

2025

Resolutions



Resolutions Committee Report

The 2025 Resolutions Committee prayerfully considered each resolution proposal to present to the messengers at the annual meeting. Each one was thoroughly discussed as to the value for the messengers and the Convention. The committee addressed issues that impact our state, individuals, and churches.

The Resolutions Committee brings this report to the messengers of the 205th Annual Meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting at Taylors First Baptist Church in Taylors, South Carolina, on November 11, 2025.

Disposition of the received proposals:

1. **Appreciation**, presented as Resolution 1, submitted by the Resolutions Committee
2. **Encouraging a Faithful Biblical Witness in the Face of Violent Attacks Against Free Speech**, presented as Resolution 2, submitted by the Resolutions Committee
3. **Affirming Life and Opposing Drug-Induced Abortions**, presented as Resolution 3, proposed by the Christian Life and Public Affairs Committee
4. **Urgency of Personal Evangelism**, presented as Resolution 4, proposed by the Christian Life and Public Affairs Committee
5. **Predatory Gambling**, presented as Resolution 5, proposed by the Christian Life and Public Affairs Committee

The Resolutions Committee received no other proposals or submissions.

2025 Resolutions Committee

David Bennett, Chair

Daniel Dickard, Vice-Chair

Kathy Blalock

Darrell Boyleston

Ryan Ofenloch

Jeff Rankin

1 ***1. Appreciation***

2
3 WHEREAS, the apostle Paul reminds us to “give thanks in everything” (1 Thessalonians 5:18), and to honor those who labor
4 faithfully for the sake of the Gospel; and

5
6 WHEREAS, Taylors First Baptist Church, under the leadership of Pastor Josh Powell, has graciously opened its doors
7 and extended warm hospitality to the messengers and guests of the 205th Annual Meeting of the South Carolina Baptist
8 Convention on November 10–11, 2025, so that we might “Celebrate” all that God is doing amongst our Convention (Psalm
9 126:3); and

10
11 WHEREAS, the staff and volunteers of Taylors First Baptist Church have given of their time, energy, and resources to
12 provide a welcoming environment for worship, fellowship, and the business of our Convention; and

13
14 WHEREAS, the facilities of Taylors First Baptist Church have been prayerfully and excellently prepared to support the work
15 of South Carolina Baptists as we gather together for the glory of God and the advancement of his Kingdom; therefore, be
16 it

17
18 RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 205th session of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Taylors,
19 South Carolina, November 10–11, 2025, joyfully express our gratitude to Pastor Josh Powell, the staff, and the entire church
20 family for their gracious hospitality and faithful service to Christ and his church; and be it finally

21
22 RESOLVED, that we pray God’s continued favor and blessing upon Taylors First Baptist Church as they serve their
23 community, our state, and the nations with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

1 ***2. Encouraging a Faithful Biblical Witness in the Face of Violent Attacks Against Free Speech***

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3 WHEREAS, Scripture teaches that every human being has immeasurable worth because he is created by God as his image
4 bearer (Genesis 1:27); and

5
6 WHEREAS, the Lord Jesus Christ commanded his followers to love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them
7 (Matthew 5:44); and

8
9 WHEREAS, free speech in the public square provides the opportunity for humanity to hear and consider truth claims that
10 shape the conscience, and Scripture calls us to “test all things; hold on to what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21) and to
11 “take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5); and

12
13 WHEREAS, violent attacks against free speech disregard human dignity, undermine civil society, and contradict the Gospel
14 of peace (Romans 12:17–18); and

15
16 WHEREAS, public discourse is increasingly marked by hostility, division, and threats against those who speak
17 courageously from biblical convictions; and

18
19 WHEREAS, the Christian witness flourishes when believers stand firmly for truth with compassionate conviction, even in
20 the face of opposition (Philippians 1:28); therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, that the messengers to the 205th session of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Taylors, South
23 Carolina, November 10–11, 2025, strongly denounce violent attacks against free speech in all their forms, calling instead for
24 a culture that values life, civility, and free expression of conscience; and be it further
25
26 RESOLVED, that we encourage all believers to bear courageous witness to the Gospel, to engage the public square boldly
27 and humbly, and to trust the Lord to use their faithful testimony for his glory (Acts 4:18–20); and be it finally
28
29 RESOLVED, that we pray for God to raise up men and women of conviction, who will declare the unchanging truth of Christ
30 with grace and steadfastness, regardless of threat or cost (Acts 4:29–31).

