



Top 25 Issue Selection Methodology

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[The South Carolina Forum](#) is a new way for people across our state to be heard, find common ground, and turn shared priorities into legislative action. We aim to identify issues that South Carolinians across age, region, race, and political views want to fix. We will use this consensus to inform policy change in the 2027 state legislative session.

From February 9 to April 3, 2026, all South Carolinians were invited to join our free online platform to answer, "If South Carolina's leaders and residents could solve one problem, what should it be?" As of April 3, participants submitted 1,241 issues and generated over 21,921 reactions (likes/dislikes). Using a methodology that combines data analytics with artificial intelligence (AI) summarization, we identified the top 25 issues with greatest consensus. From now until April 27, we will invite and encourage all South Carolinians to select their six most important issues, to inform community discussions and legislative action. This is how we implemented our analysis to select the top 25 issues.

Step 1: Collect data from the public

Over a 10-week period, we collected public input through two digital platforms: Typeform and Go Vocal. The data that we gathered included issue statements, likes and dislikes, comments, demographic data, and emails. Using participant's zipcodes, we mapped users to counties, regions, and urban/rural classifications based on South Carolina's census data.

Step 2: Analyze data to identify consensus areas

We measured public support of issues and assigned each issue a "*consensus score*." The score identifies where individuals across demographics: age, region, race, and political views most agree. Next, using AI, we grouped the 733 individual ideas into 43 distinct thematic categories based on the subject matter. We prioritized the top 25 issue areas based: a) level of consensus across demographics b) number of users' reactions or engagement on the topic and c) approval of the issue.

Step 3: Summarize using AI, review by South Carolinians

We used AI to generate a) headlines for each issue, b) compilation of quotes from South Carolinians about how the specific issue affected them and c) analysis of the consensus score. Next, we reviewed each AI-generated issue statement, comparing them to the issue groupings that they were drawn from to ensure accuracy. Also, we fact-checked claims made by participants. Finally, we validated the 25 issues with The South Carolina Forum state team to ensure accuracy and relevance. No personal identifying information was included in this analysis process; all data was anonymized.