartin
King	Kirby	Landing
Lastinger	Lawson	Ligon
Long	Lowe	Luck
Magnuson	Martin	McCabe
McCravy	McDaniel	McGinnis
C. Mitchell	D. Mitchell	Montgomery
J. Moore	Morgan	Moss
Neese	B. Newton	W. Newton
Oremus	Pace	Pedalino
Pope	Rankin	Reese
Rivers	Robbins	Rose
Rutherford	Sanders	Schuessler
Scott	Sessions	G. M. Smith
M. M. Smith	Stavrinakis	Taylor
Teeple	Terribile	Vaughan
Waters	Wetmore	White
Whitmire	Wickensimer	Williams
Willis	Yow	

Total Present--116

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STATEMENT OF ATTENDANCE

Rep. J. MOORE signed a statement with the Clerk that he came in after the roll call of the House and was present for the Session on Thursday, May 14.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT granted Rep. WOOTEN a leave of absence for the day.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT granted Rep. STAVRINAKIS a leave of absence for the day.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT granted Rep. SPANN-WILDER a leave of absence for the day due to medical reasons.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT granted Rep. WEEKS a leave of absence for the day.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT granted Rep. BREWER a leave of absence for the day due to the birth of his child.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT granted Rep. BERNSTEIN a leave of absence for the day.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT granted Rep. SANDERS a temporary leave of absence.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT granted Rep. GILLIAM a temporary leave of absence.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT granted Rep. T. MOORE a temporary leave of absence.

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CO-SPONSORS ADDED

In accordance with House Rule 5.2 below:

“5.2 Every bill before presentation shall have its title endorsed; every report, its title at length; every petition, memorial, or other paper, its prayer or substance; and, in every instance, the name of the member presenting any paper shall be endorsed and the papers shall be presented by the member to the Speaker at the desk. A member may add his name to a bill or resolution or a co-sponsor of a bill or resolution may remove his name at any time prior to the bill or resolution receiving passage on second reading. The member or co-sponsor shall notify the Clerk of the House in writing of his desire to have his name added or removed from the bill or resolution. The Clerk of the House shall print the member's or co-sponsor's written notification in the House Journal. The removal or addition of a name does not apply to a bill or resolution sponsored by a committee.”

CO-SPONSOR(S) ADDED

Bill Number: H. 5683
Date: ADD:
05/15/26 MCCRAVY

SPEAKER IN CHAIR

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The SPEAKER granted Rep. KING a temporary leave of absence to attend a funeral.

RETURNED TO THE SENATE WITH AMENDMENTS

The following Bill was taken up, read the third time, and ordered returned to the Senate with amendments:

S. 1043 -- Senators Adams, Zell, Leber and Graham: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS SO AS TO ENACT THE "CIVIL AIR PATROL LEAVE ACT"; BY ADDING CHAPTER 23 TO TITLE 25 SO AS TO DEFINE TERMS RELATED TO THE CIVIL AIR PATROL LEAVE ACT, TO PROVIDE FOR THE CREATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF CIVIL AIR PATROL LEAVE, TO PRESCRIBE THE DUTIES OF EMPLOYEES AND RIGHTS OF EMPLOYERS REGARDING CIVIL AIR PATROL

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LEAVE, TO PROVIDE EXCEPTIONS, AND TO PROVIDE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS PROTECTIONS.

H. 5683--REQUESTS FOR DEBATE

The following Bill was taken up:

H. 5683 -- Reps. Rankin, Pace, C. Mitchell, Cromer, Gilreath, Bustos, Magnuson, Edgerton, Burns, Oremus, Bailey, Guest, Brittain, Chumley, J. E. Johnson, Haddon, Jordan, Lawson, Lowe, McGinnis, B. Newton, W. Newton, G. M. Smith, White, Willis and McCravy: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 7-19-35 SO AS TO ESTABLISH THE ELECTION DISTRICTS FROM WHICH MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ARE ELECTED; AND BY REPEALING SECTION 7-19-45 RELATING TO ELECTION DISTRICTS FROM WHICH MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WERE FORMERLY ELECTED.

