

## **Where's Pickens?**

Publius

On Friday, May 2, 2025, the South Carolina Republican Party (SCGOP) Credentials Committee met in Columbia, SC, to certify the delegates to the SCGOP State Convention. What should have been a ceremonial, routine event. This would be anything but routine. The committee received three complaints from the SCGOP regarding their respective County Convention proceedings. Complaints against the Charleston, Darlington, and Pickens County Republican Party (PCRP) were heard. While they are all disputed, the focus here will be on Pickens County, where the entire Pickens Delegation was unseated.

The bottom line issues, each of which is detailed later in the report, are:

1. The root cause of the “unseating” of the Pickens Delegation to the South Carolina Republican Party Convention was a 25 March 20205 email sent to Pickens County Republican Party Chairman Bob Fetterly demanding that Pickens County contravene the rules and take additional registrations after the formal reorganization process was complete.
2. The complaint itself is inaccurate and contains allegations that are false or half-truths intended to paint a different picture than what actually occurred.
3. The complaint did not allege that any County Delegate to the State Convention was invalid or not duly elected; therefore, it has no standing at the State Level.
4. The complainant did not challenge PCRP leadership about delegates before or at the County Convention, as required by SCGOP rules.
5. Planning and execution of all Precinct and County meetings are the responsibility of the County. The SCGOP credentials committee is not charged or authorized to hear a complaint that has not previously been heard and adjudicated at the County level or is out of scope.
6. The SCGOP did not properly adjudicate the complaint or determine the validity of any part of it, yet added it to the Credentials Committee agenda.
7. The biased conduct and conclusions of the SCGOP Credentials Committee lacked any real credibility and presented patently false claims and innuendo to the State Convention Floor. This significantly affected the Convention Floor vote, which was also very flawed in its conclusion.
8. SCGOP Leadership created the Straw Man allegation that the venue was too small with the intent to obfuscate the reality that Ms. Clark has no standing and no case.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The key to understanding the injustice of the PCRP delegation being unseated at the SCGOP State Convention lies in understanding the process, complicated by a web of rules, that led to this outcome.

Every two years, the SCGOP does a “reset”. From the precinct level up, the membership and leadership are rebuilt from the ground up.

SCGOP is structurally organized at four levels from bottom to top:

1. The Precinct-level
2. The County-level
3. The Congressional District level (not discussed here)
4. The State-level

In each county, there are two precinct-level meetings and a County Convention to decide on leadership using delegates. At the state-level, there is a single convention to decide SCGOP leadership, which also uses delegates. County and state-level elections use delegates, where voters elect individuals (delegates) to represent them in the larger convention. These delegates then vote on behalf of the voters who elected them.

Precinct-level elections result in the election of precinct officers and precinct delegates to the County Convention (County Delegates). County-level elections result in county officers and delegates to the state convention (State Delegates). State-level elections result in state party officers (primarily the Chairman). Each precinct is allotted a number of delegates using a formula outlined in the SCGOP rules (Rule 4(c)(6)) based on county population. Each County is allocated a number of delegates using a formula outlined in SC Law (7-9-100) based on previous election turnout.

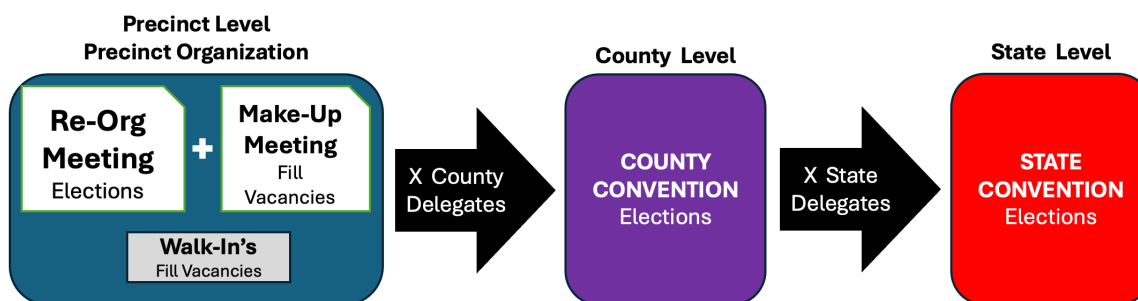


Figure 1: SCGOP Organization and Elections Process

Precinct Organization accomplishes four functions, which are recorded on the SCGOP Form-1:

1. Registration of precinct membership. Accomplished by filling out the top portion of SCGOP Form-1 (Figure 2) to include which meeting was attended ("initial meeting" is interchangeable with "Re-Org").
2. The member declares that they want to run for State Delegate and signs the portion they completed as complete.
3. Precinct Election Results (officer and delegate)
4. Certification by the Precinct Secretary and President that 1 through 3 are true and accurate.

It is essential to understand the scheduling constraints outlined in SCGOP Rules and South Carolina Law for the events included in Party Organization and the State Convention. Precinct Reorganization is required by Rule to be held in March (Rule 4(b)(1)). County Convention is required by rule to be held in April (Rule 5(b)(1)) and at least two weeks prior to State Convention (SC 7-9-70). State Convention is required by rule (Rule 7(a)(1)) to be held in May and by law (SC 7-9-100) on or before May 15.

Historically, the State Convention has been held in the middle of the month. In 2025, the SCGOP broke protocol and scheduled the State Convention for May 3, the earliest possible Saturday in May. This effectively eliminated the last two weeks in April from any county holding its county convention. This change adversely affected Pickens County, as their original County Convention was scheduled in late April.

The Form-1 is an SCGOP-provided, controlled, standardized triplicate document. Each form has an individual index number at the upper left. This makes each form unique and allows for tracking, control, and security of the Forms. The forms are pre-printed with the County name. The Form-1 is not a valid document unless the Precinct President and Secretary sign and certify the accuracy, qualifications, and elected positions of the member.

**FORM 1**

**2025 SOUTH CAROLINA REPUBLICAN PARTY**

**PICKENS COUNTY**

**PRECINCT REORGANIZATION**

Precinct: \_\_\_\_\_

Voter Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Congressional District: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please select one of the following:

☐ I attended my initial precinct meeting in person.

☐ I attended my make-up meeting in person.

☐ I did not attend my initial precinct meeting or my make-up meeting.

Delegate to the State Convention:

☐ I'd like to run to be a delegate from my county to the 2025 State Republican Party Convention, AND attest that I voted in 2 of the last 3 statewide GOP primaries. Place my name on the ballot at the County Convention as (PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature: \_\_\_\_\_

To be completed and attested by the Precinct Officers AFTER all business has been conducted.

Check the following that applies:

☐ Was elected as a Delegate to the County Party Convention

☐ Was elected as an Alternate to the County Party Convention

☐ Was elected to one of the following Precinct Officer Positions:

☐ President ☐ 1st VP ☐ 2nd VP ☐ Secretary ☐ Treasurer ☐ Committeeman

Attested by Precinct Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

Attested by Precinct President: \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 2: SCGOP Form-1 with annotations

Re-Org is the primary and largest meeting in Precinct Organization; by Rule (4(b)(1)), all precincts meet in a single location on the same day. This is the only meeting where precinct officers and delegates are elected. Only previously organized precincts can “reorganize”. Organized precincts can be as small as a single person.

