



**Rep. Wendell G. Gilliard**  
SC House District #111 - Charleston County  
328-D Blatt Building  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-212-6793



**House Floor Review**  
**March 10 - 12, 2025**

The House of Representatives approved **H. 4025**, the General Appropriation Bill and **H. 4026**, the joint resolution making appropriations from the Capital Reserve Fund, which together comprise the \$14.7 billion **Fiscal Year 2025-2026 State Government Budget**. After \$814 million is transferred to the Tax Relief Trust Fund that provides for the residential property tax caps, \$13.3 billion in recurring general fund revenue is available for appropriation. The budget's \$1.4 billion in nonrecurring revenue includes \$332 million in the Contingency Reserve Fund and \$370 million in Capital Reserve Funds. Additionally, a total of \$562 million in Education Lottery funds is available for appropriation and a total of \$162.2 million in Education Improvement Act funds, \$50.7 million in recurring and \$111.5 million in nonrecurring revenue.

In keeping with the "Comprehensive Tax Cut Act of 2022," \$97 million in recurring and \$5 million in nonrecurring revenue is used for the fourth year of the tax relief schedule, allowing the highest income tax bracket to be lowered from 6.3% to 6.2%. \$114.4 million in surplus from the Homestead Exemption Fund is appropriated to allow for additional income tax relief.

\$200 million in nonrecurring funds is allocated to accelerate the Department of Transportation's schedule for repairing and replacing the state's bridges. SCDOT is also afforded \$50 million in nonrecurring funds to address Hurricane Helene damage and \$9 million in nonrecurring funds for road safety enhancements.

The Division of Aeronautics receives \$5.4 million in recurring funds and \$5 million in nonrecurring funds for airport safety and development and \$300,000 in recurring funds for operations. The Department of Commerce is appropriated \$80 million in nonrecurring funds for airport enhancements.

\$38 million in nonrecurring funds is used for replenishing South Carolina's Disaster Relief and Resilience Reserve Fund in the aftermath of Hurricanes Helene and Debby.

The Adjutant General's Office is afforded \$1.5 million in nonrecurring funds for armory revitalization and the South Carolina Emergency Management Division receives \$1 million in nonrecurring funds for the Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund and \$222 million in nonrecurring funds for declared disasters relief.

Full funding is provided for the state financial reserve accounts used to cope with revenue shortfalls.

The budget includes a provision requiring state agencies that issue benefit checks to develop and implement measures to mitigate the risk of fraud. These agencies must outline the specific steps being taken to prevent and detect fraudulent activity such as a verification processes for recipient eligibility, security measures for check issuance and distribution, and monitoring procedures to detect and address fraudulent transactions. Each agency is responsible for compiling a report detailing fraud mitigation measures implemented along with any incidents of fraud detected and corrective actions taken which must be submitted to the General Assembly by the end of the year.

The budget provides for a restructuring of pay grades for state agency employees in classified full-time equivalent (FTE) positions following expert recommendations for reforming the State's Classification and Compensation system commissioned from an external consultant. \$66.6 million in recurring revenue is used to provide a 2% state employee pay increase, or a greater increase in cases where it is needed to bring employees' salaries up to the minimum levels of the new pay grades established by the Department of Administration.

\$89.4 million in recurring funds is included for the state's health insurance plan with employees paying an additional \$36.76 per month in premiums. There are no increases in monthly premium costs for retired employees.

\$112 million in State Aid to Classrooms is used for a \$1,500 teacher pay increase. The minimum starting salary for teachers is increased to \$48,500. The budget provides for a revised teacher salary schedule.

The total for State Aid to Classrooms in the budget represents an average per pupil appropriation of \$5,884. The average total is \$19,075 per pupil when federal, local, and state funding commitments are factored together.

\$20 million in nonrecurring Education Improvement Act funds is dedicated to school facilities safety upgrades.

\$4.4 million is provided to fully fund the increased enrollment in full-day four-year-old kindergarten.

\$1.7 million in recurring Education Improvement Act funds is allocated to the Child Early Reading and Developmental Education Program.

\$7 million in recurring EIA revenue and \$24 million in nonrecurring EIA revenue funds Summer Reading Camps.

\$24 million in nonrecurring Education Improvement Act funds is used for instructional materials.