Reps. W. NEWTON, GARVIN, MCCRAVY, BALLENTINE, WHITE, EDGERTON, HIXON, OREMUS, CROMER, COX, WATERS, GILLIARD, RIVERS, KIRBY, HEWITT, GRANT and GOVAN requested debate on the Bill.

H. 4042--DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate Amendments to the following Bill were taken up for consideration:

H. 4042 -- Reps. Kilmartin, White, Gilreath, Cromer, Guffey, Harris, Hager, McCravy, Edgerton, Terrible, Magnuson, Lastinger, D. Mitchell, Sessions, Chapman, Brewer, Lawson, Oremus, Hartz, Vaughan, Pedalino, Teeple, Landing, Rankin, Schuessler, Ligon, Long, Sanders, Ford, T. Moore, Forrest, Chumley, Bowers, Taylor, Hixon, M. M. Smith, Gibson and Duncan: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 44-53-150 SO AS TO AUTHORIZE THE OVER-THE-COUNTER SALE OF IVERMECTIN TABLETS.

Rep. W. NEWTON moved to adjourn debate on the Senate Amendments, which was agreed to.

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H. 5538--DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate Amendments to the following Bill were taken up for consideration:

H. 5538 -- Reps. Pope, Herbkersman, G. M. Smith, Hartz, W. Newton, Jordan, Ligon, Oremus, Neese, Taylor, Hiott, Cromer, Gilreath, Morgan, Lastinger, Huff, Burns, Chumley, Beach, D. Mitchell, McCabe, Pedalino, Vaughan, Kilmartin, Gibson and Govan: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ENACTING THE "GUARANTEE BANKING ACT" BY ADDING CHAPTER 47 TO TITLE 34 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR FAIRNESS AND TRANSPARENCY IN BANKING.

Rep. W. NEWTON moved to adjourn debate on the Senate Amendments, which was agreed to.

S. 922--DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate Amendments to the following Bill were taken up for consideration:

S. 922 -- Senators Massey, Alexander, Hutto, Campsen, Leber and Kimbrell: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 1-3-210, RELATING TO FILLING VACANCIES WHEN THE SENATE IS NOT IN SESSION, SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR WHEN THE GOVERNOR MAY MAKE AN INTERIM APPOINTMENT; BY AMENDING SECTION 7-3-10, RELATING TO THE STATE ELECTION COMMISSION, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE ELECTION COMMISSION SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY ADDING SECTION 1-30-12 SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT CABINET MEMBERS WILL SERVE COTERMINOUS WITH THE GOVERNOR THAT APPOINTS THEM; BY AMENDING SECTION 1-13-40, RELATING TO THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN AFFAIRS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 1-15-10, RELATING TO THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 1-31-10, RELATING TO THE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND

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CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 6-19-30, RELATING TO THE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 13-1-370, RELATING TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE DIVISION OF STATE DEVELOPMENT, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 13-19-10, RELATING TO THE MIDLANDS AUTHORITY, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 13-21-10, RELATING TO THE EDISTO DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 25-21-20, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE VETERANS' TRUST FUND, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 38-89-160, RELATING TO THE DAY CARE JOINT UNDERWRITING ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-7-10, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF BARBER EXAMINERS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-13-10, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF COSMETOLOGY, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-20-40, RELATING TO THE PANEL FOR DIETETICS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-30-40, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPY, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-35-10, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF LONG TERM HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATORS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-47-11, RELATING TO THE MEDICAL DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-51-30, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF PODIATRY EXAMINERS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-57-40, RELATING TO THE REAL ESTATE COMMISSION, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-59-10, RELATING TO THE RESIDENTIAL BUILDERS COMMISSION, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND

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CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-60-10, RELATING TO THE REAL ESTATE APPRAISERS BOARD, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-63-10, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-67-10, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY AND AUDIOLOGY, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-69-10, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-81-50, RELATING TO THE STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 43-31-40, RELATING TO THE STATE AGENCY OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 44-43-1320, RELATING TO DONATE LIFE SOUTH CAROLINA, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 44-53-830, RELATING TO THE DARE FUND, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 46-41-260, RELATING TO THE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES ADVISORY COMMISSION, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 46-50-40, RELATING TO THE COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 48-23-10, RELATING TO THE COMMISSION OF FORESTRY, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 50-5-2700, RELATING TO THE ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMPACT, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 51-13-1720, RELATING TO THE OLD JACKSONBOROUGH HISTORIC DISTRICT BOARD OF REGENTS, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 54-17-30, RELATING TO THE MARITIME SECURITY COMMISSION, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 60-11-40, RELATING TO THE COMMISSION OF ARCHIVES AND

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HISTORY, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; BY AMENDING SECTION 60-15-20, RELATING TO THE ARTS COMMISSION, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 63-11-700, RELATING TO THE DIVISION FOR REVIEW OF THE FOSTER CARE OF CHILDREN, SO AS TO REMOVE THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE.

Rep. W. NEWTON moved to adjourn debate on the Senate Amendments, which was agreed to.

H. 5683--AMENDED AND DEBATE INTERRUPTED

The following Bill was taken up:

H. 5683 -- Reps. Rankin, Pace, C. Mitchell, Cromer, Gilreath, Bustos, Magnuson, Edgerton, Burns, Oremus, Bailey, Guest, Brittain, Chumley, J. E. Johnson, Haddon, Jordan, Lawson, Lowe, McGinnis, B. Newton, W. Newton, G. M. Smith, White, Willis and McCravy: A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 7-19-35 SO AS TO ESTABLISH THE ELECTION DISTRICTS FROM WHICH MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ARE ELECTED; AND BY REPEALING SECTION 7-19-45 RELATING TO ELECTION DISTRICTS FROM WHICH MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WERE FORMERLY ELECTED.

The Committee on Judiciary proposed the following Amendment No. 1 to H. 5683 (LC-5683.HDB0016H):

Amend the bill, as and if amended, by adding an appropriately numbered section to read:

SECTION X. (A)(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of Sections 7-11-15 or 7-11-210, and for 2026 only, the dates for filing for all candidates seeking nomination by a political party primary or a political party convention for one of the seven seats in the U.S. House of Representatives is between noon on June first and noon on June fifth.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 7-13-45, notice of the dates of the filing period set forth in item (1) for candidates for U.S. House of Representatives, the place and street address where filings may be made, and the hours an authorized person will be present to receive filings must be published on the State Election Commission's website as soon as practicable following the enactment of this act.

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(B) Notwithstanding the provisions of Sections 7-13-15 or 7-13-40, and for 2026 only, a special primary must be held on August 18, 2026, for the seven seats in the U.S. House of Representatives to be voted on in the November 3, 2026, general election. Written certification of the names of all candidates for the seven seats in the U.S. House of Representatives to be placed on the special primary ballots must be made by the political party chairman, vice chairman, or secretary to the State Election Commission no later than noon on June 9, 2026.

(C) A special runoff primary, if necessary, must be held on September 1, 2026.

(D) Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 7-13-350, written certification of the names of the nominees for the seven seats in the U.S. House of Representatives to be placed on the November 3, 2026, general election ballot must be made by the political party chairman, vice chairman, or secretary to the State Election Commission no later than noon on September 9, 2026.

(E)(1) Only votes cast in the special primary and subsequent runoff, if necessary, for candidates for U.S. House may be counted for purposes of determining the names of nominees to appear on the November 3, 2026, general election ballots. No votes cast in the June 9, 2026, statewide primaries for candidates for U.S. House may be counted for these purposes.

(2) In conducting the June 9, 2026, statewide primaries and subsequent runoffs, each county board of voter registration and elections must post signs or other appropriate notices in conspicuous locations informing voters of the impact of the provisions of item (1) on ballots being cast. The language to be printed on these signs must be approved by the State Election Commission or its executive director.

(F) In conducting the special primaries and runoffs, each county board of voter registration and elections may combine polling places for reasons including, but not limited to, the availability of poll workers and polling locations. Provided, each county board of voter registration and elections must ensure voters have adequate notice and access to polling places.