Make-up is a mandatory second and final meeting (Rule 4(c)(11)). Make-Up registers membership and has delegate “elections” (unlike Re-Org, there is no precinct meeting, so practically speaking, there cannot be “elections”). Make-Up is an opportunity to fill unfilled officer or delegate precinct-level positions. In the time between Re-Org and Make-Up, Precinct Presidents may accept valid registrations (Form-1s) as “walk-ins.” These walk-in members can be added to the membership rolls. If there are

officer or delegate positions not filled, they can be filled by those who attended Make-Up first, then by walk-ins (in that order) (Rule 4(c)(11)).

Appeals to the process or results of the precinct-level meetings, including officer and delegate selection, should first be appealed at the precinct level. After adjudication, the appeal may be elevated to the county-level leadership and decided by committee (Rule 10(a)). The last opportunity to make a formal appeal regarding precinct-level officer and delegate selection is at the County Convention before the credentials report acceptance (Rule 5(c)(3)).

There are two controlled documents used to record the process of registrations and elections, the previously described "Form-1" (physical) and the P1 (electronic).

The P1 list is a SCGOP-provided spreadsheet used to document membership rolls, elected positions, and delegates to the County Convention and the State Convention. The primary source documents for data entry to the P1 list are the precinct Form-1s. Entry from Form-1 to the P1 is a manual, labor-intensive, and time-consuming process. For each line entry in the P1 list, there are 21 fields.

There are several mandated certifications and timings at each level. To be a valid member of a precinct, an individual must reside in that precinct and provide proof of a current, valid voter registration number, which is recorded on Form-1. Each Form-1 must be certified by the Precinct Secretary and Precinct President by signature and forwarded to the County Chairman no later than 5 days after the Re-Org is complete (Rule 4(c)(7)). The County Chairman is required to compile and send the initial certified P1 list to the SCGOP Chairman NLT 7 days following Re-Org and NLT 3 days after the Make-Up meeting (Rule 4(c)(9)). The P1 submitted after Make-Up contains the final certified list of delegates to the County Convention; it is also the list used to credential all delegates at the County Convention.

The provision in Rule 4(c)(9) *"No delegate or alternate shall be elected by the precinct less than five (5) days before the County Convention"* sets the last day any Precinct Reorganization (election) meeting may occur. This does not mean that officers or delegates can be added ad hoc up to this date.

After the County Convention, the certified P1 list is updated to include County Delegates elected to be State Delegates, along with the person elected as the Credentials Committee Representative (Rule 5(c)(7), Rule 7(3)). The County Chairman must send the updated and re-certified P1 list to the State Chairman no later than 5 days following the County Convention (Rule 5(c)(7)).

In the event of a challenge to an election at the county level, the County Convention decides appeals of all county-level elections (or issues related); the authority to resolve questions about elections or delegate seating lies with the County Convention (meaning not an external entity)(Rule 10(b)). If the challenge is unresolved at the county level, the County Chairman (not the challenger) must elevate the challenge to the state level.

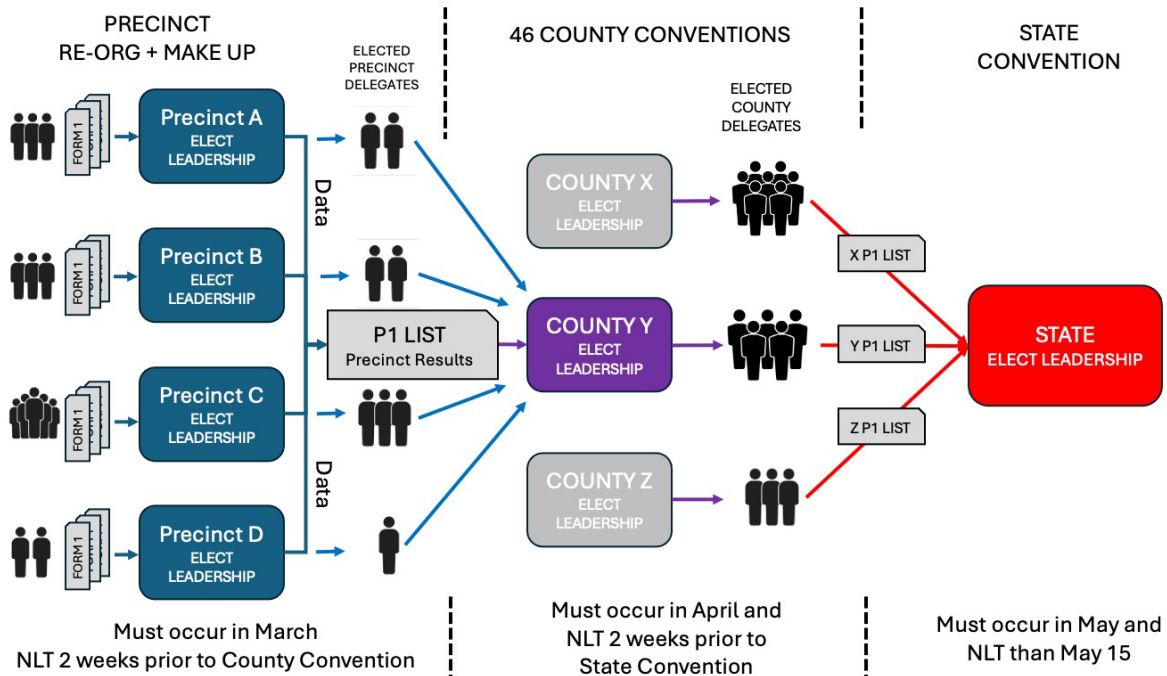


Figure 3: SCGOP Party Election Process Detail

## THE ISSUES:

The root cause of the “unseating” of the Pickens Delegation to the South Carolina Republican Party Convention was a 25 March 2020<sup>5</sup> email sent to Pickens County Republican Party Chairman Bob Fetterly demanding that Pickens County contravene the rules and take additional registrations after the formal reorganization process was complete.

Hope all is well!

We have gotten some reports from precinct presidents being refused P1 forms as they work to fill delegate vacancies.

Under SCGOP Rule 4 C(9), precincts are able to fill vacancies within 5 days of county convention.

Should these requests come in to fill vacancies, form 1s need to be provided to precinct presidents. If they are not provided, precinct presidents may provide the same information manually and it will be accepted as an official form 1.

Please let me know if you need any further clarification!

Thanks,

Leighton Gray Smith

*Figure 4: 25 March email from LGS to Bob Fetterly*

Starting with “*we have gotten reports*”, from whom? Ms. Gray Smith admits people are bypassing the county and going directly to the state with complaints, and the SCGOP is happy to accommodate them. Who would have direct access to the SCGOP?

