



SCPC
1323 Pendleton Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
P 803 779 5022
F 803 779 4953
scpolicycouncil.com

OUR MISSION
is to educate members and all South Carolinians about state and local public policy based on the traditional South Carolina values of individual liberty and responsibility, free enterprise and limited government.

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HOUSE RULES CHANGE IS NOT TRANSPARENCY; MOST BILLS ARE EXEMPT FROM RECORDED VOTE REQUIREMENT

The South Carolina House of Representatives voted 77-34 today to adopt a House rules change that expands the range of matters subject to a vote on the record, but the rules change exempts most legislation from a recorded vote.

In response to today's rules change, Policy Council President Ashley Landess released the following statement:

"We've said all year the legislative process is not accountable, and today the House proved us right. They scammed the public by pretending to pass transparency – they didn't, and no responsible elected official should go home and say otherwise. The House leadership used its power to thwart the people's will and deny them accountability. In fact, the Leadership has fought transparency all year, ignoring research that shows our state is last in the nation for requiring legislators to record votes. This rule change did nothing to fix a broken system. It will not require a recorded vote on every section of the budget, where millions of dollars of pork and waste are hidden. Representatives in South Carolina still won't have to record their votes when they create expensive new programs, set social policy, regulate business and deliberately kill meaningful reform."

The proceedings today make it clear why South Carolina is last in the nation in so many areas, including transparency. Our state is run by a self-serving group of politicians that cares more about keeping power than good government. The transparency debate is not going away, and neither are we. We will work twice as hard to report on government, analyze the budget, provide real-time information on the legislative process and expose wasteful spending. The public deserves no less."

The rules change does not require a recorded vote on multiple matters:

- Each section of the state budget
- Second reading of bills
- Third reading of amended bills
- Conference committee reports

An October Policy Council study of the Constitutional and legislative procedural rules in all 50 states found that 41 states require lawmakers to record their votes on every single bill when passing them into law. The rules change passed by the House today clearly falls short of this national standard.

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