(G)(1) The State Election Commission shall issue a refund in the amount of the filing fee paid by any person under Section 7-13-40 who filed as a candidate for U.S. House of Representatives for the June 9, 2026, statewide primaries and does not again file as a candidate under subsection (A).

(2) A person who filed as a candidate for U.S. House of Representatives for the June 9, 2026, statewide primaries and paid the

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filing fee required under Section 7-13-40 may file again to be a candidate under subsection (A) by filing the appropriate statement of intention of candidacy and party pledge without an additional filing fee.

(H) In the event of a conflict between this act and the provisions of Title 7 of the S.C. Code, the provisions of this act shall control.

Renumber sections to conform.

Amend title to conform.

Rep. JORDAN explained the amendment.

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT IN CHAIR

Rep. JORDAN continued speaking.

Rep. BAMBERG spoke against the amendment.

Rep. GARVIN spoke against the amendment.

REMARKS MADE BY REP. GARVIN

Thank you, Mr. Speaker:

On Wednesday, May 13th, I watched with intrigue as a bipartisan group of state leaders, including the Governor, Lt. Governor, Senate President, Speaker of the House, and other members of this General Assembly, gathered for the long overdue and well-deserved groundbreaking ceremony for a monument honoring the life of a remarkable South Carolinian, Robert Smalls. Growing up here in Columbia, my mother taught my brother and I that “those who don’t know their history are doomed to repeat it.” Thus, as a student of history, I couldn’t help but notice the irony of what I was witnessing and the historical parallels to the present.

You see, Robert Smalls was an enslaved man, who guided his family and friends to freedom when he commandeered the Confederate ship, The Planter. After the Civil War ended, Mr. Smalls went on to become the first black member of this State House, went on to serve in the State Senate and became one of the longest serving members of Congress from SC at that time. He was even a founder of the SC Republican Party. Following the Civil War, During the 1868 SC Constitutional Convention, the majority African American delegates implemented the first system of free public education, and other civil rights. However, this progress was short-lived.

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Ironically, Robert Small's long and distinguished Congressional Career came to an abrupt end shortly after the Compromise of 1877, which was an agreement that withdrew federal troops from the South, which effectively ended the Reconstruction Era, thus wiping away federal protection, election oversight, and all of the hard-fought gains that African Americans in the south had achieved.

In 1895, Robert Smalls was one of only five African Americans who was part of the SC Constitutional Convention that met in this State House, and he fought hard against the supermajority "Tillmanite" delegates led by Pitchfork Ben Tillman, to prevent the regressive dismantling of the previous progressive constitution and the insertion of discriminatory language that would successfully disenfranchise his community for more than a generation. This constitution created poll taxes for black residents which had its intended effect as the number of black registered voters decreased from 137,000 to just over 5,000 the following year.

This was intentional. This was deliberate. Pitchfork Ben Tillman, who is also honored on these State House grounds, bragged about lynching and disenfranchising black folks, and stated that they were a "race of beings naturally ungrateful and treacherous" who should be kept in a subordinate position.

After the conclusion of the short-lived Reconstruction Era, It would be nearly another one hundred years before another African American would have the opportunity to represent SC in the US Congress. That person is Jim Clyburn.

Congressman Smalls once said, "My race needs no special defense, for the history of them in this country proves them to be the equal of any people anywhere. All they need is *an equal chance* in the battle of life." *An equal chance.*

Will it be another 100 years before the descendants of Robert Smalls be given an *equal chance* in the battle of life? Will it be another 100 years before we elect another Robert Smalls or Jim Clyburn to Congress? That decision will be determined by our actions over the next few days.

Over the past two weeks since the Callais Supreme Court decision and it became evident that this legislative body would yield to the demands of Donald Trump to overturn the progress that so many fought for, bled

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for, had their homes bombed for, even died for – I’ve found myself explaining to a community that has endured centuries of tumult with small victories and bigger setbacks along the way, how the Supreme Court’s actions to gut the Voting Rights Act would impact their ability to meaningfully participate in this our democracy.