As stated above in the background section, the Make-Up meeting is the last opportunity to register at the Precinct Level. In Ms. Gray-Smith’s email to Chairman Fetterly, she cites Rule 4 (c)(9) as the basis for filling vacancies up to five days before the County Convention. Rule 4(c)(9) states (in part):

*“No delegate or alternate shall be elected by the precinct less than five (5) days before the County Convention...”*

Rule 4(c)(9) does not allow precincts to “fill vacancies” for delegates within 5 days of the County Convention; it sets the last day to be elected as a delegate or alternate. The only true elections occur at the Re-Org meeting, as it is the only time the precinct convenes and can hold a vote.

There is a provision to “fill vacancies” by people who did not attend the Re-Org or Make-Up meetings under Rule 4(c)(11), which states (in part):

*“...or those who are absent from the meeting but who have submitted the properly signed forms”*

The certified forms must be submitted before the Make-Up meeting, not after. Those “absent” individuals are the last to fill vacant delegate positions per the same rule.

Ms. Gray Smith did not invoke or reference this clause; she improperly invoked a line of 4(c)(9).

If a county desired, the Make-Up meeting can be held as late as 5 days before the County Convention, which aligns with Rule 4(c)(9), but 4(c)(9) cannot be invoked in isolation after the Make-Up meeting. Ms. Gray-Smith incorrectly or selectively interpreted, then directed Chairman Fetterly to violate the SCGOP rules.

Chairman Fetterly also took this as a veiled threat from the SCGOP that if he did not go outside the SCGOP Rules to *“fill vacancies”* after the Makeup Meeting, the SCGOP would intervene.

Once the Make-Up meeting is closed, the Reorganization process is complete. By rule, there can be no more precinct officers or county delegates elected or vacancies filled.

There is a series of subsequent emails in which Ms. Gray-Smith is asked how she expected the PCRPs to meet mandatory deadlines and break the rules. Eventually, this led to a 31 March email to Chairman McKissick, as the out-of-control registrations, following the Make-Up meeting, were impacting the validity of the P1 list and Chairman Fetterly’s ability to certify the P1 by the 31 March deadline. Additionally, the number of potential registrations began to raise concerns regarding the Founders Hall seating capacity. Seating capacity had not been a factor until Ms. Gray-Smith’s directive bypassed the rules. Chairman Fetterly relayed those concerns and informed Chairman McKissick that he was not accepting anything but valid, certified Form-1s, with less than 5 days to the convention, and also told Chairman McKissick in the same email:

*“If the SCGOP desires to accommodate these folks who signed up late and did not coordinate with their precinct president, I would need it to do so with its own resources.”*

Meaning, if Chairman McKissick wanted to break the SCGOP Rules by allowing unfettered, uncertified registrations and attendees, an “open border”’s mentality, the SCGOP would have to make the necessary accommodations and provide extra resources to do so; the PCRPs did not have the funds, manpower or bandwidth on such short notice to do that.

Chairman McKissick did not respond to the email.

**The complaint itself is inaccurate and contains allegations that are false or half-truths intended to paint a different picture than what actually occurred.**

There were five allegations made in Ms. Clark’s complaint. Under scrutiny, the claims and exhibits provided by Ms. Clark are false or partial truths. Not a single allegation is true when taken to the conclusion.

Detailed analysis of the complaint allegations:

1. *“Chairman Bob Fetterly limited the delegate count to 400 on/before convention day”.*

The challenge implies an intent by Chairman Fetterly to limit the number of delegates. This is easily dismissed by the fact that the original venue scheduled (by Chairman Fetterly and the PCRP committee) could seat 660 people. This would have been the venue used had the SCGOP not scheduled the State Convention for early May in mid-February. The 3 May State Convention date broke precedent for State Convention timing (usually mid-May). It forced the PCRP to reschedule their original date and venue to earlier in the month (the two weeks between county and state convention law).

Ms. Clark both further undermines and discredits her claim with her own data in the very next line, citing 339 registered and 287 attended. Chairman Fetterly did not limit the delegate count; in fact, Chairman Fetterly increased the delegate count from what it would have been. Had he not identified and corrected a number of people who did not select the “I was elected as a delegate” on the Form-1s (as required) to be elected a delegate, the number of delegates would have been far fewer. Chairman Fetterly also allowed several people to be delegates on Convention Day whose Form-1s were incomplete. The 752 number cited is the “possible”, not the “probable”, and not even close to a “likely” number. Chairman Fetterly and the PCRP Committee planned to “Plausible or Likely” number of Delegates based on sound judgment and history. This was proven to be a sound decision based on real-world attendance.

The complaint included 21 Form-1s submitted as evidence by Ms. Clark without explanation as to why they are included. All 21 were submitted after Make-Up. All 21 were copies and therefore invalid (no index number), 19 had no signatures, and the two that did only had one signature (Kelsey Crooks, Brushy Creek). 11 were submitted after the extended deadline of March 31. Ten Form-1s were at least partially filled out by the same person across multiple precincts, which is not illegal, but demonstrates that this was a coordinated activity. None of the applicants contacted PCRP leadership to rectify the rejected copies and submit the proper Form-1s. None of the Form-1s or applicants challenged the credentials report at the PCRP County Convention.

The social media post cited as “Example 3” states that “guests” will not be allowed to attend due to venue limitations; it does not state that “delegates” will not be able to participate. To underscore Chairman Fetterly’s willingness to accommodate individuals versus limit individuals, as detailed above, the Hollidays were allowed to fill vacant delegate spots as “walk-ins” on Convention Day after providing their Voter information.

Nothing provided demonstrates any intent by Chairman Fetterly to limit the delegate count.

2. *“March 23, 2025, Zion precinct (EC), Laura Hinty contacted Chairman Bob Fetterly to fill two open delegate spots for her precinct. Below is the text received from Chairman Bob Fetterly denying EC Laura Hinty this ability”*

This is the first example of inaccurate, incomplete, and disingenuous information presented by Ms. Clark. Ms. Hinty’s request was made on Sunday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, at nearly 7 pm, the day after Make-Up. The request was to register “two more folks” and meet “for Re-Org” (Figure 5).



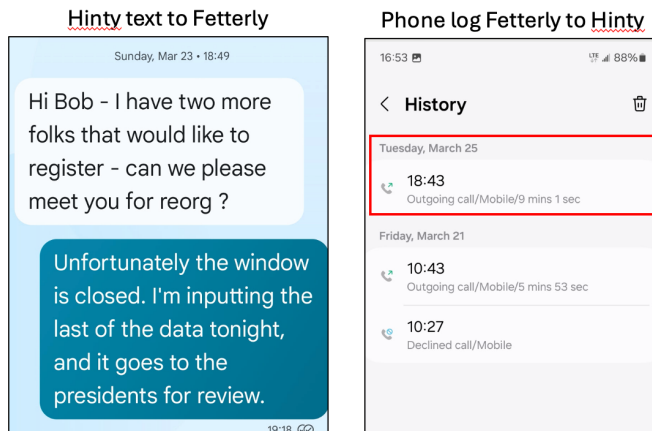


Figure 5: Fetterly - Hinty Text and Phone Log

The text message request was initially denied for the reason stated in the text reply. Ms. Hinty wanted to have a second private Re-Org. Re-Org is covered under Rule 4(c)(11), the requirement to hold “a Make-Up meeting” (singular) was met by the PCRP Make Up meeting held on 22 March.