3. Affirming Life and Opposing Drug-Induced Abortions

3 WHEREAS, every human life, from conception to natural death, is a sacred gift of God, created in his image (Genesis 1:27;
4 Psalm 127:3–5; Psalm 139:13–16); and
5
6 WHEREAS, Scripture calls God’s people to defend the vulnerable (Psalm 82:3–4) and to speak up for those who cannot
7 speak for themselves (Proverbs 31:8–9); and
8
9 WHEREAS, Christ calls his church to extend both truth and compassion, offering hope, healing, and forgiveness through
10 the Gospel to all who have been impacted by abortion (John 8:32); and
11
12 WHEREAS, drug-induced abortions accounted for 63% of all abortions in the United States in 2023,¹ and 84% of all
13 abortions in South Carolina in 2023 were chemically induced,² demonstrating a sharp rise in the prevalence of this
14 dangerous method for terminating pregnancy within our state; and
15
16 WHEREAS, drug-induced abortions endanger unborn children while also placing women at increased risk of physical
17 complications, such as hemorrhage and infection; psychological trauma; and spiritual detachment³; and
18
19 WHEREAS, although drug-induced abortions are often promoted as safe and easy,⁴ in reality, they leave women to endure
20 a painful and sometimes dangerous process, frequently alone and without medical supervision; and
21
22 WHEREAS, the abortion industry exploits vulnerable women, particularly through online access to abortion-inducing drugs,
23 by downplaying or disregarding the potential long-term consequences of such procedures on women’s health and well
24 being; therefore, be it
25
26 RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 205th session of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Taylors,
27 South Carolina, November 10–11, 2025, affirm the dignity and value of every human life, both born and preborn, and
28 oppose the practice of drug-induced abortions; and be it further
29
30 RESOLVED, that we call upon South Carolina Baptists to support life by praying for, serving with, and financially supporting
31 pregnancy resource centers, foster and kinship care initiatives, and adoption ministries; and be it further
32
33 RESOLVED, that we urge lawmakers to protect both the preborn and expectant mothers by promoting policies that
34 safeguard the well-being of women, encouraging holistic healthcare that values both mother and child, and enacting

35 legislation that prohibits the use of abortion-inducing drugs in South Carolina; and be it further
 36
 37 RESOLVED, that we encourage churches to equip members to evangelize, disciple, and walk alongside women and families
 38 facing unplanned pregnancies, offering compassion, and tangible support in the name of Christ; and be it further
 39
 40 RESOLVED, that we call upon South Carolina Baptists to continue to advocate for a culture of life in every sphere of
 41 influence, resisting the normalization of abortion in all its forms; and be it finally
 42
 43 RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the ultimate hope for life, healing, and
 44 restoration for all people (Romans 1:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17–19; Colossians 1:19–20).

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- ¹ Rachel K. Jones and Amy Friedrich-Karnik, “Medication Abortion Accounted for 63% of All US Abortions in 2023—An Increase from 53% in 2020,” Guttmacher Institute, March 2024, <https://www.guttmacher.org/2024/03/medication-abortion-accounted-63-all-us-abortions-2023-increase-53-2020>.
² South Carolina Department of Public Health: A Public Report Providing Statistics Compiled from All Abortions Reported to DPH, https://dph.sc.gov/sites/scdph/files/2025-06/2024-SC_Abortion_Report.pdf.
³ Donna J. Harrison et al., “Mifepristone Adverse Events in the FDA Adverse Event Reporting System, 2002–2019,” *Issues in Law & Medicine* 36, no. 1 (Spring 2021): 3–26; Cameron Louttit, “The Origins and Proliferation of Unfounded Comparisons Regarding the Safety of Mifepristone,” *Bio Tech* 14, no. 2, <https://doi.org/10.3390/biotech14020039>.
⁴ Lauren Canterbury, “Abortion Complications Underreported, New Report Finds,” *World*, September 26, 2025, <https://wng.org/sift/fda-approves-generic-abortion-pill-after-promising-to-review-drugs-risks-1759501147>.

