

South Carolina Energy Justice Coalition (SCEJC)

2026 Legislative Session Wrap-Up

Data Center Regulation & Utility Accountability

S. 867 (Sen. Davis) – Did Not Pass

Following six committee hearings, S. 867 passed favorably out of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Despite significant stakeholder engagement and committee support, the bill did not receive a vote on the Senate floor before adjournment.

S. 902 (Sen. Rankin) – Did Not Pass

This data center-focused legislation received two subcommittee hearings and generated important discussion regarding utility costs, infrastructure demands, and community impacts. The bill did not advance out of the subcommittee process.

S. 784 (Sen. Massey) – Did Not Pass

A separate data center proposal introduced during the session. The bill was referred to committee but did not receive a hearing.

Budget Provisos: Data Center Transparency & Accountability

The SCEJC also supported three data center-related budget provisos included in the General Appropriations Bill. While the state budget has not yet been finalized, these provisos would:

- **55.28 – Water Use Transparency:** Require annual reporting on data center water consumption to better understand impacts on South Carolina's water resources.
- **50.31 – Economic Incentive Accountability:** Restrict the use of state funds by the Department of Commerce for recruiting or supporting expanding data centers.
- **109.18 – Tax Exemption Transparency:** Require reporting on state sales and use tax exemptions claimed by data centers, including exemptions for computer equipment and electricity.

These provisions represent important steps toward greater transparency and accountability as data center development continues across South Carolina.

Relevant Legislation

H. 5216 – Did Not Pass

H. 5216 successfully passed the House and was sent to the Senate for consideration. Following further review, the SCEJC anticipates likely support for this legislation in the upcoming session.

Conservation & Environmental Protection

South Carolina Protected Lands Act – Passed

The South Carolina Protected Lands Act successfully passed during the 2026 legislative session. The legislation strengthens protections for conserved lands and helps ensure that protected natural, agricultural, and recreational spaces remain available for future generations of South Carolinians.

SCEJC-Supported Consumer Protection & Public Accountability Legislation

H. 5282 – Utility Billing Accountability and Consumer Protection Act – Did Not Pass

Sponsored by Rep. Robert Reese, this legislation sought to strengthen oversight of utility billing practices, improve transparency, and provide additional protections for South Carolina ratepayers. The bill did not receive a hearing during the 2026 legislative session and is expected to be refiled.

H. 5283 – South Carolina Utility Citizens Council Act – Did Not Pass

Sponsored by Rep. Robert Reese, this legislation would establish an independent consumer-focused body to increase public participation and accountability in utility decision-making. The bill did not receive a hearing during the 2026 legislative session and is expected to be refiled.

Looking Ahead

While several priority bills did not advance this session, the SCEJC successfully elevated energy burden, utility accountability, consumer protection, data center regulation, and conservation as important legislative issues. The coalition will continue working with lawmakers, partners, and impacted communities to advance these priorities during the upcoming legislative cycle.