Chairman Fetterly was justified in denying the request based on SCGOP rules. Registering someone to the party rolls can be accomplished at any time by the Precinct officers; delegates cannot. The intent was obviously to add more delegates after the deadline. Chairman Fetterly and his team were in the process of getting the required data into the P1 list to meet the “and no later than three (3) days after a make-up meeting” certification requirement in Rule 4(c)(9).

Chairman Fetterly, after direction from SCGOP on 25 March, called Ms. Hinty to inform her that she could “register two more folks” (Figure 2). Ms. Hinty was provided the two requested Form-1s, which were returned, and the two people were certified as County delegates. Ms. Clark knew that the two had been registered and certified when she made her complaint nearly a month later. This was a nonissue.

There were approximately 80 additional people to add to the P1 list at the completion of the Make-Up meeting. The Form-1 data had to be entered, then checked and recertified by Precinct Presidents (or at least the ability to be checked by the precinct Presidents), returned, and sent to the SCGOP as “certified” by close of business March 25<sup>th</sup>.

The email from Ms. Gray-Smith (Figure 3) was sent at 5:05 pm (i.e., close of business) on March 25<sup>th</sup>, the same day and time as the certified P1 list was due at the SCGOP. Chairman Fetterly could not send a certified P1 list to SCGOP, fulfilling the 4(c)(9) requirement, and adhere to the directive outlined in the email to “fill vacancies” for an additional 6 days. The SCGOP directed Chairman Fetterly to ignore (violate) the rules and proceed to “fill vacancies”, which Chairman Fetterly did.

Laura Hinty received the requested Form-1s, which were subsequently returned. Ms. Clark was aware of this when she filed the complaint. This is a frivolous and false allegation.

3. *"Karin Kirby was denied her ability to vote at the convention and told she did not check the delegate box."*

*She stated she was guided on how to fill out the form at REORG and had clearly asked to be a county delegate at REORG. Karin Kirby's precinct had delegate spots available. However, she was still denied her ability to vote at the convention."*

Karin Kirby did not have the "was elected as a delegate" box on her Form-1 checked after re-org. She was initially left off the P1 list for that reason. Kirby was eventually certified as a delegate to the County Convention as a vacancy fill-in. An email dated April 2nd from PCR leadership listed Ms. Kirby as a County Delegate.

Karen Kirby was not "denied her ability to vote". The claim is false.

4. *"There were enough delegates denied registration, denied voting ability, and denied the ability to attend the convention to change the outcome of the election."*

There were ZERO valid delegates denied registration, therefore denied voting ability, or denied the ability to attend the convention. As outlined above, the outcome of the election (for Chairman) is not in question.

5. *"Chairwoman candidate Chris Clark spoke out against the denial of delegates online. Chairman Bob Fetterly responded to the post: See attached: (Example 6)"*

Example 6 is a Social Media reply from Bob Fetterly to Chris Clark, which has no bearing at all on her complaint nor does it show that she "spoke out against" anything. It does demonstrate that many people who registered did not show up.

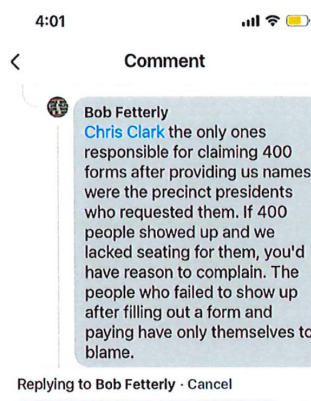


Figure 6: Clark Example 6

**The complaint did not allege that any County Delegate to the State Convention was invalid or not duly elected; therefore, it has no standing at the State Level.**

The complaint (Attachment 1) pertains to precinct elections and county delegates, rather than state delegates.

This is NOT a state matter without at least two checks happening:

1. It was challenged and adjudicated at the county level first.
2. If the outcome of the County level is challenged, is this a valid challenge? If the challenge is valid, who at the SCGOP should handle the dispute? If it is not regarding a State Delegate, it is not in the jurisdiction of the Credentials Committee to adjudicate.

A review of the complaint follows.

Ms. Clark cites two examples (three people) of individuals who were allegedly denied County Delegate status; all three were certified as delegates at the time of the County Convention. Certification means they have met all the requirements to be a delegate and were entered into the P1 list as such. Certification is the only action the Chairman can take; the Chairman cannot compel people to attend the Convention.

The three people cited specifically by Ms. Clark are Karen Kirby, Michael Holliday, and Paige Holliday, who were alleged to have been denied certification to the County Convention by the Chairman.

A review of the complaint shows that the allegations are false; all three were certified, and the Holliday's were seated at the County Convention (it is unconfirmed but assumed that Ms. Kirby was also seated).

Karen Kirby attended the Re-Org meeting; however, Ms. Kirby did not have the "was elected as a Delegate" box checked on her Form-1. The form was certified by her Precinct President and signed by the Precinct Secretary. The PCRП used that box to determine if a member was elected as a Delegate when entering the data into the P1 list after Re-Org. Ms. Kirby was not a delegate after the Re-Org meeting because the box was not checked. After the Make-Up meeting, the Lawrence Chapel precinct had unfilled vacancies, and Ms Kirby was certified to fill one of the unfilled delegate positions. Karen Kirby was certified as a County Delegate on the PCRП P-1 list.

Michael and Charlene (Paige) Holliday did not check the box to be considered as a County Delegate and did not fill out their Form-1s completely. As is evident in Example 8 of Clark's complaint, the voter ID numbers are not included as required. The Precinct President, Huey Womack, Jr, and Precinct Secretary, Kathy Womack, should not have certified the Form-1 as complete with these omissions. The County Chairman, upon review, initially rejected them as he could not verify they were registered voters in the McKissick Precinct. Due to this oversight by the Hollidays and the Precinct President and Secretary, when the Hollidays arrived at the County Convention, they were initially informed that they did not have a delegate package. However, it was rectified by Chairman Fetterly after they provided Voter ID and registration. They were certified and seated as replacement delegates for those who had no-showed. This is a prime example of PCRП leadership doing everything legally possible to allow participation at the County Convention.

Not only did the complaint lack standing at the State Level, but the allegations are proven to be false.

**The complainant did not challenge PCRP leadership about delegates before or at the County Convention, as required by SCGOP rules.**

There is no record or even a comment that Ms. Clark raised the issue to PCRP County leadership before, during, or after the County Convention. The internet quip cited in Example 6 does not constitute a challenge to the claim. And Chairman Fetterly's response was correct, the only thing the chairman can do is certify valid delegates (as shown above), the Chairman cannot make people show up. This is true in every county in South Carolina.

