



2026 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Delivering Results for REALTORS® through Advocacy



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Leadership Message

Winning through advocacy

As we conclude the 2025-2026 Legislative Session I am pleased to report the significant advocacy wins for South Carolina REALTORS®. This session underscored the profound strength of the South Carolina real estate industry and our 30,000 REALTOR® members.

At the onset of the legislative session, our leadership and tireless work of the SCR Legislative Committee established a clear agenda based on REALTOR® values of defending private property rights, expanding housing opportunity, protecting small businesses, and promoting a tax environment that supports our local communities.

Thanks to your direct engagement and the work of local associations and State Political Coordinators responses to critical Calls to Action, we successfully advanced defensive and offensive wins directly across these core initiatives.

From securing immediate small business tax cuts and optimizing transportation modernization to addressing processes of clearing title for heirs' property and streamlining

legal remedies to remove unlawful occupants of property, this session delivered clear victories. We successfully identified over 1,200 unique bills, aggressively opposing overreaching measures that would have added unnecessary financial liabilities onto housing developments or complicated standard transaction parameters.

These legislative milestones were achieved through coordinated grassroots efforts that could only be accomplished with South Carolina REALTORS® at the table.

The SCR Advocacy Team wants to extend a special thank you to the SCR Legislative Committee and Chair Adam Cates, our South Carolina local associations, and our SPCs for their tireless effort all year. Your presence at the Statehouse, participation in advocacy campaigns, and ongoing support for RPAC ensure our profession maintains its critical position at the helm of economic policy. We look forward to building on this momentum as we prepare for the sessions ahead.



Nick Kremydas

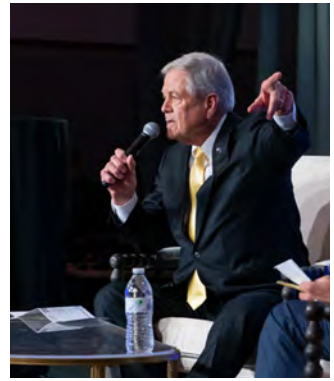
Chief Executive Officer

Pictured: SCR Legislative Committee Chair Adam Cates with Zeke Morris 2025 NAR REALTOR® Party Director.





Pictured left to right: SC REALTORS® 2026 Leadership Team - President Corwyn Melette, President-Elect Julie Whitesell, Treasurer Steve Taylor, Secretary Ashley Jackrel, Immediate Past President Keon Aldrich



Pictured left to right: SCETV Reporter and Moderator Gavin Jackson, South Carolina Candidates for Governor Alan Wilson, Pam Evette, Dr. Jermain Johnson, and Ralph Norman

Thank You!

Your participation makes the difference

To all members who took time out of their businesses to attend this year's SCR's Legislative Meetings, Thank you! Your attendance at the conference, legislative reception, and SC Statehouse prove that when it comes to vital legislative issues that impact housing, Realtors® show up for their businesses and communities. We hope you enjoyed the chance to learn about the Realtor® legislative process, our advocacy goals, and even hear from the candidates running for South Carolina Governor.

With your help, we can continue empowering advocacy by supporting homeownership, leading the way by prioritizing property rights, backing Realtor® champions with RPAC support, and creating change through the power of political engagement.

The 2026 SCR Leadership Team,

President Corwyn Melette
 President Elect Julie Whitesell
 Treasurer Steve Taylor
 Secretary Ashley Jackrel
 Immediate Past President Keon Aldrich

UNLEASHING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH TAX & HOUSING REFORM

SC Small Business Tax Cut Act (S. 688)

This legislation reduces property tax and administrative compliance burdens for qualifying small businesses. In conjunction with the Act, the legislature also added an exemption related to business personal property tax for small businesses. The bill provides that a “small business” is permitted an exemption on the first \$10,000 of net depreciated value of business personal property (“BPP”) owned by the business. These new provisions become effective July 1, 2026.

Heirs’ Property Tax Relief Act (H. 4477)

This legislation helps families clear title to heirs’ property without triggering unfair tax reassessments, creating a more straightforward path to generational property ownership and marketability.



Abandoned Buildings Tax Credit (S. 853)

This legislation revises the state’s Abandoned Buildings Revitalization Act to make the tax credit program more flexible and clear for rehabilitating abandoned buildings. Specifically, it amends definitions so that a building does not need to have had an income-producing use before abandonment to qualify, update applicability provisions, clarify when a developer must file a notice of intent to rehabilitate to claim the credit, prohibit using the tax credit as collateral for debt, and remove certain certification requirements for state-owned abandoned building sites.

