

SOUTH CAROLINA STATEWIDE POLL: ENERGY CHOICE

TOPLINE REPORT

Audience: General population in South Carolina (N=1,027)

Field Dates: February 2026

Methodology: This survey was conducted using a mixed-mode survey design, combining online (via email and text) and telephone (via landline and cell phone) interviews. The survey was among adults aged 18 and older from the general population residing in South Carolina. Online interviews were administered via a secure web-based platform, while telephone interviews were conducted by trained interviewers.

To ensure the results are representative of the adult population, final data were weighted to U.S. Census, including demographic variables such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, and income.

Margin of Error: At the 95% confidence level, the margin of error for this survey is ± 3 percentage points. Margin of error may be higher on subgroups due to smaller sample sizes.

Screener 1 State.	
SOUTH CAROLINA	100%

Screener 2 Age.	
18 - 29	19%
30 - 39	17%
40 - 49	15%
50 - 64	23%
65+	26%

Screener 3 Gender.	
MALE	49%
TOTAL FEMALE/OTHER	51%
FEMALE	51%
NON-BINARY/OTHER	*

Screener 4/5

Race/Ethnicity.

CAUCASIAN OR WHITE	61%
AFRICAN AMERICAN OR BLACK	23%
HISPANIC	8%
TOTAL ASIAN/OTHER	7%
ASIAN-AMERICAN OR ASIAN	5%
NATIVE RACES, WHICH INCLUDES AMERICAN INDIAN, ALASKA NATIVE, NATIVE HAWAIIAN, OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	1%
MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN	*
TWO OR MORE RACES/ETHNICITIES	1%
OTHER	*

Screener 6

What is your annual household income?

TOTAL <\$50K	34%
TOTAL \$50K-\$100K	31%
TOTAL \$100K+	35%
UNDER \$25,000	15%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	19%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	19%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	11%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	21%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	8%
\$200,000 OR MORE	6%

Question 1

Which of the following are you most concerned about when it comes to your household expenses? Please select up to your top 3.

GROCERY/FOOD COSTS	73%
ELECTRICITY/ENERGY COSTS	56%
HOUSING COSTS (RENT/MORTGAGE)	43%
HEALTHCARE COSTS	41%
TRANSPORTATION COSTS	15%
CHILDCARE/EDUCATION COSTS	8%
OTHER EXPENSES	9%
NOT CONCERNED ABOUT ANY OF THESE	6%

Question 2

To what extent are you concerned about your household's electricity costs?

TOTAL CONCERNED	80%
TOTAL NOT CONCERNED	20%
VERY CONCERNED	30%
SOMEWHAT CONCERNED	49%
NOT TOO CONCERNED	15%
NOT AT ALL CONCERNED	5%
DON'T KNOW	*

Question 3

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	TOT AGR	TOT DISAG	STRG AGR	SMWT AGR	SMWT DIS	STRG DIS	DK
3_1. South Carolina's electricity market could be improved upon to better benefit residents.	90%	4%	54%	36%	3%	1%	6%
3_2. Government should make it a priority to ensure that households and businesses have access to affordable, reliable energy.	91%	7%	63%	28%	5%	2%	2%
3_3. Households and businesses should have the right to choose their electricity supplier.	91%	5%	55%	36%	4%	1%	4%
3_4. Competition among electricity suppliers generally leads to lower prices for households and businesses.	79%	15%	42%	37%	10%	5%	7%
3_5. Having only one monopoly electricity provider in an area gives that company too much control over prices.	90%	6%	60%	30%	5%	2%	4%
3_6. When utilities have no competition, households and businesses have few options if prices rise or service declines.	89%	8%	57%	31%	6%	1%	4%
3_7. My household's electricity costs are too high.	81%	16%	39%	42%	14%	2%	2%

Question 4

Do you know who currently provides your electricity?

DOMINION ENERGY	26%
DUKE ENERGY CAROLINAS	25%
OTHER LOCAL UTILITY (I.E., MUNICIPAL UTILITY OR COOP)	23%
DUKE ENERGY PROGRESS	11%
SANTEE COOPER	10%
THIRD-PARTY SUPPLIER (NOT THE UTILITY)	1%
DON'T KNOW	4%

Question 5

Overall, how satisfied are you with your current electricity provider?

TOTAL SATISFIED	75%
TOTAL NOT SATISFIED	24%
VERY SATISFIED	23%
SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	52%
NOT TOO SATISFIED	17%
NOT AT ALL SATISFIED	7%
DON'T KNOW	1%

Question 6

How fair do you think the current electricity system in South Carolina is for residents?

TOTAL FAIR	51%
TOTAL NOT FAIR	43%
COMPLETELY FAIR	10%
SOMEWHAT FAIR	41%
NOT TOO FAIR	30%
NOT AT ALL FAIR	13%
DON'T KNOW	6%

Question 7

How important are each of the following when it comes to your electricity service?