Per SCGOP rules, the complaint must be submitted and addressed by County leadership first. If the result is unsatisfactory, the complaint can then be elevated to the State level. There is no direct path to the SCGOP, let alone a direct path to the SCGOP Convention Credentials Committee to adjudicate what is a County matter. Ms. Clark bypassed the County and went directly to the SCGOP; the complaint was directed, as requested, to the SCGOP Credentials Committee, thereby bypassing all rules and protocols.

**Planning and execution of all Precinct and County meetings are the responsibility of the County. The SCGOP Credentials Committee is not charged or authorized to hear a complaint that has not previously been heard and adjudicated at the County level or is out of scope.**

Per SCGOP rules, the conduct of all business at the Precinct and County level not explicitly addressed in the SCGOP rules is the responsibility of the County. SCGOP Rule 10 (a) states:

*"All controversies that may arise in precinct organization shall be decided on appeal by the county committee."*

Challenges at the Precinct or County level are handled by the County Executive Committee (EC).

There was no challenge to any State Delegate; therefore, SCGOP Rules 10(b) and 7(a)(3) do not apply.

There was not a single credible example provided of a disenfranchised valid delegate to the County or State Convention. There were 23 examples (Examples 8 and 9) of incomplete Form-1s. Not a single form presented as evidence was complete or acceptable as valid. SCGOP explicitly ruled photocopies as not sufficient. Forms that were not certified by the Precinct President and Precinct Secretary are not acceptable. Many of the examples presented were turned in after the deadline.

Any potential issues with Venue Size and Form-1 availability are the business of the County and not the SCGOP Credentials Committee. The Committee Chairman should have rejected this narrative in the complaint as such. Venue size and Form-1 Count became the focal point of his report to the Convention, though in reality, neither was a factor in the Conduct of Re-Org or Make-up.

Since the SCGOP Credentials Committee report emphasized the venue size as a failure or conspiracy of the PCRP to somehow "space-limit" the number of delegates, it is complete fiction. The PCRP had initially booked the 660-seat Pickens County Performing Arts Center for the planned PCRP Convention date of 25 April 2025. The February 15 announcement by the SCGOP that the SCGOP State Convention would be held on May 3, 2025, triggered a chain reaction that led to a significant change in the PCRP

Convention plan. May 3 is the earliest date of the SCGOP State Convention in years. The last three dates for the State Convention were May 20, May 15, and May 18. There was no indication from the SCGOP that the 2025 SCGOP State Convention would break precedent. The PCRPs planned date of 25 April was reasonable, with a suitable venue and a sound decision based on history. After a county-wide search, to include Chairman Fetterly contacting Karla Kelley (chair of the Pickens County School Board), in hopes of a large venue in the school system, the PCRPs settled on Founders Hall located at Southern Wesleyan University, which has a capacity of 360 with an overflow area to accommodate 40 more, total capacity of 400. Founders Hall had been used for a previous Convention.

Of the 400 original Form-1s, 335 were used at Re-Org and Make-Up, which would validate the ballot request of 400 as more than adequate. After the SCGOP mandated extension to 31 March, 373 Form-1s were used (372 members & 1 spoiled), leaving 27 unused forms.

Of the 224 who attended Re-Org, the 208 who requested to be a County Delegate were certified as such. Of the 111 who attended Make-Up, the 93 who asked to be a County Delegate 93 were certified as such. The total number of delegates at the end of the formal Organizational process was 339. Of the 339 delegates certified, 287 were seated at the PCRPs County Convention (including the walk-up delegates such as the Hollidays).

Venue size (400 max) was not a factor in the conduct of the PCRPs. The insinuation that the PCRPs should plan to sit all 750+ possible delegates is unreasonable, given the inclusion of Democrat voters in the calculation and historical data. There is evidence that several, if not most, other counties followed the same planning considerations.

The number of Form-1s available was also not a factor. There were provisions available from the SCGOP if Forms were a problem, as was the case in other counties. The selection of 400 Form-1s was a “best guess” of how many would be needed based on historical PCRPs turnout (300-350). This was completely independent and unrelated to venue size.

There were no complaints made to PCRPs leadership about the process or anyone being disenfranchised during or after the formal Reorganization process. What did occur was that a number of people filled out their Form-1s, but the Precinct President, Precinct Secretary, or Individual did not select the “was elected as Delegate to County Convention” box at the bottom of the Form-1. Technically, this is to be accomplished by a Precinct Officer after the Precinct elections are complete. This checkbox is also what is used by County Leadership and staff to complete the P-1 list. Again, through extra effort by the PCRPs Leadership and Re-Organization staff, individuals who had valid Form-1s filled delegate vacancies IAW with Rule 4(c)(11). Another example of the PCRPs team going above and beyond to make sure everyone who wanted to be a County Delegate was certified as one.

This vindicates that the planning assessments used to size the back-up venue (remember the original planned venue held 660) and the number of Form-1s required were more than adequate.

**The SCGOP did not properly adjudicate the complaint and determine the validity of any part of the complaint, yet added it to the Credentials Committee agenda.**

Ms. Clark sent her email to Drew McKissick “Wed, Apr 30, 2025 at 2:46 PM”, at approximately 7:30 pm. Rhonda Billingsley PCRP EC and Cathy Davis PCRP Chair (of the new Leadership) received a forward of the email from Leighton Gray Smith at approximately 8 pm that same day.

This means that the SCGOP, at what has to be one of the busiest times of the year, just before the State Convention, read the entire complaint and made a formal decision about the claims. They would have to substantiate that:

- The complainant (Ms Clark) had standing?
- The accusations were valid?
- SCGOP rules were violated by the Pickens County Republican Party?
- Is the Credentials Committee the proper adjudicating body (vs the EC or some other body)?

Or, they could bypass any review and simply forward the email as requested by Ms. Clark to the Credentials Committee. Which is apparently (because there is no evidence to the contrary) what they did.

Under what Rule did Ms. Gray Smith send the complaint to the SCGOP Convention Credentials Committee? Since the Committee had not formed, whom did she forward the complaint (and the two others) to?

Under Rule 7(a)(3), which covers the credentials committee of the State Convention:

*“In case of a contest as to the election of delegates by any county, the county chairman shall notify the State Chairman of such contest at the time the report of the County Convention is made to the State Chairman furnishing the names and addresses of all persons claiming to be delegates to the state convention.”*

The County Chairman is responsible for notifying the State Chairman of a delegate contest. Ms. Clark is not nor has she ever been the County Chairman. The complaint is invalid as it was never made at the County level, and the contest to delegate elections did not originate with the County Chairman. The only direct path to the SCGOP would be if the complaint were not first adjudicated at the county level.

