



South Carolina Conservation Bank – 2017 Legislation

FACT SHEET

(updated 1/24/17)

Need For Reauthorization

The SC Conservation Bank was created 14 years ago to safeguard our drinking water, preserve our history and culture, and protect our precious natural resources. Because of a sunset provision in the law, the Conservation Bank will disappear if the Bank is not reauthorized by the General Assembly by June 30, 2018.

Senate Bill S.219

To provide longevity to this efficient and effective state agency, S.219 was introduced on January 10, 2017, by Senator George “Chip” Campsen, who authored the original Conservation Bank legislation in 2002. The bill has been referred to the Senate Finance Committee for consideration.

Key Provisions of S.219

- Revises sunset date to reflect a 10-year extension (to July 1, 2028)
- Instead of getting zero funds during lean budget years, directs a double-percentage cut (versus overall budget) to the Conservation Bank trust fund
- Directs existing trust fund balances be utilized according to existing statute

Why Reauthorization Is Needed Now

The Conservation Bank must be reauthorized in 2017. Even waiting until 2018, when the original legislation expires, will result in the Conservation Bank having no funding available for competitive awards for at least a year. The organization will have exhausted whatever funding is authorized in the 2017-2018 budget.

Ramifications From Losing The Conservation Bank

The South Carolina Conservation Bank is one of the greatest tools we have for safeguarding our drinking water, protecting our natural resources and preserving our history and heritage. Conservation Bank funding is critical to maintaining the state’s high quality of life and abundant natural resources, factors that have been mentioned by companies such as Michelin, BMW, Boeing and others as a big part of what attracted them to the state. Losing the Conservation Bank would cause great harm to our economy, environment and quality of life, now and for generations to come.