4. *Urgency of Personal Evangelism*

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 3 WHEREAS, Jesus Christ has commanded his followers to “go and make disciples of all nations,” (Matthew 28:19–20),
 4 proclaiming the Gospel message of the atoning death, physical burial, and glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ to every
 5 person (Mark 16:15; 1 Corinthians 15); and
 6
 7 WHEREAS, the population of South Carolina continues to grow rapidly, with the addition of more than 1 million new
 8 residents in the period between 2000 and 2022,¹ and according to the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office,
 9 South Carolina is the fastest growing state by percentage and the 5th fastest by numeric change; and
 10
 11 WHEREAS, although baptisms have increased over the last five years according to South Carolina Baptist Convention
 12 statistics, the reported number of baptisms annually has decreased over the last decade by almost 5,000; and
 13
 14 WHEREAS, apart from a renewed commitment to genuine relationships with lost people and personal evangelism, we risk
 15 losing ground in fulfilling the Great Commission given by our Savior, and losing an entire generation; therefore, be it
 16
 17 RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 205th session of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Taylors,
 18 South Carolina, November 10–11, 2025, affirm the urgency of personal evangelism as a biblical mandate (Acts 1:8) and a
 19 present necessity; and be it further
 20
 21 RESOLVED, that we call upon every South Carolina Baptist pastor, church leader, and church member to intentionally
 22 build relationships with those far from God and verbally share the Gospel with friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, and
 23 newcomers to our communities; and be it further
 24
 25 RESOLVED, that we encourage each South Carolina Baptist church to prioritize equipping their members to confidently and
 26 compassionately proclaim Christ, by providing training, resources, and accountability in evangelism; and be it finally

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28 RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves to the mission of Christ's Church, relying on the power of the Holy Spirit to make
29 Christ known in South Carolina and to the ends of the earth, so that all may hear and believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and
30 Savior.

¹ USAFacts, "Our Changing Population: South Carolina, Year 2000 to 2022," <https://usafacts.org/data/topics/people-society/population-and-demographics/our-changing-population/state/south-carolina/?endDate=2022-01-01&startDate=2000-01-01>

5. Dangers of Predatory Gambling

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3 WHEREAS, the South Carolina Baptist Convention has a long history of opposing gambling in its various forms, including
4 casinos, lotteries, horse racing, and other predatory gambling schemes (21 gambling resolutions since 1983); and
5

6 WHEREAS, the South Carolina General Assembly currently has three gambling bills under consideration that would
7 establish casino gambling, legalize online sports wagering, and permit pari-mutuel betting on horse racing; and
8

9 [Neighborly Love and Predatory Behavior]

10 WHEREAS, predatory gambling violates the principle of neighbor-love, causing the financial loss and harm of many for
11 the gain of a few who enjoy entertainment at the expense of others (Exodus 20:17; 22:21; Leviticus 25:17; Deuteronomy
12 22:1-4; Matthew 22:39; Mark 12:31; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8); and
13

14 WHEREAS, the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) classifies
15 gambling as an addictive product similar to heroin, opioids, alcohol, and cocaine; and
16

17 WHEREAS, according to Baylor University economics professor Dr. Earl Grinols, communities typically build casinos based
18 on a mirage of false promises, such as providing jobs, funding schools, and boosting the local economy, when one of every
19 dollar of casino benefit to the community generates three dollars in social costs; and
20