The SCGOP leadership, via the Credentials Committee, decided to unseat an entire delegation based on false and misleading claims by a single individual who waited until just before the State Convention to make the complaint; a complaint that provided nothing of substance. Ms. Clark’s complaint should have been sent back to the County to have it heard at the proper level.

This is not some “administrative error” that did no harm, an “oops” moment. This action resulted in the entire Pickens County Republican Party and its 24-person delegation and over 40,000 Republican voters being disenfranchised. The entire state party is clearly fractured further by this action. The individual delegates spent money and time to be elected, they paid their dues, they went to meetings, they worked the polls, they stepped up in Pickens County only to be denied and shamed over baseless accusations, innuendo, and in the case of Chad Connelly, outright lies.

To summarize:

- Does the complainant (Ms. Clark) have standing? No.
- Are the accusations valid? No.
- Were SCGOP rules violated by the Pickens County Republican Party? No.
- Is the Credentials Committee the proper adjudicating body (vs the EC or some other body)? No.

**The biased conduct and conclusions of the SCGOP Credentials Committee, which lacked any real credibility and presented patently false claims and innuendo to the State Convention Floor as fact. This significantly affected the Convention Floor vote, which was also very flawed in its conclusion.**

#### **The Committee:**

The SCGOP Credentials Committee met on Friday Evening in the Richland Meeting Room at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. This is the same room used for convention credentialing of delegates on Saturday.

To set the scene, the room is approximately 90 feet wide by 60 deep, and the members of the board were arranged along all four walls (the same configuration that would be used Saturday morning for the Convention) as seen in Figure 7. Each county had seats going around the room in alphabetical order. The speaker's table(s) were near the center of the room. From the speakers' tables, it is approximately 43 ' to the members on the side walls, 50' to the members in the corners, and 31' to the members directly in front (see Figure 7). There were members seated behind the speakers. **There was no microphone or audio system provided, and the room was noisy.** The acoustics were described as "awful". A normal person using a raised voice can typically be heard clearly up to 10-20 feet (see red ring in Figure 7). Not a single member of the Committee was within 20 feet of the speaker, and at any point, a majority of the room was in a very poor hearing location. Ms. Billingsley could only address one part of the committee at a time, while the committee members on the opposite sides could barely, if at all, hear what was being said. If Ms. Billingsley was addressing Greenville along the back left wall, York and anyone else along the right side of the room could not hear what was being said. This setup was entirely inappropriate for this type of activity and the seriousness of the proceedings. Comically, during the Charleston presentation, the speaker defending Charleston played a cell phone video on the table, and no one could see or hear it; that was their case —a video that no one could see or hear.

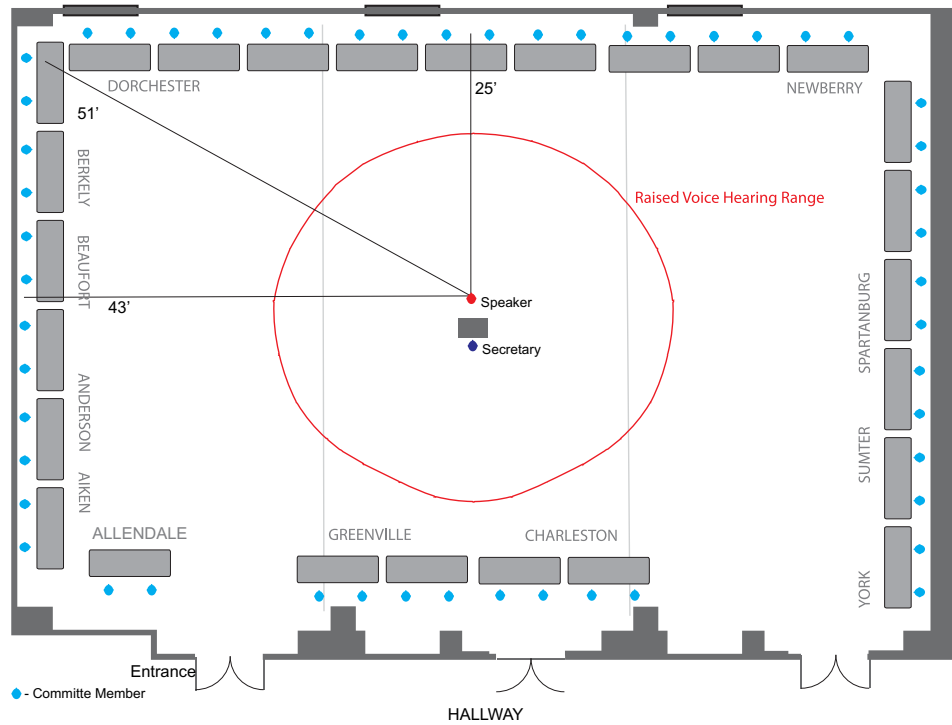


Figure 7: Approximate layout of the credentials room during the meeting with key counties approximate locations.



Figure 8: Richmond Conference Room from left wall looking at right wall

The proceedings began with Leighton Gray Smith reviewing the administration of the Credentials Committee certification and the contents of the delegate packages. The body then moved to address the



challenges, which began with the nomination and election of Kevin Hennelly of Beaufort County over Joe McGaughlin as Chairman, followed by the election of a Secretary. The members of the Committee decided that each side would enter the room and present their case, starting with the complainant, and then the defense would have an opportunity to present its case. Each side would have five minutes to make its case. A vote would follow deliberation. The parties would stay in the lobby unless they were addressing the committee. Once the decision had been made to vote, they would come in, and the votes would be cast.

There was a motion made by Steven Wright (Dorchester County) that the committee would not be permitted to ask questions of the individuals presenting their case; the motion was seconded and passed by voice vote. There would be no ability for members to get clarification or any additional information regarding the allegations made in the complaint.

Before each of the three cases was heard, the committee members were handed a packet about the case, but little to no time to review what was provided to read both sides' documentation. In the words of one board member about the Charleston package *"this one in defense of their motion was four pages. Well, it'd take me five minutes to read all of this, but we didn't get that time"* obviously the proceedings were going to be rushed and a body of people who thought they were going to certify their electors to the convention were now deciding matters outside their scope without time to prepare or understand the charges. Of the three charges, only Darlington was truly a State Credentials Committee matter. Darlington was a challenge about an elector to the State Convention who went through the proper procedure, and Rule 7(a)(3) addresses this use case. Charleston was a procedural claim that voting pure slates without any individual selections violated State Rules.

In the Pickens case, the committee was provided with the package, which was no less than 35 pages (see the link below to download). To complicate matters, there were not enough copies made for every member of the committee to have their own copies, which required board members to share them. The bulk of Ms. Clark's complaint was "examples" used to bolster her case (see attachment 2).

Ms. Clark was brought into the room, where she reiterated her complaint. The same acoustic issues were in play; board members could only hear clearly if Ms. Clark was facing them.

Ms. Billingsley was then brought into the room where she attempted, in the short 5 minutes made available, to mount a defense against what she thought were the issues in the complaint.