Property Tax Win

Eligible homeowners will be exempt from paying property taxes on the first \$75,000 of their primary residence’s value, up from \$50,000. Both the full SC House and Senate must formally vote to approve the newly reached budget compromise. Once officially passed this change will be effective for tax year 2026.



STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE

DOT Modernization (S. 831)

This legislation modernizes the Department of Transportation and addresses infrastructure and congestion concerns in the state's transportation system. The bills focus on needed operational reform while separating out funding measures.

SCR Advocacy Impact: DOT Modernization in its original form would have imposed overreaching EV fees and congestion mitigation fees directly on new real estate development.

These harmful development fees were completely removed from the enacted statute after extensive advocacy efforts.



Pictured: SCR President Corwyn Melette testifies at the Senate Transportation Subcommittee Meeting on housing costs and affordability in South Carolina.

DEFENDING PROPERTY RIGHTS

“I think the days of squatters being allowed to hijack a property are over,” said Nick Kremydas, chief executive officer of the South Carolina Association of Realtors.” (WISV News, July 7, 2026)



Pictured: SCR CEO Nick Kremydas appears in WISV's news story, "South Carolina's new anti-squatting law speeds removal process, changes eviction appeals"

Unlawful Occupants of Property Act (H. 3387)

This legislation addresses the issue of squatters and provides property owners with an alternative legal remedy to remove unauthorized occupants. The bill clarifies probate issues and provides the court discretion regarding the structure of rent payments during an appeal, among other provisions.

Eviction Removal from the Public Index (H. 4270)

This legislation addresses eviction record policies and housing stability issues. This bill allows for the removal of eviction records after seven years from the public index. The legislation reflects growing bipartisan conversations about balancing housing access with fairness and transparency in the rental market. It ensures landlords have an adequate risk history but does not follow the tenant around indefinitely.

Domestic Violence in Rental Properties (H. 3569)

This legislation amends the state's landlord-tenant laws to support residential tenants who are victims of certain domestic violence offenses. The bill allows protected tenants to terminate their rental agreements within sixty days of a documented qualifying incident without incurring penalties or fees typically associated with early termination. Protected tenants must provide written notice to their landlord within this sixty-day period and relinquish all legal rights to the premises.

Ongoing Legislative Advocacy Issues

Insurance Rate Reduction and Policyholder Protection Act

(H.4817)

H.4817 is comprehensive insurance reform legislation designed to lower insurance costs and strengthen consumer protections across the state.

The bill expands regulatory oversight of insurance rates, strengthens enforcement against insurance fraud and predatory contractor practices, and limits discriminatory factors in auto insurance underwriting. It also promotes policyholder savings and resilience by requiring certain deductible options, expanding catastrophe savings incentives, and investing in home mitigation and wind-damage retrofit programs.

SCR supports lawmakers in their effort to improve affordability, fairness, and long-term stability in South Carolina's insurance market while increasing accountability for insurers and related industries.

Prohibition of Eminent Domain for Private, Petroleum Pipeline Companies (S.689)

S.689 clarifies and limits the use of eminent domain by pipeline companies by explicitly prohibiting private, for-profit pipeline operators from exercising condemnation authority unless they qualify as a regulated public utility under state law.

The bill strengthens private property rights by ensuring that eminent domain is reserved for entities serving a clear public purpose, rather than commercial infrastructure projects driven by private profit.

SCR supports reducing ambiguity in current statute and protecting landowners from involuntary easements, improving legal clarity, and realigning eminent domain authority with traditional public utility oversight.



Pictured: SCR Past President Reah Smith with Rep. Don Chapman at SCR's Legislative Meetings

Ongoing Legislative Advocacy Issues

Homeowners Association Reform

SCR supports policies that promote transparency, accountability, and professionalism in homeowners association (HOA) governance and management.

Drawing from licensing models in neighboring states, South Carolina should consider reasonable standards for HOA management that emphasize competency, ethical conduct, and consumer protection without overregulation.

SCR also supports clear disclosure of all fees, assessments, management contracts, and governing documents. Access and transparency is essential to ensuring homeowners and prospective buyers fully understand their financial obligations and rights before and after purchase. Improved transparency and consistent disclosure practices help build trust, reduce disputes, and protect property values while supporting well-managed communities that serve both homeowners and the broader real estate market.