	TOT IMPT	TOTAL NOT IMPORTANT	VERY IMPT	SMT IMPT	NOT TOO IMPORTANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	DK	REF
7_1. Coming from renewable sources (i.e., wind, solar, etc.)	75%	22%	36%	39%	14%	8%	4%	*
7_2. Being the lowest price possible	94%	5%	63%	31%	4%	1%	1%	*
7_3. Reliable service without outages	96%	3%	80%	16%	2%	*	1%	*
7_4. Transparent pricing	95%	3%	72%	23%	3%	*	2%	*
7_5. Supporting the local economy	87%	11%	47%	40%	8%	3%	3%	*
7_6. Having choice/options (i.e., being able to choose the energy mix, pricing plan, etc.)	88%	8%	52%	36%	7%	1%	3%	*

Question 8

To what extent do you support or oppose having more choice over your electricity supplier?

TOTAL SUPPORT	91%
TOTAL OPPOSE	5%
STRONGLY SUPPORT	54%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	36%
SOMEWHAT OPPOSE	5%
STRONGLY OPPOSE	1%
DON'T KNOW	4%

Question 9

Before today, how much, if anything, have you heard about proposals to allow large commercial and industrial businesses in South Carolina to choose their own electricity provider?

TOTAL HEARD	43%
TOTAL A LOT/SOME	28%
TOTAL LITTLE/NOTHING	72%
A LOT	8%
SOME	20%
A LITTLE	16%
NOTHING AT ALL	57%

Question 10

Currently in South Carolina, businesses must purchase electricity from the single utility assigned to serve their area, at rates set by the South Carolina Public Service Commission. Businesses cannot choose an alternative electricity provider.

A policy called "Limited Retail Choice" has been proposed that would enable large businesses, including commercial and industrial businesses, to secure more competitive energy rates and, in some cases, generate their own power.

This initiative aims to address rising grid demand and meet the state's growing energy needs by enabling large commercial and industrial businesses to choose among competing electricity suppliers for lower prices or improved service.

By reducing the need for utilities to build costly new infrastructure for large commercial and industrial businesses, this approach could help keep electricity rates lower and energy more reliable for households and small businesses.

Based on this description, how would you describe your opinion of Limited Retail Choice?

TOTAL FAVORABLE	80%
TOTAL UNFAVORABLE	12%
VERY FAVORABLE	34%
SOMEWHAT FAVORABLE	46%
SOMEWHAT UNFAVORABLE	8%
VERY UNFAVORABLE	4%
DON'T KNOW	8%

Question 11
To what extent do you support or oppose policies that allow large industrial and commercial businesses in South Carolina to choose their own energy suppliers?

TOTAL SUPPORT	81%
TOTAL OPPOSE	11%
STRONGLY SUPPORT	34%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	47%
SOMEWHAT OPPOSE	8%
STRONGLY OPPOSE	4%
DON'T KNOW	8%

Question 12
Were you aware that South Carolina already allows an arrangement similar to Limited Retail Choice for natural gas, where large industrial users can choose their gas supplier?

YES, I WAS AWARE	15%
NO, I WAS NOT AWARE	79%
DON'T KNOW	7%

Question 13
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	TOT	TOT	STRG	SMWT	SMWT	STRG	DK
	AGR	DISAG	AGR	AGR	DIS	DIS	
14_1. Large commercial and industrial businesses should be allowed to choose their own electricity supplier.	80%	12%	38%	42%	8%	3%	9%
14_2. Allowing large commercial and industrial businesses to choose their own energy suppliers could help reduce overall energy costs in South Carolina.	75%	11%	34%	42%	8%	2%	14%
14_3. Removing large commercial and industrial businesses' demand from the local utility grid would help keep electricity costs lower for households and small businesses.	73%	14%	31%	41%	11%	3%	13%
14_4. Removing large commercial and industrial demand from the local utility grid would improve energy reliability for households and small businesses.	77%	12%	33%	44%	10%	2%	11%

Question 14

Georgia has allowed large businesses to choose their electricity provider for over 50 years. During that time, Georgia has become a national leader in economic development, with nearly 17,000 jobs and \$9.1 billion in capital investment facilitated in 2024 alone. Georgia has been recognized as a top state for business recruitment for 27 consecutive years.

Based on this information, are you more or less likely to support a similar Limited Retail Choice policy in South Carolina?

TOTAL MORE LIKELY	75%
TOTAL LESS LIKELY	3%
MUCH MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT	42%
SOMEWHAT MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT	34%
SOMEWHAT LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT	2%
MUCH LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT	1%
NO DIFFERENCE	17%
DON'T KNOW	4%

Question 15

A study by energy consulting firm Daymark Energy Advisors found that industrial customers in states with retail choice have seen savings of approximately \$10 per megawatt-hour on their electricity costs. The study also found that states allowing retail choice have seen overall electricity generation costs decline for all customers - including residential and small business customers, not just the large businesses that were given a choice of providers.

Based on this information, are you more or less likely to support Limited Retail Choice for large businesses in South Carolina?