Ms. Billingsley did not consider the convention venue to be an issue that needed to be addressed, given that it is not within the purview of the credentials committee and was not a factor in the conduct of the PCRP Convention. Recall that the SCGOP did not inform the PCRP of the SCGOP's perceived rule violations that led to their appearance before the Credentials Committee, so they were left to try and decide for themselves based on what they were given, Clark's complaint. Ms. Clark made the 2 line statement in her complaint:

*"The PCRP convention was held on April 5, 2025, and 752 delegates were allotted for Pickens County; however, Chairman Bob Fetterly limited the delegate count to 400 on/before convention day."*

Nowhere does Ms. Clark allege the venue was a factor; she focused on specific registrations. This is where Ms. Billingsley spent the majority of her rebuttal.

Clark alleged that county delegates were denied registration, denied voting ability, and denied the ability to attend the convention in numbers sufficient to change the outcome of the county chairman election. Ms. Billingsley made the correct argument that the claim was a county-level claim and the time to make the claim was April 5<sup>th</sup> at the County Convention. The County Convention Credentials Report was accepted without objection.

Ms. Billingsley further argued Ms. Clark would have needed 12 votes just to close the gap between 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place, not to win the election. There were 21 disputed Form-1s in the complaint, 11 Form-1s missed the deadline, leaving 10. Even if the 10 had been accepted and all 10 were for Clark, she still would have come in 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ms. Billingsley made the point, “It was a sore loser situation”. Ms. Billingsley addressed the Credentialing Committee’s purpose – “to determine the eligibility of state delegates” and re-emphasized that the matter was a county issue. Ms. Clark’s allegations rightly had no validity at the State level.

Had the SCGOP and SCGOP Credentials Committee acted properly, the county would have been notified of which of the accusations it was considering, which in turn would have given the PCRP some clue as to how to address what are proven to be frivolous, unfounded charges.

Ms. Billingsley made the point that due process was not followed, as the county was not allowed to face the accuser. She was told by Laura McCravy Hunter, “This is not a trial.” The reasonable answer would be “then what is it?”

Ms. Billingsley and Ms. Clark were then in the lobby outside the meeting room while the body debated the matter.

Inside the meeting room, there were several key events that took place that once again undermined the credibility of the Committee as an enterprise of good faith and presented the appearance of a foregone conclusion. Again, the room’s acoustics made it difficult for members to communicate with each other.

Joe McLaughlin stood to make the case that the situation was very similar in Greenville County, Committee Chair Hennelly quickly cut him off and stated (paraphrase Becky McGaughlin), “We are not here to debate specifics” and told Mr. McLaughlin to sit down.

Chad Connelly (Newberry County, a prominent member) stood and made the statement (paraphrased by Becky McGaughlin), “My son was at reorg and he was disenfranchised because he waited three hours for a form one, and he finally left. Everyone in the room is going ‘Ohhh no!’” The statement obviously made an impact. What no one in the room knew was that his statement was entirely fabricated. Connelly’s son Bennett and his wife were not turned away but walked away because they did not want to wait for the start of the Re-Org meeting (see attachment). They never made it past the check-in desk. This lie would be repeated on the Convention floor.

Shery White (Sumter County) then made a dramatic and damaging statement (recalled by Becky McGaughlin) “She wanted to make an example out of Pickens. We can’t keep having this kind of

cheating at our state convention. We need to make an example out of them. They need to be unseated” then somebody else joined with them. It was over but for the vote.

To summarize, the Committee was not provided by the SCGOP or the Credentials Committee Chairman any guidance on what the actual infractions were or what the body should debate and decide on. A baseless complaint with incomplete, inaccurate, and invalid examples to determine the fate of who or what? A delegate? The delegation? The process was further tainted by Chad Connelly’s lie, Shery White’s theatrics, and no questions allowed. In making the statement in the room, Connelly was permitted to provide false evidence and was then allowed to vote. This was without the knowledge of the PCRП representative. The sweeping motion by Shery White swayed the committee to invalidate the entire delegation as a whole, something the Credentials Committee is not, by Rule, authorized to do. The Committee did not adjudicate the credentials of Pickens County delegates; they never voted on Pickens County because they had voted to unseat the entire delegation over an unrelated precinct/county-level matter.

The vote was 34-6 to unseat the Pickens County delegation.

After the vote, the Credentialing Committee adjourned. Ms Billingsley, along with Cathy Davis, PCRП Chair, and Justin Alexander, spoke with Kevin Hennelly (Credential Committee chair) in the hallway. They were informed that the committee had decided not to seat Pickens due to the unaccounted-for F1s, the venue’s size limiting delegate participation, and people being turned away. All of which have been proven to be false accusations and outside the scope of the Credentials Committee to adjudicate.

#### **The Committee Chairman’s Report to the Floor:**

For the majority of attendees, this was the first time anyone had any idea there was an issue with Pickens and what the facts were (or, in reality, were not). How does a body vote on an issue where very few know what occurred while being misled by the Committee Chairman?

Chairman Hennelly rose and made a blustery, loud, impassioned speech... with great emphasis that it was not Pickens County’s current leadership, it was Pickens County’s former Chairman who was to blame here! The problem is, the speech doubled down on the lies and misinformation outlined above. The 400! How can it be just a coincidence that the venue held 400 AND they only had 400 Form-1’s???? HOW??? This was premeditated by the Chairman to limit delegates!!!!

“ And the chairman arbitrarily set a cap of 400 people because there were 400 forms! And miraculously, the venue only seated 400!”

Hennelly went on to make it sound as if there were pages and pages of emails and texts that proved this beyond a reasonable doubt, when in reality, they had nothing more than what was provided by Chris Clark’s unsupported weak complaint, previously addressed in detail.

Chairman Hennelly follows that with another fabrication, implying that Chairman Fetterly actually set a limit of delegates and, in doing so, broke SCGOP rules. He ended the rant with this line:

*"So, the limit set tainted the entire process. It poisoned the entire process. Every branch, every twig, every leaf on that tree was tainted by the decisions made by this individual that tainted the process before day one, all the way through to the end."*

In reality, there was no limit set, every valid delegate was certified, including the Hollidays, who were both permitted a seat on the day of the County Convention. Not one valid delegate was turned away or disenfranchised. The process was not "poisoned" in any way; the process was poisoned when the Pickens delegation was unseated for theoretical limitations (number of Form-1s or the venue size), not an actual limitation. Ms. Clark's complaint actually refutes the allegation itself.

The Chairman then went on about the PCRP county election for Chairman:

*"That was the margin of victory in Pickens County, 12. Remember the 21? Remember that 68?"*

There are several reasons why this is an invalid basis for removing a delegation to the State Convention. The contest referenced was an election for County Chairman, held after the county credentials committee numbers were presented and accepted without challenge. The "margin of victory" in Pickens for this race was far more than 12, which was the margin to get to a second-place tie (not victory) in the first round. The margin for victory would have been 37 votes, unattainable in any scenario. Chairman Hennelly presented false and misleading information to the County Convention Floor. As stated by Ms. Billingsley above, Ms. Clark would not even come in second, assuming the 10 Form-1s submitted in time (all of which were invalid) were accepted and those 10 people voted for Ms. Clark. Statistically, Clark could never overcome that margin, assuming all additional delegates voted in the same ratios as the 287 delegates in attendance.