I was born in 1991—nearly 35 years ago – the year before the modern-day 6th congressional district was drawn which allowed for minority communities to select a candidate of their choice for the first time since the Reconstruction and Robert Smalls era. Throughout my life, I’ve ever only lived in or near, an “opportunity district.” What’s an opportunity? It’s a chance for progress. It’s a possibility for communities of interest to select a candidate of their choice. An opportunity is the ability to achieve a set goal. *An opportunity as Robert Smalls stated, is an equal chance.* So I’ve found myself over the past two weeks, explaining that this legislative body, and other legislators throughout the South, are systemically and viciously stripping away the *opportunity* for minority voters to select a candidate that reflects their interest, values, and political beliefs.

A few years ago, I utilized an ancestry DNA test and historical records which demonstrated that my ancestors were brought from the African continent, came through Charleston, and that my family has remained in South Carolina, for at least 10 generations. I am a true South Carolinian.

Over the years, many argued, that black folks no longer needed protection through the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as mindsets and people had changed, specifically within the American South which was the home to the Confederacy. Ironically, yet the first states that do away with minority representation when given the opportunity by an activist, right-wing Supreme Court, are the same southern states where most black folks in the United States live and who have been historically discriminated against. The same states that sent its loyal sons to fight to preserve slavery in 1861 of my ancestors are now the very same states that when no longer court mandated are rolling back voting rights in 2026 of the descendants of those same people who were enslaved. The historical parallels are telling.

Allow me to address the supporters of this bill. Both in and outside of this chamber.

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There are two groups — the first group of supporters will never be convinced that the actions that we're taking that strip minority voters of their *opportunity* to select a candidate of their choice is a bad thing and are quite frankly *downright giddy* to do so. I read your tweets. I hear your comments. I watch your actions.

This group of supporters have proudly argued that minority voters never *deserved* to have a voice or a seat at the table in the first place in what's supposed to be this 250-year-old experiment as a multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious, multi-age democracy. So no matter what I say from this well today, this group will not be swayed as they wear their opposition to voter disenfranchisement as a badge of honor and valor worthy of praise and view it as redemption for the lost cause.

The second group of supporters are folks who *might* be uncomfortable with the idea of stripping minority voters of their ability to select representation of their choice. This group of supporters will make private comments such as "This isn't *my*" map. This group will *privately* concede that these efforts are regressive and wrong yet – whether it be fear, electoral worry, political expediency, or some other rationalization, thus far, they refuse to take a moral stand against these efforts. This group of supporters refuse to go against the loudest and most extreme voices in your party. They refuse to stand up to a president that has declared an effort to Make America Great Again by waging attack after attack on marginalized groups. This group of supporters refuse to do what they know at their core is the right thing to do. Let me remind you of the words of the great theologian and Civil Rights activist, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who stated, "In the end we will not remember the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends." Your silence is deafening. Your support is telling. Your actions speak louder than any words.

Some of you may have constructed a narrative that "I'm only voting in support of partisan districts". While that justification may help you rationalize your vote – I won't let you off that easily.

A yes vote, is in fact a vote to strip 28% of African American voters, or approximately 1.4 million citizens of their voice in the state.

A yes vote, is a vote for Jim Crow like policies that suppresses and dilutes the votes of minority communities.

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A yes vote, reaffirms, “Make America Great Again” as a concept that means America can only be great again without minority representation, and was only built for a few.

A yes vote, is a vote to erase the progress made over the past century since Robert Smalls was ran from the halls of Congress, and his contemporaries ran from these very chambers by actual mobs.

A yes vote, is a vote in support of telling black and brown children that they are unworthy of having a voice or a seat at the table.

One hundred years from now, when the story of this era is told, a yes vote, no matter how you attempt to rationalize it, will forever be associated with your legacies long after we are gone. Will future generations tell the story of a courageous General Assembly that refused to put our social progress in reverse – or will it tell a story of a legislative body that proudly did as its predecessors did and disenfranchise the voices of its people.

We have seen this story before. Yet – while I breath, I hope.

