

The Honorable G. Murrell Smith, Jr.
Speaker of the House
South Carolina House of Representatives
Columbia, South Carolina

The Honorable Bruce W. Bannister
Chairman
House Ways and Means Committee
Columbia, South Carolina

The Honorable William “Bill” Herbkersman
Chairman
House Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee
Columbia, South Carolina

The Honorable Jeff Bradley
Chairman
House Regulations, Admin. Procedures,
Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity
Committee

Subject: Immediate Action Required: ASCEND Appropriation

Dear Chairman Bradley, Speaker Smith, Chairman Bannister, Chairman Herbkersman, and Members of House Leadership:

We write to strongly urge your support for the ASCEND appropriation and to underscore the urgency of this decision as it relates to the State’s upcoming budget deliberations.

This is a time-sensitive opportunity. The outcome of this budget cycle will determine the State’s position in this emerging infrastructure landscape.

ASCEND is expected to be considered as part of House budget deliberations in the coming days. The decisions made in this window will determine whether South Carolina actively shapes its role in next-generation infrastructure or adapts to frameworks defined elsewhere.

ASCEND is not simply an economic development initiative. It is foundational infrastructure.

Just as prior generations invested in ports, power, and transportation, this investment establishes the compute, energy alignment, and governance systems that will define how artificial intelligence, digital identity, and financial platforms operate within our state.

At its core, ASCEND creates a statewide, sovereign computing capability coordinated through the South Carolina Research Authority (SCRA). This ensures that South Carolina defines how these systems are deployed, accessed, and governed at a time when control over infrastructure is increasingly tied to economic and policy outcomes.

The window to act is narrowing.

We are entering a three to four-year period in which these systems, standards, and market positions will be established. States that move now will define the terms. States that wait will inherit them.

Other states are already advancing infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and capital alignment to capture leadership in this space. Delay does not preserve flexibility. It results in lost positioning that is difficult, if not impossible, to recover.

The implications are both immediate and long-term.

In the near term, ASCEND supports growth across critical sectors including healthcare, advanced manufacturing, agriculture, and energy. It strengthens South Carolina's ability to attract investment, research partnerships, and high-value jobs.

Over the long term, it determines whether the State maintains influence over the infrastructure layers that increasingly govern economic participation, data systems, and digital interaction.

Aligned efforts in research, workforce development, and pilot programs are already underway, preparing the foundation necessary for successful implementation. These efforts ensure that infrastructure deployment is matched by talent, policy readiness, and institutional coordination.

This is not a single initiative. It is a coordinated strategy.

The requested appropriation is modest relative to the scale of impact. More importantly, it allows South Carolina to act now, while this decision is still ours to make.

Inaction is not neutral. It is a decision to defer leadership and accept external direction in systems that will shape the State's economic future.

South Carolina is well-positioned to lead. ASCEND provides the mechanism to do so. We respectfully urge your support.

Respectfully,



Dennis Fassuliotis

President

South Carolina Emerging Technology Association (SCETA)
and undersigned stakeholders

Name	Company	Position
Leslie L Aker	Les Aker Consulting	Founder
Mara Ballard	Ballard Forensics LLC	Forensic Accountant / Blockchain Investigator
Jason Bilotti	Istruzi LLC	Founder
Mark Boyce	Individual	Individual
Russell Bundy	Just Verify	Co-Founder & Chief Visionary Officer
Javier Oswaldo Borrayo Mazariegos	Piaf Producciones	Director
Jay Caldwell	Individual	Founder
Allen Conger	Vessel Wave Technologies, Inc.	Founder / CEO
Michael E Covert	Individual	Former Beaufort County Councilman; Geothermal Expert (HVAC)
George Crouch	Crouch's Crypto Corner	Founder
Jennifer Cunningham	Individual	Individual
Robert B Danford	American Maglev Initiative	Founder
Ivan Dimov	American Crypto Academy	Co-Founder
Gerald P Dwyer	Individual	Emeritus Professor of Economics; BB&T Scholar
Tony Erwin	FutureTech Georgia	Co-founder
Dennis Fassuliotis	South Carolina Blockchain, Inc	Founder
Trevor Foley	Individual	Investor
Aaron Gleave	Utah Blockchain Coalition	Executive Director
Legrand Groves	Veritx Corp	Co-founder
Bob Hilscher	Code+/Trust	Member

Name	Company	Position
Martin Patrick Hidalgo	Freights Bay Digital Asset Management, LLC	Founder & CEO
Eric Lapin	Finfusion, LLC	Founder & Managing Partner
Trischia Khouri	Khourigroup	Founder
Ryan E Long	Long & Associates PLLC	Attorney; Tech
Marc Mereyde	Individual	Individual
Doug Morton	AlpacaBOSS	Founder
Siim Ounap	Intellex	Founder
Terri Pettitt	AsOneSouthCarolina.org	Founder / Advocate
Wade Preston	Alabama Blockchain Alliance	Founding Board Member
Gustaf Ryding	Retention Masters Europe AB	Founder
Frank Speiser	Metafide	Founder
Tony J Spain	FutureTech Georgia	Co-founder
Tommy Sullivan	Signal Key Group	Founder
Dora Tang	Pay.Cool	CEO
Carlos Toriello	Simple Proof Inc	CEO
Aviran Vargas	EZ Blockchain	Director of Operations & Infrastructure
Brandi Veil	Individual	Founder / Investor
Rachelle Waite-Bey	WAITE SLTS, LLC	Founder
Norman Keith Wilcox	Individual	Individual
Scott Worden	Adaptt	Founder



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