

# State House Visit & Advocacy Trip

Thursday, February 8, 2024  
South Carolina State House  
1100 Gervais Street  
Columbia, South Carolina

*(bus parking on Senate Street after turning right off Gervais Street)*

## Schedule

**Before 10:30 am** → This time should be utilized to meet with your local legislators in Columbia OR to tour the statehouse grounds (links to brochures and tours on the website at <https://www.skillsusasc.org/state-house-visit>). See below for information about students contacting their local legislators.

**10:30 am** → State Officers and State Officer Coordinators meet at Senator Ronnie Cromer's (location will be sent directly to the officers).

**10:40 am** → All others be on the State House Steps for a photo with Senator Ronnie Cromer.

**10:45 am** → State Photo on State House Steps. Immediately following the photo, please go to the Senate Gallery. You will enter through the side of the state house (left of the front steps when facing the steps), go through the metal detectors, go to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, then go up the thin staircase on the left side to gain access to the gallery). Be seated prior to 11:00 am if possible.

**11:00 am** → The SC Senate will go into session.

**11:00 am – 11:45 am** → Sometime within this time frame, Senator Cromer will present SkillsUSA SC with a resolution, declaring it SkillsUSA Week in the state. Following this presentation, all can quietly exit the State House.

**11:45 am – 1:30 pm** → Break for lunch on your own

**1:30 pm & 2:00 pm** → There are 2 inside tour options available. The first is at 1:30 pm and the second is at 2:00 pm. Roughly 35 people can be on the tour. These times are set aside for our advisors and students. Please return to the same state house entry point, pass through the metal detectors, and wait in the lobby just beyond the metal detectors. The first 35 people there at 1:30 will be on that tour and the rest on the second tour.

**After 2:00 pm** → This time can also be utilized to meet with your local legislators in Columbia, to tour the state house grounds, or to head home. If your legislator can only meet during the 1:30 – 2:30 pm time frame, you may do that instead of the state house tour, but please let Mr. Chapman know.

## Advocacy

Reaching out to, inviting, and meeting with your local legislators is a great way to advocate for SkillsUSA, your school, and your program. Students should be the ones contacting their legislators and leading the conversations. Contacting legislators is time-sensitive because their schedules are constantly changing, so reaching out to local legislators a week in advance is perfect for getting put on their schedule for meetings. Reaching out a few weeks in advance is a great way to have them visit your school.

We have a video, recorded by your State Vice President, Avery Smith, explaining a document created to help you reach out by email to legislators and the media about SkillsUSA week and to reach out to legislators for meetings on February 8<sup>th</sup> or any other day. Student leaders should utilize this tool, look over the schedule above, and try to book a meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> in Columbia, in the morning, or back home in the coming week or weeks. (*Document on state site*)

When reaching out, be sure to state your name, your school and city/town, and that you will be in Columbia in February 8<sup>th</sup> to receive a resolution in the Senate, but want to meet with them or their aid to talk about Career and Technical Education and SkillsUSA. Let them know how many students and advisors will be in attendance as well. Make sure to follow up daily until you have a meeting.

At the meeting, be sure to follow the video provided by Avery Smith and get prepared. The student chosen to lead your group should research SkillsUSA national information regarding the organization and explain that we have a few thousand members in our state with hundreds competing annually at the state level and tens of thousands from across the country attending the national conference in June. Tell them your framework story and how SkillsUSA or your CTE program is making a difference in your lives, and then invite them to your school to visit in the future. If you have any brochures about your school programs or your chapter, leave those with them as a gift.

When you get back to your school, be sure to send a follow-up email thanking them for meeting with you and letting them know of any upcoming events you have going on or when they could visit.

Visit the state website for our State House Visit to see the video from Vice President Avery Smith.

<https://www.skillsusasc.org/state-house-visit>