

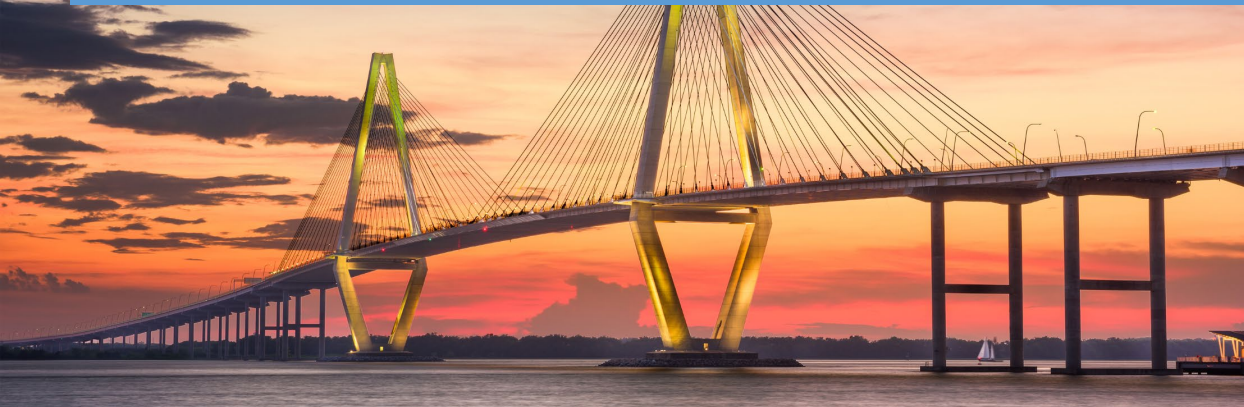
Public Service Commission of South Carolina

Mission and Overview



Public Service Commission of South Carolina's Mission

The Public Service Commission regulates just and reasonable rates and services of public utilities in the state of South Carolina.



Background of the PSC

Initially formed as a result of [Act No. 662](#) of the General Assembly Regular Session of 1878, the PSC was originally the regulatory body that oversaw railroad operations in South Carolina. In 1910, [Act No. 286](#) created “a public service commission of three reputable and competent citizens of the State, to be appointed by the Governor, by and with the consent of the Senate, who shall be authorized to fix and establish in all cities of this State, now or hereafter incorporated under any general or special law of this State, maximum rates and charges for the supply of water, gas or electricity furnished by any person, firm or corporation to such city and the inhabitants thereof, such rates to be reasonable and just.”

The two Commission offices were consolidated with [Act No. 533](#) of 1922, and one additional Commissioner was added to form the current, seven-commissioner makeup of the agency. The current name—the Public Service Commission—was established in 1935.

In 2004, [Act 175](#) of the General Assembly reformed the Public Service Commission by separating the Commission’s adjudicative functions and non-adjudicative functions into the Office of Regulatory Staff and delegating all non-adjudicative functions to the Office of Regulatory Staff. The PSC continues to serve as the adjudicative regulatory agency for public utilities in South Carolina.



Structure of the PSC

The Public Service Commission is made up of several dozen staff members and seven Commissioners, each of whom represents one of the congressional districts in our state. The Commissioners, rather than being elected by the general populace or appointed by the Governor, are elected by the General Assembly.

The PSC is accountable to the State Regulation of Public Utility Regulatory Committee, or PURC, a committee of the General Assembly that screens candidates who seek the office of Commissioner, reviews the agency's financial and operational documents, and analyzes reports provided by the PSC.



Current and Former Commissioners of the PSC

COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES



Commissioner C. Williams (District 1)

Member - NARUC EV State Working Group, NARUC Committee on Energy Resources & the Environment, NARUC Committee on Consumers and the Public Interest, NARUC-DOE Joint Office of Electric Transportation
Ambassador - NARUC Ambassador Program
Member - SEARUC and American Planning Association



Commissioner Belser (District 2)

Member - NARUC Committee on Energy Resources & the Environment
Member - SEARUC



Commissioner Caston (District 3)

Member - NARUC Committee on Water
Member - SEARUC
Life Member - Water Environment Association of South Carolina (WEASC)



Commissioner Ervin (District 4)

Member - NARUC
Member - SEARUC

****Resigned Effective March 13th, 2024****



Commissioner Thomas (District 5)

Member - NARUC Committee on Gas
Member - SEARUC



Commissioner J. Williams (District 6)

Member - NARUC Electricity Committee
Member - SEARUC



Commissioner Powers (District 7)

Member - NARUC Committee on Energy Resources and the Environment
Member - NARUC Committee on Critical Infrastructure
Ambassador - NARUC Ambassador Program
Member - SEARUC
Member - New Mexico State University Center for Public Utilities Advisory Council

Current Commissioners

As of 2024, there are six Commissioners representing six of the seventh Congressional districts; District 4 is currently vacant.