From recurring Education Improvement Act revenue, \$356,500 goes to Science PLUS, \$250,000 goes to Reach Out and Read, and \$1.4 million goes to the Call Me Mister program.

The Education Scholarship Trust Fund receives \$30 million in recurring funds and \$15 million in nonrecurring funds.

\$6.7 million in recurring Education Improvement Act funds is appropriated for the School Leadership Accelerator.

\$1.6 million in nonrecurring Education Improvement Act funds goes to the Child Nutrition Program.

The Tech-to-Teach Pilot Program is afforded \$1.5 million in nonrecurring Education Improvement Act funds.

\$20 million in nonrecurring Education Improvement Act funds is allocated for purchasing and leasing school buses.

The budget includes a revised higher education tuition mitigation initiative in which additional recurring funding is distributed among the state's institutions of higher learning. In order to retain these appropriations, the institutions must comply with provisions for freezing in-state tuition and mandatory fees during the 2025-2026 academic year for all continuing in-state undergraduate students at public four-year institutions and two-year University of South Carolina campuses. Under the revised tuition mitigation initiative, newly enrolled in-state undergraduate students may be subject to higher tuition and fees, but these costs must remain frozen for these students as they continue their undergraduate careers at the public institutions.

Most of the Capital Reserve Fund is devoted to facility repairs and construction projects at the state's colleges, universities, and technical schools.

The University of South Carolina is afforded \$5.8 million in recurring funds for its School of Law, \$4.5 million in recurring funds for neurological critical care and rehabilitation services in South Carolina, \$100,000 in recurring funds for the pediatric brain health center, \$100,000 in recurring funds for brain health education, and \$13.2 million in Capital Reserve funds for a battery center facility.

From the Capital Reserve Fund, USC Aiken receives \$5.2 million for science building enhancements and modernization, USC Upstate receives \$2.6 million for its nursing and health sciences building, USC Beaufort receives \$3 million for a new convocation center, and USC Sumter receives \$5.3 million for its Collaboration Lab.

Clemson University is appropriated \$2.5 million in recurring funds for the expansion of its Institute for the Study of Capitalism, and, from the Capital Reserve Fund, \$4.3 million for a life sciences lab, and \$13.2 million for a NextGen Computing Complex.

South Carolina State University is afforded \$9.9 million to renovate the Dr. Maceo O. Nance Hall for the establishment of the new College of Agriculture, Family, and Consumer Science. The budget legislation provides for the forgiveness of the principal balance, and all associated interest and costs of the South Carolina Budget Control Board Operating Loan issued to South Carolina State University in 2015.

The Medical University of South Carolina receives \$5 million in recurring funds for Comprehensive Cancer Center designation, \$4.4 million in recurring funds for dental tuition reduction, \$3 million in recurring funds for residential rehabilitation treatment

assessment, \$5.8 million in nonrecurring funds for the Lancaster Medical Center Graduate Medical Education (GME) program, and \$6.6 million in Capital Reserve Funds for the Southeastern Health AI Consortium.

Lander University is appropriated \$5.9 million from the Capital Reserve Fund for renovating the Marion Carnell Learning Center.

From the Capital Reserve Fund Francis Marion University receives \$4.95 million for the renovation of the Hyman Fine Arts Center and \$1.3 million for the Leatherman Science Facility and the McNair Science Building renovation.

The Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries receives \$10 million in Education Lottery funds to further cost-effective sharing of high-quality resources through PASCAL.

Full funding is provided in Education Lottery funds for the LIFE, HOPE, and Palmetto Fellows higher education scholarship programs.

The Commission on Higher Education is afforded \$80 million in lottery funds for need-based grants.

\$3.6 million in lottery unclaimed prize funds is appropriated for College Transition Program scholarships through the CHE.

The Higher Education Tuition Grant Commission is allocated \$20 million in lottery funds.

\$53 million in lottery funds is provided through CHE and the Board of Technical and Comprehensive Education for tuition assistance.

The Board of Technical and Comprehensive Education is afforded \$70 million in lottery funds and \$20 million in unclaimed prize funds for SC Workforce Industry Needs scholarships that help provide full tuition at technical colleges for SC WINS recipients seeking degrees in industry sectors with critical workforce needs.

\$5 million in lottery funds is allocated to the Ready SC Program which provides worker training at the state's technical colleges that is customized to the needs of new and expanding business and industry.