I am reminded of the victors of America’s first sin, slavery, whose bodies lined the chilly waters of the Atlantic, from Africa to North America and who declared, “Before I’d be a slave, I’d be buried in my grave.” Their victories souls proclaimed that “we have overcome”.

I am reminded of those who lay shackled on slave ships, stacked one upon another, with no food to eat, no water to drink, no comfort, and no mercy — surrounded by disease, suffering, and despair. Yet somehow, through every storm and every sorrow, they declared we shall overcome.

I am reminded of those who labored from the early mornings to the late nights in the cotton fields of the South, whose hands built a nation, chopped cotton, cropped tobacco, dug ditches through desert plains, and carved highways through mountain ranges. Through whips, wounds, and weary days, they declared we shall overcome.

I am reminded of those who endured segregation, discrimination, and injustice through Reconstruction, Pitchfork Ben Tillman, Jim Crow, and to this very present day. Through poll test, dog bites, bully clubs, through marches, being called mobs, fire hoses, jail cells, anti-DEI, anti-affirmative action, and closed doors, they declared we shall overcome.

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For without a shadow of a doubt, we've come this far by faith — leaning on the Lord, for He has never failed us yet. And because of that faith, we are still standing. Because of that faith, we are still rising. Because of that faith, we still believe that brighter days are ahead and this nation will live up to its promise and that we shall overcome.

So to all who are listening in this chamber, and across this state, and nation. To those who may feel discouraged to see the progress that took centuries to make be eroded in a matter of days at lightning pace. To those who are worried about their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren living in a world with less rights than they have enjoyed, allow me to remind you that we have faced challenge and adversity before, and we overcame those obstacles. It's important that we who labor in this chamber, and those who labor across this state, and nation, who's votes are now being disenfranchised – not lose hope.

In times like these – I'm still encouraged.

My faith tradition reminds me that:

Faith without works is dead. So it's time to register, it's to vote, and it's time to change systems.

For My faith tradition teaches me that:

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
My faith tradition reminds me to:

Fight the good fight.

My faith tradition reminds me to:

Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor

My faith tradition reminds me to:

“...let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!”

My faith tradition teaches me that:

“...they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.

My faith tradition shares:

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“What you have done to the least of these, you have done to me also.”

My faith tradition says:

If God is for us, who can be against us?"

My faith tradition says:

Weeping may endure for a night – and its nighttime y'all – but joy – cometh in the morning. For we shall overcome.

Rep. ALEXANDER spoke against the amendment.

Rep. GOVAN spoke against the amendment.

SPEAKER *PRO TEMPORE* IN CHAIR

Rep. GOVAN continued speaking.

Rep. WILLIAMS moved that Rule 3.9 be invoked.

A quorum was present.

Rep. GOVAN continued speaking.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The SPEAKER *PRO TEMPORE* granted Rep. WHITE a temporary leave of absence.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The SPEAKER *PRO TEMPORE* granted Rep. KILMARTIN a temporary leave of absence.

Rep. GOVAN continued speaking.

ACTING SPEAKER HIOTT IN CHAIR

Rep. RUTHERFORD spoke against the amendment.

SPEAKER *PRO TEMPORE* IN CHAIR

Rep. J. MOORE spoke against the amendment.

Rep. BAUER spoke against the amendment.

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REMARKS MADE BY REP. BAUER

We also are tested on 20 guiding principles by Gichin Funakoshi, which I think members in this body need to hear.

1. Do not forget that Karate-do begins and ends with Rei.
2. There is no first strike in karate
3. Karate stands on the side of justice
4. First know yourself and then know others.
5. Mentality over technique
6. The mind must be set free
7. Calamity springs from carelessness
8. Karate goes beyond the Dojo
9. Karate is a lifelong pursuit
10. Apply the way of karate to all things in life. Therein lies its beauty.
11. Karate is like boiling water, without heat, it returns to its tepid state
12. Do not think of winning. Think, rather; of not losing
13. Make adjustments according to your opponent
14. The outcome of a battle depends on how one handles emptiness and fullness (weakness and strength)
15. Think of the opponent's hands and feet as swords

Mr. Speaker I rise today to speak about something very near and dear to me and who I am as person. Competition.