- I represent District 7 and was recently elected by my fellow Commissioners to serve as Chair.
- Our Vice Chairman is Commissioner Justin Williams, who represents District 6 and who has served as an assistant solicitor and as a criminal defense lawyer. Vice Chair Williams also serves in the Army Reserves and is a Major and Brigade Judge Advocate at Fort Jackson.
- Commissioner Carolee Williams represents District 1. Her background is in urban and environmental planning and project management, and she joined the PSC in 2020.
- Commissioner Florence Belser, who served as Chair prior to me, has an extensive background in regulatory law, having served as an attorney at the Public Service Commission for over a decade and as general counsel for the Office of Regulatory Staff from 2004-2019.
- Commissioner Mike Caston represents District 3 and comes from an engineering background in water and wastewater services, including serving as a board member of the Pickens County Water and Sewer Authority. He came aboard in 2020.
- Finally, Commissioner Headen Thomas, representing District 5, comes to the PSC from Piedmont Natural Gas Company out of Charlotte. A licensed CPA, Commissioner Thomas started his tenure at the PSC in 2020.





A New Outlook: Act 62

Act 62, known as the South Carolina Energy Freedom Act, was passed by the South Carolina General Assembly in 2019 and signed by Governor Henry McMaster on May 16th, 2019. This Act, among other matters, addresses topics around renewable energy programs and how utilities create their utility resource plans, or long-term analyses of future energy needs.

A New Outlook: Electrification

In 2022, following an in-depth workshop on electrification of South Carolina's power grid, the Public Service Commission began work on an electric vehicle report for the Joint Committee on the Electrification of Transportation. In April 2024, the agency delivered the 132-page report, which outlines factors affecting electric vehicle adoption, the impact of electric vehicles on the existing electric grid, and efforts currently underway from South Carolina utilities and stakeholders to prepare for a shift towards electric vehicles.



The Commission opened Docket No. 2023-121-E to address issues concerning the electrification of the transportation sector in South Carolina and received comments from nine parties (Americans for Affordable Clean Energy, Charge Ahead Partnership, ChargePoint, Electric Cooperatives and Central Electric Power Cooperative, Duke Energy Carolinas/Duke Energy Progress, Dominion Energy South Carolina, the Office of Regulatory Staff, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy/Vote Solar/Coastal Conservation League, Walmart Inc.). Parties provided eleven topics of concern related to the electrification of the transportation sector.



A New Outlook: Hosting Capacity Analysis (HCA)

In 2023, the PSC conducted an internal research project related to Hosting Capacity Analysis in the Southeast and the feasibility of establishing a hosting capacity map for South Carolina. “Hosting capacity” is the estimated maximum amount of energy from a distributed energy resource (DER) that can be accommodated on the distribution system at a specific location without the need for significant upgrades.

A hosting capacity map shows where a DER—solar, in the case of South Carolina—can be added to a distribution system without an additional cost in system expansion, thus enabling stakeholders to develop better implementation strategies for deploying DER.

In December 2023, the Commission issued the final report, which incorporated thorough case study analysis of other states and recommendations for Hosting Capacity Analysis in South Carolina.



Public Participation and Consumer Input

When a utility proposes a rate increase or a utility introduces their annual Integrated Resource Plan (or at other times as determined by the PSC), the agency schedules a customer public hearing. These are hearings, usually in the evening, designed specifically to gather testimony from customers of the utility provider in question. Customers can sign up to speak in person or preregister to testify virtually, and each customer who signs up is able to speak for three minutes, sharing their experience with the utility and their opinion on the utility's request. These hearings are held in various utility service territories throughout the state so that customers do not need to travel. In 2023-2024, the PSC held eighteen customer public hearings in six different dockets in 13 cities in South Carolina.



The Public Service Commission livestreams our meetings and hearings through a partnership with SCETV. Anyone interested in watching a Commission Business Meeting, at which the outcomes of cases before the Commission are discussed, or a hearing in a rate case or annual IRP case can do by going to our website at www.psc.sc.gov and clicking “Livestream.” In 2023-2024, our livestream was viewed 29,662 times.



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