\$10 million in lottery funds is provided to the Commission on Higher Education for its Nursing Initiative.

The Department of Employment and Workforce is afforded \$10.3 million in nonrecurring funds for the Statewide Education and Workforce Development Portal, \$2.8 million in recurring funds for maintenance of the portal, \$2 million in nonrecurring funds for a systemic study of higher education, and \$1 million in nonrecurring funds for the Graduation Alliance.

The Department of Commerce receives \$1 million in recurring funds and \$80 million in nonrecurring funds for site readiness through LocateSC to address business and industry needs.

The Rural Infrastructure Fund is appropriated \$5 million in nonrecurring funds and the Statewide Water and Sewer Fund is appropriated \$15 million in nonrecurring funds.

The Department of Agriculture receives \$1 million in recurring funds for customer service activities at the State Farmers Market and \$2 million in nonrecurring funds for regional farmers markets.

Clemson University PSA is afforded \$1 million in recurring funds for food safety and nutrition extension personnel and programmatic support.

SC State University PSA receives \$500,000 in recurring funds and \$650,000 in nonrecurring funds for statewide extension agribusiness development and \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds for agriculture innovation research.

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism receives \$9.6 million in nonrecurring funds for tourism development, \$1.5 million in recurring funds \$6 million in nonrecurring funds for destination specific tourism marketing grants, \$1.5 million in recurring funds for statewide marketing, \$1.1 million in nonrecurring funds for SC Association of Tourism Regions promotions, \$4 million in nonrecurring funds for film incentives, \$4 million in nonrecurring funds for its Sports Marketing Program, \$1 in recurring funds for welcome center facility operations, \$1 million in nonrecurring funds for maintenance and repairs at state parks, and \$1.5 million in nonrecurring funds for beach renourishment grants.

The Department of Archives and History receives \$1.3 million in nonrecurring funds for the commemoration of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American Revolution in South Carolina.

The Arts Commission is afforded \$500,000 in recurring funds and \$1 million in nonrecurring funds for support grants for community arts organizations.

The Conservation Bank is provided \$3 million in recurring funds and \$9 million in nonrecurring funds for conservation grant funding.

The Department of Natural Resources is appropriated \$2 million in recurring funds for agency operations, \$2 million in recurring funds for recruitment and retention, \$1 million in nonrecurring funds for law enforcement equipment, \$3 million in recurring funds for wildlife management area maintenance, \$1.5 million in nonrecurring funds for waterfowl impoundments infrastructure maintenance, \$1.5 million in nonrecurring funds for statewide flood inundation map modeling, \$20 million in nonrecurring funds and \$5 million from the Capital Reserve Fund for high hazard dams, and \$12.3 million in nonrecurring funds for disaster relief grant match funding.

The Department of Environmental Services is afforded \$6.9 million in recurring funds for workforce retention and credentialing, \$1.9 million in recurring funds for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, \$2.5 million in recurring funds for its Drinking Water Program, and \$2.3 million in recurring funds for its Air Quality Program.

The Department of Public Health receives \$2 million in recurring funds for healthcare facility safety, \$2 million in recurring funds for critical public health services, \$1.3 million in recurring funds and \$1.6 million in nonrecurring funds for its Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies initiative, and \$10 million in nonrecurring funds for modernizing its information technology infrastructure support systems.

The Department of Health and Human Services receives \$60.4 million in recurring funds for Medicaid program maintenance of effort, \$2 million in recurring funds for Medicaid behavioral health provider rate adjustments, \$10 million in recurring funds for graduate medical education, \$1.5 million in recurring funds for the Partial Hospitalization Program/Intensive Outpatient Program, \$2.5 million in recurring funds for opioid treatment services, \$5 million in recurring funds to reduce the waiting list for home and community-based services, \$2 million in recurring funds for the Children's Hospital Collaborative, and \$150 million from the Capital Reserve Fund for neurological critical care and rehabilitation services in South Carolina.

The budget includes a provision for prohibiting funding to abortion providers which requires the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services to withhold funding to abortion providers to the fullest extent allowed under the law.

The Department of Mental Health receives \$6 million in recurring funds for state mandated programs, \$6 million in recurring funds to improve inpatient services hospital bed capacity, \$9.4 million in nonrecurring funds for inpatient services capital needs, and \$500,000 in recurring funds for assertive community treatment.

The Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services is afforded \$1 million in recurring funds for residential treatment and withdrawal management access and \$1 million in recurring funds for formula grants and direct treatment services.

The Department of Disabilities and Special Needs receives \$1 million in recurring funds and \$3.5 million in nonrecurring funds for residential services, \$500,000 in recurring funds for the Greenwood Genetics Center, and \$1 million in nonrecurring funds for the South Carolina Genomic Medicine Initiative.

The Department of Social Services is appropriated \$18.6 million in nonrecurring funds for Economic Services System Application Modernization, \$4 million in recurring funds for early care and education, \$8.1 million in recurring funds for children and families, and \$1.2 million in recurring funds for its domestic violence program.

The Department on Aging is allocated \$3 million in recurring funds for maintenance of effort and \$5 million in recurring funds for home and community-based services.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs is afforded \$18.6 million in recurring funds for veteran homes operating costs, \$1 million in recurring funds for veteran homes support costs, and \$5 million in nonrecurring funds for the Military Enhancement Fund.

The Attorney General's Office is allocated \$3.5 million in nonrecurring funds for the crime victim assistance program and \$250,000 in recurring funds for the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

The Prosecution Coordination Commission receives \$4.2 million in recurring funds.

The Commission on Indigent Defense is afforded \$2.8 million in recurring funds.

The budget emphasizes recruitment and retention initiatives at the state agencies employing law enforcement officers.

The Department of Public Safety receives \$3.7 million in recurring funds for its school safety program, \$1 million in nonrecurring funds for law enforcement equipment, and \$3 million in recurring funds for retaining Highway Patrol Officers.

The Department of Corrections is afforded \$5 million in recurring funds for operating expenses, \$4 million in recurring funds and \$3.5 million in nonrecurring funds for cell phone interdiction, \$2.5 million in nonrecurring funds for deferred maintenance, \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds for security equipment replacement, and \$1 million in nonrecurring funds for prison industries operating costs.

The Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services receives \$1 million in recurring funds and \$750,000 in nonrecurring funds for IT modernization and \$200,000 in recurring funds for improved delivery of victim services.

The Department of Juvenile Justice is allocated \$2 million in recurring funds for community and administrative salary increases, \$3 million in recurring funds for agency operations, and \$1.3 million in nonrecurring funds for IT ongoing security assessment and remediation.

The Judicial Department is afforded \$25 million in nonrecurring funds for modernization of the case management system and \$3 million in recurring funds for the Family Court case management system.

The Department of Administration is allocated \$3.7 million in recurring funds for information security monitoring and protection tools, \$9 million from the Capital Reserve Fund for a modernized IT service management platform, and \$24 million from the Capital Reserve Fund for security upgrades at state-owned buildings.

In order to better manage the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions across state government, a budget provision establishes a timeline for eliminating 25% percent of agencies' vacant FTE positions.

The Election Commission is afforded \$10.97 million in nonrecurring funds for statewide voting system upgrades and \$500,000 in recurring funds for election integrity.

\$14.6 million in recurring funds is provided for aid to political subdivisions through the Local Government Fund.

The House of Representatives approved **S. 157** and enrolled the bill for ratification. The legislation authorizes **electrical utility issuance of Hurricane Helene storm recovery bonds** under an expedited storm damage securitization process due to the significant and unprecedented damage caused by Hurricane Helene in 2024 to public and private property in South Carolina, including widespread destruction of utility infrastructure. To contend with the extraordinary expenses, the legislation provides authority for an electrical utility to include as storm recovery costs, for Hurricane Helene only, its cost of capital from the date of the storm through the issuance of storm recovery bonds to repair, restore, and rebuild infrastructure. This cost of capital shall be determined by the actual interest rate paid by the utility to borrow funds necessary to cover the restoration and recovery efforts after Hurricane Helene up to specified maximum limits.

If you have a comment or opinion concerning the issues discussed in this report, or if I may be of assistance to you at any time, please feel free to call your legislative office in Columbia (803-212-6793); my office in Charleston (843-209-3123) or write P. O. Box 31641, Charleston, SC 29417. If you would like any additional information on these bills, or any other legislation under consideration by the General Assembly, feel free to visit our website at [www.scstatehouse.gov](http://www.scstatehouse.gov). Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in the House of Representatives.

WG/dkh/gilliard-2025mar13