As many of you know, I was a college athlete. I grew up poor, but athletics opened doors for me. I was able to get a college degree because of a volleyball scholarship.

That changed my life. It gave me a path to the middle class. Provided me with an opportunity to earn an advanced degree. To own a home. And eventually, run for public office and serve here with all of you.

I'm living the American dream in part because of the opportunities athletics offered me.

But athletics did a lot more for me than get me through college. It shaped who I am as a person. It made me a better person; a more honorable person.

I also practice zen shotokai karate. It's extremely physical. But in my studies we write papers, we take written tests, and are put through tests

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to challenge our comprehension of our 3 pillars: patience, humility and discipline.

16. When you step beyond your own gate, you face a million enemies.
17. Kamae (ready stance) is for beginners; later, one stands in shizentai (natural stance)
18. Perform kata exactly; actual combat is another matter
19. Do not forget the employment or withdrawal of power, the extension or contraction of the body, the swift or leisurely application of technique
20. Be constantly mindful, diligent and resourceful in your pursuit of the Way.

We are tested by our sensei and by our fellow karate-kas to do better. I've competed before in kata, sparing; and weapons, and I've won some and lost some.

But we are trained to do what's right. We are taught to follow the rules laid before us. To not succumb to pressure. We compete not just with each other, but most importantly, ourselves.

You see, athletic competition shapes character because it forces us to follow shared rules, to respect our opponents, and examine our own shortcomings when we fail.

The best lessons I learned were not from matches I won, but from the many that I lost.

When we play by the rules, competition counsels grace in victory. And dignity in failure.

We play by the rules because tomorrow, we have to play again. And again. And again.

And because we will play again, we must respect our opponents and the game that we love by following the rules.

I have Jost respect for most of you in this room.

I was not here when you gerrymandered our congressional districts in 2021. That too was wrong.

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But it's ironic that this body defended our current map all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court, which overruled our U.S. District Court and held that our congressional lines were not a racial gerrymander.

That decision, just two years ago, upheld the current 6-1 map that you drew to advantage Republicans in our congressional delegation.

So, what's changed?

Some of you claim the Supreme Court's latest response is the reason for this mid-decade redraw. That the Sixth Congressional District that you drew and you fought for all the way to the Supreme Court suddenly offends the Constitution.

That's nonsense. And I can prove it.

Prior to the Callais decision, when Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act required drawing a district to help minority voters, those voters had to be a majority of the district population.

Black voters are not a majority of the population in Congressional District 6. They're 46%--a plurality.

So, CD-6 isn't the sort of district Callais was concerned about and it was upheld in 2024 by the US Supreme Court.

So, again, what's changed?

But for most in this room, I have lost respect over what you are doing here and you should be ashamed of yourselves.

I have struggled to find the words to convey my frustration with your lack of courage and the ease with which Donald Trump bends you to his will.

So instead, I borrow the words of a Republican and true patriot, the likes of which we desperately need more of:

“In our country we don't swear an oath to an individual or a political party. We take our oath to defend the United States Constitution, and

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that oath must mean something. Today, I say this to my Republican colleagues who are defending the indefensible: there will come a day when Donald Trump is gone, but your dishonor will remain.”

U.S. Representative Liz Cheney, June 10, 2022.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my comments be published in the Journal.

The question then recurred to the adoption of the amendment.

The amendment was then adopted.

HOUSE TO MEET AT 11:00 A.M. MONDAY

Rep. JORDAN moved that when the House adjourns it adjourn to meet at 11:00 a.m. Monday, which was agreed to.

Rep. JORDAN moved that the House do now adjourn, which was agreed to.

Further proceedings were interrupted by adjournment, the pending question being the consideration of amendments.

ADJOURNMENT

At 3:03 p.m. the House, in accordance with the motion of Rep. REESE, adjourned in memory of Evelyn Eichelberger Dowdy, to meet at 11:00 a.m. Monday, May 18.

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