AGENCY NAME:	Office of Regulatory Staff		
AGENCY CODE:	R060	SECTION:	73

Fiscal Year 2026-27
Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

OPERATING REQUESTS (FORM B1)		**For FY 2026-27, my agency is (mark "X"):**
		Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
	X	Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
		Not requesting any changes.

NON-RECURRING REQUESTS (FORM B2)		**For FY 2026-27, my agency is (mark "X"):**
		Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
		Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
	X	Not requesting any changes.

CAPITAL REQUESTS (FORM C)		**For FY 2026-27, my agency is (mark "X"):**
		Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
	X	Not requesting any changes.

PROVISOS (FORM D)		**For FY 2026-27, my agency is (mark "X"):**
		Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
		Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
	X	Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	Name	*Phone*	*Email*
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Mark Rhoden	803-737-1108	mrhoden@ors.sc.gov
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Prasanthi Pandradju	803-737-0629	ppandraju@ors.sc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2026-27 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	Agency Director	*Board or Commission Chair*
SIGN/DATE:	[signature]	[signature]
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	Andrew M. Bateman	Senator Thomas C. Alexander

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	Office Of Regulatory Staff
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BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Wages, Benefits, and Related Overhead; Consulting Related to: Bill H3309, SC Energy Security Act, May 12, 2025	0	0	3,220,000	0	3,220,000	0.00	0.00	18.00	0.00	18.00
TOTALS			0	0	3,220,000	0	3,220,000	0.00	0.00	18.00	0.00	18.00

Agency Name:	Office Of Regulatory Staff		
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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	1

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Wages, Benefits, and Related Overhead; Consulting Related to: Bill H3309, SC Energy Security Act, May 12, 2025**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $0** **Federal: $0** **Other: $3,220,000** **Total: $3,220,000**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	18.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	IT Technology/Security related
X	HR/Personnel Related
	Consulted DTO during development
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
X	Government and Citizens

Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative: H3309, SC Energy Security Act, May 12, 2025:

Budget request is for ORS Other Fund 3035, which funds regulatory oversight of utilities: Electric, Water Wastewater, Transportation, Telecommunications; as well as public safety: pipeline safety, railroad safety, and emergency management. ORS serves the following Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objectives components:

• Deliver a government that serves the needs of South Carolinians and achieves inter-agency collaboration to deliver highly effective, efficient, and innovative programs.

• Build a world-class and safe public infrastructure to enhance the quality of life of our citizens and to promote the state in global competitiveness as a location for business, investment, talent, innovation, and visitors.

Agency goals, which align with strategic objectives are:

• ORS is responsive to the public serving the needs of South Carolinians through its mission and related rate-making activities saving SC citizens millions of dollars annually.

• Operations are marked by professional excellence in performance of rate-making activities as well as coordinating with other Federal and State Agencies in Pipeline and Railroad safety and responsiveness to EMD events

	• Responsiveness to the public by providing consumer education related to public utilities. This budget request advances the above by providing OTHER funds AUTHORIZATION to support the following: • Certain ORS responsibilities resulting from the enactment of H3309, SC Energy Security Act. a) Adapt IRP compliance review to new statute requirements; review/evaluate customer agreements; regarding deployment of nuclear facilities, review applications for siting, studies, progress reports, and costs; review DSM/EE program and incentives and amounts; review DSM program annual reports; triennial review of DSM/EE portfolios; review economic development rates; regarding net energy metering, review applications/agreements filed with Commission; review out-of-state facility siting applications; continuous monitoring of construction projects monthly update to PSC and General Assembly; review compliance in competitive procurements; review proceedings related to filings for long-lead, clean generation resources; monitor utility construction >$500 million, quarterly status reports. b) Examinations, compliance & monitoring under E-RSA. c) Prepare/distribute 5-year report related to the E-RSA activities; review utility evaluations filed at PSC for SMR Nuclear deployment; review DESC report on conversion of Wateree to biomass-fired generation. This FY27 budget submission does not include any budget ask related to 3309 responsibilities that are dependent on general funding decisions as follows: d) Study to evaluate third-party EE administration. e) Prepare a comprehensive state energy assessment and ten-year action plan. f) These activities may involve a future general funds budget ask of approx. $1.1 million.
ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	*What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?*

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Currently, ORS' regulatory responsibilities are Other funded via Gross Receipts billings to regulated utilities. ORS is the recipient; funds received are used primarily to pay wages/benefits and overhead. This budget ask represents a request for increased budget authorization only. Actual funding is dependent on Gross Receipts billings to regulated utilities. ORS anticipates it will need to increase its Gross Receipts billings to utilities next June 2026 to cover approximately $2 million of this budget ask. For 3309 expenses expected to be incurred in FY26, ORS plans to absorb those expenses with current cash carryforward balances; however, part of the increase in Gross Receipts next year will be to recover FY26 expenditures as well as provide for FY27 and future annual spend necessary under 3309. While the budget authorization ask includes authorization for E-RSA activities under 3309, ORS will not request any Gross Receipts funding related to E-RSA until utilities elect under the E-RSA and until ORS begins to incur expenditures for those activities. It should be noted that parts of 3309 activities are dependent on funding from General funds; however, until general funding decisions are made, budget for those activities are not a part of this request.
	What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

	ORS is seeking $3,220,000 in budget authorization primarily in the areas of wages and benefits along with nominal overhead and $50K consulting justified by requirements of enacted H3309 as follows: • Certain ORS responsibilities resulting from the enactment of H3309, SC energy Act.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

a) Adapt IRP compliance review to new statute requirements; review/evaluate customer agreements; regarding deployment of nuclear facilities, review applications for siting, studies, progress reports, and costs; review DSM/EE program and incentives and amounts; review DSM program annual reports; triennial review of DSM/EE portfolios; review economic development rates; regarding net energy metering, review applications/agreements filed with Commission; review out-of-state facility siting applications; continuous monitoring of construction projects monthly update to PSC and General Assembly; review compliance in competitive procurements; review proceedings related to filings for long-lead, clean generation resources; monitor utility construction >$500 million, quarterly status reports.