21 WHEREAS, no amount of taxation, regulation, or economic gain would justify the harm caused by an expansion of legalized
22 gambling on individuals, marriages, families, children, economic well-being, and opportunities for human flourishing; and
23

24 [Trusting God Over Government]

25 WHEREAS, gambling violates the principle of lordship, tempting individuals to trust chance rather than God, who provides
26 for the needs of "the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:45; 6:24; Philippians 4:18-19; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 2
27 Corinthians 9:8-12; Colossians 3:17; 1 Timothy 6:17-18); and
28

29 WHEREAS, studies from institutions such as the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Oregon reveal
30 online sports wagering is highly addictive, increasing incidences of domestic violence, personal bankruptcy, and emotional
31 and psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, and suicide; and
32

33 [Principles of Work]

34 WHEREAS, gambling violates the principle of work by looking to gain something for nothing and hoping for easy money
35 rather than pursuing responsible industry, investment, and labor (Genesis 1:28; Exodus 20:9; Psalm 104:23; 128:2;
36 Ecclesiastes 2:24; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12); and
37

38 WHEREAS, a 2024 study conducted by Northwestern University on the negative financial effects of sports wagering
39 concluded that while online sports betting may offer states an additional source of revenue, it also exposes residents,
40 especially those already facing financial difficulties, to significant financial risks; and

41

42 WHEREAS, according to a 5-year study conducted by the University of California San Diego that included data from 32
43 states and over 700,000 gamblers, 96% appeared to lose money compared to only 4% who made money; and

44

45 [Principles of Stewardship]

46 WHEREAS, gambling violates the principle of stewardship, encouraging reckless and careless speculation with resources
47 entrusted by the Lord while disregarding the same Lord who provides for all human needs (Matthew 6:19–34; 1 Timothy
48 6:17–18; 1 Peter 4:1–11); and

49

50 WHEREAS, according to an extensive investigative essay in *The Atlantic*, casinos build their business model on problem
51 gamblers and employ tactics, such as identifying their “biggest losers” and offering them customized perks and VIP
52 treatment; and

53

54 [Principle of Violence]

55 WHEREAS, the Bible clearly identifies violence as a corrupting force in society, declaring that “the violence of the wicked
56 sweeps them away, because they refuse to act justly” (Proverbs 21:7) and that “the Lord examines the righteous, but he
57 hates the wicked and those who love violence” (Psalm 11:5); and

58

59 WHEREAS, research published by Birches Health recognizes that up to 50% of people with a gambling addiction have
60 committed a gambling-related crime (theft, fraud, or embezzlement) and it is linked to suicidality and intimate partner
61 violence¹; and

62

63 [Civil Magistrate & Current Legislation]

64 WHEREAS, gambling violates the principle of the civil magistrate, causing governments to prey on their own citizens
65 through state-sponsored gambling rather than protecting them and seeking their good (Proverbs 8:15–16; Amos 5:10–13;
66 Romans 13:4; 1 Timothy 2:1–2; 1 Peter 2:13–15); therefore, be it

67

68 RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 205th session of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Taylors,
69 South Carolina, November 10–11, 2025, encourage the members of the South Carolina General Assembly to stop all efforts
70 to open South Carolina to additional legalized gambling; and, be it further

71

72 RESOLVED, that we encourage all South Carolina Baptists to contact their legislators to express their opposition to the
73 expansion of all forms of gambling; and be it further

74

75 RESOLVED, that we encourage our state legislators to stand up and oppose efforts by representatives of gambling
76 interests who seek to exert their influence over the political process, portraying predatory gambling as a means to
77 strengthen the economy and to promote human flourishing; and be it finally

78

79 RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be provided to all members of the South Carolina General Assembly.

¹ Zach Lutz, “Gambling Addiction Stats: 10 Concerning Betting Trends in America,” September 12, 2025, <https://bircheshealth.com/resources/concerning-gambling-addiction-stats-in-america>.



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