Statewide Framework for Short Term Rentals

Short-term rentals (STRs) are a vital part of South Carolina's housing economy. Short term rental properties can bring a positive economic impact to a city or county through additional tax revenues and benefit the communities as a whole to fill gaps in markets where additional lodging is needed.

SCR continues to work towards a balanced and standardized approach to short-term rentals that protects private property rights while addressing legitimate quality-of-life concerns in local communities. Property owners should retain the ability to responsibly use and lease their property, including for short-term rental purposes, as a fundamental aspect of ownership and economic opportunity. At the same time, reasonable, narrowly tailored regulations that focus on safety standards, occupancy limits, noise, parking, and local accountability can help preserve neighborhood character and protect residents' quality of life.

SC Deed Verification and Deed Alert Protection Act (S. 822)

Title theft is a fast growing problem nationwide. SCR is working with stakeholders to protect South Carolina property owners from deed fraud and title theft by strengthening identity verification at Registers of Deeds, creating a Deed Alert Notification System, and establishing an expedited legal process to remove fraudulent filings.

SCR supports legislation that would require most deed submitters to provide government-issued photo ID, to empower Registers to reject documents without proper identification, and to allow verified property owners to receive real-time alerts when instruments are recorded against their property. Property owners who discover fraudulent filings can seek fast-track court relief to void false documents, recover costs, and stop repeat offenders. Together, these measures enhance fraud prevention, improve transparency, and restore confidence in South Carolina's public land records system.





END OF SESSION LEGISLATIVE RECAP FROM SOUTH CAROLINA REALTORS® 2026



Legislative Resources

Updates to keep you informed

SCR keeps Realtor® members informed on fast-moving legislative developments with live video updates from the Statehouse and the SCR Office Studio. Throughout the legislative session, SCR's advocacy team serves as your eyes and ears at the Capitol, monitoring bills that could impact your business and your clients.

Weekly updates—typically released every Friday while the legislature is in session—provide a clear overview of key legislation, its current status, and what it means for Realtors®.

SCR offers further insight on advocacy issues through its new podcast, The Advocacy Angle. In the latest episode we recap the session with SCR's Chief Advocacy Officer, Lindsay Hutto. You can also check out other episodes like [Non-partison Advocacy and Engagement with Immediate Past President Keon Aldrich](#) and the [State Political Coordinators Program with Legislative Committee Chair, Adam Cates](#).

Join our 6.1K subscribers and watch the latest updates on the SCR YouTube channel, at youtube.com/screaltors.



From SC to D.C.

From SC to D.C., Realtors® work to support the American Dream of Homeownership. In June, one hundred thirty eight SCR members and leadership took time out of their businesses to travel to Washington DC for NAR's REALTOR® Legislative Meetings to promote pro-real estate policies on the Hill, attend Governance meetings, and gain insight from top speakers. South Carolina members joined 8,000 other REALTORS® from across the nation for this important event.



We're here
to help.



Lindsay Hutto
Chief Advocacy Officer

ljhutto@screaltors.org



Louis Dettorre
VP, External Affairs & Strategy

louis@screaltors.org



David Robinson
Director of Political Affairs

david@screaltors.org

SCR Legislative Committee

Adam Cates, Chair
(Region 3) Coastal Carolinas

Carolann Newton, Vice-Chair
(Region 5) Western Upstate

Lee Allen
(Region 1) Charleston Trident

Greg Coggins
(Region 1) Charleston Trident

Drew Grossklaus
(Region 1) Charleston Trident

Mark Mitchell
(Region 1) Charleston Trident

Brian Kinard
(Region 2) Hilton Head Area

Cindy Creamer
(Region 2) Hilton Head Area

Madison Cooper
(Region 3) Coastal Carolinas

Richard Trappier
(Region 3) Greater Pee Dee

Brad Maloch
(Region 3) Coastal Carolinas

Patrick Enzor
(Region 4) Sumter

Dianne Bunnell
(Region 4) Central Carolina

Julie Whitesell
(Region 4) Aiken

Morris Lyles
(Region 4) Central Carolina

Reah Smith
(Region 5) Western Upstate

David Burnett
(Region 5) Spartanburg

Tamiann Adams
(Region 5) Greater Greenville

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Become a State Political Coordinator at
spc.screaltors.org

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Become a South Carolina REALTORS®

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SAVE THE DATE!

SCR CAPITOL CONFERENCE

MARCH 16-17, 2027