Represents an FTE ask of 9.

b) Examinations, compliance & monitoring under E-RSA.

Represents an FTE ask of 8.

c) Prepare/distribute 5-year report related to the E-RSA activities; review utility evaluations filed at PSC for SMR Nuclear deployment; review DESC report on conversion of Wateree to biomass-fired generation.
Represents an FTE ask of 1.

This FY27 budget submission does not include budget ask related to 3309 responsibilities that are dependent on general funding decisions as follows:
d) Study to evaluate third-party EE administration.
e) Prepare a comprehensive state energy assessment and ten-year action plan.
f) If authorized and funded these activities may involve a future general funds request of approx. $1.1 million, which primarily consists of consulting costs and wages/benefits equivalent to 1 FTE.

ORS FY27 Budget Ask - FTEs & Related Costs

Commitment Item Number		501060	513000	512001	512002	
Commitment Item Name		UNCLASSIFIED POSITIONS	EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS	OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	
Position Title By Major SECTION	**FTEs**	**Salary**	**Fringe**	**Overhead**	**Consulting**	**Total**
Analyst or Auditor - ERSA	4	$ 426,004	$ 170,416	$ 8,540		$ 604,960
Attorney - ERSA	2	$ 210,791	$ 84,316	$ 3,099		$ 298,206
Economist - ERSA	1	$ 118,177	$ 47,271	$ 827		$ 166,274
Director - ERSA	1	$ 167,493	$ 66,997	$ 5,527		$ 240,017
TOTAL - ERSA	8	$ 922,464	$ 369,000	$ 17,993	$ -	$ 1,309,457
Analyst - All Other Functions	2	$ 221,979	$ 88,792	$ 4,439		$ 315,209
Attorney - All Other Functions	2	$ 264,000	$ 105,600	$ 3,828		$ 373,429
Director - All Other Functions	2	$ 333,347	$ 133,339	$ 7,534		$ 474,220
Administrative - All Other Functions	1	$ 61,624	$ 24,650	$ 912		$ 87,185
Audit - All Other Functions	1	$ 100,815	$ 40,326	$ 2,117		$ 143,258
Engineer - All Other Functions	2	$ 268,618	$ 107,447	$ 6,178		$ 382,243
TOTAL - All Other Functions	**10**	$ 1,250,383	$ 500,153	$ 25,008	$ -	$ 1,775,543
Consultant - ERSA					$ 50,000	$ 50,000
Office Rent Allocation				$ 85,000		$ 85,000
FY27 BUDGET REQUEST	**18**	**$ 2,172,846**	**$ 869,153**	**$ 128,001**	**$ 50,000**	**$ 3,220,000**

Position Title SUMMARY	FTEs	Salary	Fringe	Overhead	Consulting	Total
Analyst	6	$ 647,982	$ 259,208	$ 12,979	$ -	$ 920,169
Attorney	4	$ 474,791	$ 189,917	$ 6,927	$ -	$ 671,635
Economist	1	$ 118,177	$ 47,271	$ 827	$ -	$ 166,274
Director	3	$ 500,840	$ 200,336	$ 13,061	$ -	$ 714,237
Admin	1	$ 61,624	$ 24,650	$ 912	$ -	$ 87,185
Audit	1	$ 100,815	$ 40,326	$ 2,117	$ -	$ 143,258
Engineer	2	$ 268,618	$ 107,447	$ 6,178	$ -	$ 382,243
	18	**$ 2,172,846**	**$ 869,153**	**$ 43,001**	**$ -**	**$ 3,085,000**

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan

AMOUNT	$94,903

What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.

ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	N/A

How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?

PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	Office of Broadband Coordinator

What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?

SUMMARY	The Office of Broadband Coordinator would not expect a significant impact on its core responsibilities and function with a reduction of this amount. In the event of a General Fund reduction, the Office will look to reduce spending on temporary positions and optional conferences and the related travel expense.

Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS	Reduce travel costs and optional conferences - $5,000 Leverage Federal funding - $25,000 Reduce temporary positions - $25,000

What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than $50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?

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FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS

TITLE	Efforts to Reduce Cost and Burden to Business

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	ORS participated in regulation development initiated by the Public Service Commission of South Carolina ("Commission") related to regulation changes in the Commission practice and procedure and regulation changes impacting the customers of natural gas, electric, water, sewer utilities and transportation carriers. Many of the changes proposed by ORS during the Commission's regulation development process are intended to streamline the regulatory process and reduce regulatory costs for customers.

What is the expected savings to South Carolina's businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	Repeal or revision of regulations.
	Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.
X	Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.
	Other

METHOD OF CALCULATION	N/A

Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.

REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	N/A

Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?

REDUCTION OF REGULATION	N/A

Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?

SUMMARY	ORS participated in regulation development initiated by the Public Service Commission of South Carolina ("Commission") related to regulation changes in the Commission practice and procedure and regulation changes impacting the customers of natural gas, electric, water, sewer utilities and transportation carriers. Many of the changes proposed by ORS during the Commission's regulation development process are intended to streamline the regulatory process and reduce regulatory costs for customers.

Provide an explanation of the proposal and its positive results on businesses or citizens. How will the request affect agency operations?