TOTAL MORE LIKELY	78%
TOTAL LESS LIKELY	3%
MUCH MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT	40%
SOMEWHAT MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT	38%
SOMEWHAT LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT	2%
MUCH LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT	1%
NO DIFFERENCE	15%
DON'T KNOW	4%

Question 16

Compared to the current energy system in South Carolina, do you think implementing Limited Retail Choice for large businesses would be better, worse, or about the same?

TOTAL BETTER	71%
TOTAL WORSE	5%
MUCH BETTER	32%
SOMEWHAT BETTER	39%
SOMEWHAT WORSE	3%
MUCH WORSE	2%
ABOUT THE SAME	17%
DON'T KNOW	7%

Question 17

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Limited Retail Choice?

	TOT AGR	TOT DISAG	STRG AGR	SMWT AGR	SMWT DIS	STRG DIS	DK
18_1. Since South Carolina already allows large commercial and industrial users to choose their natural gas supplier, it makes sense to offer a similar option for electricity.	86%	6%	48%	39%	4%	2%	7%
18_2. Retail choice for large commercial and industrial businesses could attract new employers and investment into South Carolina, creating jobs and increasing tax revenue.	82%	11%	41%	41%	9%	2%	7%
18_3. Since nineteen other states, including Georgia and Virginia, already allow retail choice for large commercial and industrial businesses, South Carolina should do the same.	83%	9%	43%	40%	7%	2%	9%
18_4. Retail choice could give large commercial and industrial businesses access to a wider range of energy sources, including renewable options like wind and solar.	82%	8%	40%	42%	7%	1%	10%
18_5. If large commercial and industrial businesses were able to secure lower-cost energy through competition, those savings would reduce pressure on household energy bills by avoiding unnecessary infrastructure buildout by utilities.	80%	9%	39%	41%	7%	2%	11%
18_6. Knowing that the local utility would continue to deliver power and maintain the grid makes me more comfortable with Limited Retail Choice.	83%	10%	39%	44%	8%	2%	7%
18_7. Knowing that the South Carolina Public Service Commission would continue to oversee the market makes me more comfortable with Limited Retail Choice.	76%	14%	31%	45%	12%	2%	10%
18_8. Limited Retail Choice would help keep electricity affordable for South Carolina families and small businesses.	79%	10%	39%	40%	9%	2%	10%

Question 18

What, if anything, appeals to you most about Limited Retail Choice for large commercial and industrial businesses? Please select up to your top 2.

LOWER ENERGY COSTS FOR HOUSEHOLDS	61%
IMPROVED GRID RELIABILITY FOR HOUSEHOLDS AND SMALL BUSINESSES	28%
A FIRST STEP TOWARD ENERGY CHOICE FOR ALL CONSUMERS	23%
REDUCING THE POWER OF MONOPOLY UTILITIES	21%
ATTRACTING NEW BUSINESSES AND INVESTMENT TO SOUTH CAROLINA	16%
LOWER ENERGY COSTS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES	14%
LESS NEED FOR COSTLY NEW POWER PLANT CONSTRUCTION	11%
GIVING BUSINESSES MORE CONTROL OVER THEIR ENERGY DECISIONS	9%
OTHER	*
NOTHING APPEALS TO ME	2%
NOT SURE	3%

Question 19

If state legislators were working to pass legislation enabling Limited Retail Choice for large commercial and industrial businesses in South Carolina, would that make you more or less likely to support them?

TOTAL MORE LIKELY	71%
TOTAL LESS LIKELY	3%
MUCH MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT	30%
SOMEWHAT MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT	42%
SOMEWHAT LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT	1%
MUCH LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT	1%
NO DIFFERENCE	20%
DON'T KNOW	6%

Question 20

Would you be willing to contact your state legislators to express support for Limited Retail Choice legislation?

TOTAL YES	59%
TOTAL NO	29%
YES, DEFINITELY	22%
YES, MAYBE	36%
NO, PROBABLY NOT	23%
NO, DEFINITELY NOT	7%
UNSURE	12%

Question 21

Are you responsible for paying your household's electricity bills?

TOTAL RESPONSIBLE	93%
FULLY RESPONSIBLE	64%
SHARE RESPONSIBILITY	29%
NO, NOT RESPONSIBLE	6%
DON'T KNOW	1%

Question 22

Are you a member of AARP?

YES	22%
NO	74%
DON'T KNOW	2%
PREFER NOT TO SAY	1%

Question 23
Which political party do you most identify with?

DEMOCRAT	30%
REPUBLICAN	36%
TOTAL IND/OTHER	25%
INDEPENDENT	23%
OTHER	2%
NO PARTY/NOT POLITICAL	7%
PREFER NOT TO SAY	2%

Question 24
And do you think of yourself as a conservative, moderate, or liberal?

CONSERVATIVE	35%
MODERATE	36%
LIBERAL	22%
PREFER NOT TO SAY	7%

Question 25
Are you a parent/guardian of a child under the age of 18?

YES	30%
NO	69%
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER	1%

Question 26
Do you own or rent your home?

OWN	68%
RENT	26%
OTHER ARRANGEMENT	5%
PREFER NOT TO SAY	1%