To recap the convention vote, and present the entire picture, and not just the first round of voting:

The first round vote totals for the PCRP Chair position was:

Cathy Davis: 113

Neil Garrick: 89

Chris Clark: 77

Total: 279 / 287

Ms. Clark was short of making the runoff by 13 votes, unless she were able to get 13 solid votes for herself (with only 10 possible additional votes), and none for anyone else (which appears to be what she was trying to do with the after Make-Up ballot harvesting). The math makes the possibility of Ms. Clark eclipsing Mr. Garrick or Ms. Davis astronomically low, regardless of how many votes were cast.

Ms Davis and Mr Garrick went to the second round. The vote was:

Cathy Davis: 159

Neil Garrick: 96

Abstain: 13

Total: 268 / 287

Ms. Clark lost the election; there were no challenges to the delegates, and no one was turned away from the convention. The SCGOP Credentials Committee was not informed of this, nor were they permitted to ask. The debate was closed, and the vote taken.

34-6 to unseat Pickens delegates, the stated reasons of which had nothing to do with Ms. Clark's complaint.

### **The Convention Floor Vote:**

A motion was made on the floor to seat the Pickens delegation, which was seconded. Five minutes were given to each side to make statements. Of note, on the NO side, Chad Connelly went to the microphone and repeated the lie that his son, Bennett, and his wife were turned away. On the YES side, Rhonda Billingsley of Pickens gave a detailed, impassioned speech going over the allegations made by Clark and making the case that there was no basis for the PCRCP to be in front of the Committee trying to defend themselves.

The proceeding moved to a voice vote over the objections of many delegates. A frame-by-frame audio analysis of a video recording of the voice vote to seat the Pickens County delegation shows that the actual winner was the Ayes. Both images show the peak amplitude on the recording. The recording was taken from the center in the back of the hall.



*Figure 9: Peak Meter readings for each vote*

While the voice vote was technically in favor of the Ayes, on the floor, it was not possible to determine a clear winner. The Convention President, before the noise even subsided, ruled that the No's have it, shocking many on the floor and further diminishing any confidence that the outcome was not pre-determined.

### **SCGOP Leadership created the Straw Man allegation that the venue was too small with the intent to obfuscate the reality that Ms. Clark has no standing and no case.**

The Credentials Committee went beyond the complaint and created the straw man argument, "the venue was too small," and therefore, the Pickens County Republican Party is somehow corrupt, so corrupt that they must be punished, severely punished, and "made an example of". Truth? Fact? Founders Hall was plenty large enough; the numbers bear that out. The venue was never a real issue. No one was denied, no one was turned away. On convention day, there was capacity to handle 113

additional people. However, that is what the SCGOP Credentials Committee hung their hat on. As President Trump would say... "Fake News".

In the end, this was Republican Fratricide, Red taking out Red. 40,000+ Republican voters in Pickens County were signaled that they were of little to no value to the SCGOP and the Republican Party.

Attachments:

Clark Complaint

Clark attachments can be downloaded here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-iHuEsj36l874yzOYYTN9gZNGKeL4V8x/view>

Transcript of Hennelly Committee Report to the floor transcript (need to clean up)

Billingsley floor response

Statement from Ms. Pinkerton, a volunteer who checked in Bennett Connelly and wife

From: **Chris B. Clark** <clark630@bellsouth.net>

ATTACH 1: CLARK LETTER

Date: Wed, Apr 30, 2025 at 2:46 PM

Subject: Formal Complaint: Pickens County Republican Convention April 5, 2025

To: [drew@scgop.com](mailto:drew@scgop.com) <[drew@scgop.com](mailto:drew@scgop.com)> Cc: Leighton Gray Smith <[leightongray@scgop.com](mailto:leightongray@scgop.com)>, Chris Clark <[clark630@bellsouth.net](mailto:clark630@bellsouth.net)>

Dear Chairman:

Please accept this formal complaint against the Pickens County Republican Party and, as Chairman, present it to the Credentials Committee.

This is a formal complaint filed against the Pickens County Republican Party and Chairman Bob Fetterly. The PCRП convention was held on April 5, 2025, and 752 delegates were allotted for Pickens County; however, Chairman Bob Fetterly limited the delegate count to 400 on/before convention day.

Convention Day delegate totals:

339 Registered

287 attended the convention

March 23, 2025, Zion precinct (EC) Laura Hinty contacted Chairman Bob Fetterly to fill two open delegate spots for her precinct. Below is the text received from Chairman Bob Fetterly denying EC Laura Hinty this ability: See attached (Example 1).

This denial prompted a review of party rules. This discovery uncovered this rule. Chairman Bob Fetterly was then contacted and F1 Forms were allowed to be filled out until March 31, 2025. See attached (Example 2 and 4).

March 31, 2025, Kelsey Crooks, Chairwoman candidate Chris Clark, and Eric Hiltner arrived at 2:30 to meet Chairman Bob Fetterly to turn in F1 forms. Chairman Bob Fetterly decided that the limit of delegates would be 400 and that he would not accept any F1 forms that did not have a pink slip copy, and/or a copy of an F1 form would not be allowed. Here is an example of limiting the delegates to 400 and one of the reasons: See attached (Example 3).

At this location meeting on March 31, 2025, Chairman Bob Fetterly declined 10 F1 forms, because the forms were copied and did not have pink slips, and along with being over the 400 limit. There were an additional 11 F1 forms in transit and were turned away because of the denial by Chairman Bob Fetterly, and did not reach the location. (Attached are the denied 21 F1 forms total) Representative Neal Collins (District 5) and his wife were part of the denial: See attached text messages to confirm the meeting and reasons given: See attached (Examples 5).

April 5, 2025, Susan Bradley arrived at the convention to be denied her vote. Susan's F1 Form is attached below. Chairman Bob Fetterly claimed she did not check the delegate box on her form. The form attached clearly proves she was a registered delegate. Susan Bradley left the convention without voting. See attached (Example 7)

Michael Holliday and Paige Holliday arrived on convention day. They were turned away as well, and they left the building. They phoned Chairman candidate Chris Clark before leaving the property. Chris asked them to come back into the building, and the forms were presented to Chairman Bob Fetterly. Chairman Bob Fetterly then changed the names on two envelopes to accommodate the Holliday's, but only after a picture copy of the forms were proven. See attached (Example 8)

Karin Kirby was denied her ability to vote at the convention and told she did not check the delegate box. She stated she was guided on how to fill out the form at REORG and had clearly asked to be a county delegate at REORG. Karin Kirby's precinct had delegate spots available. However, she was still denied her ability to vote at the convention.

The first round totals for the Chairman candidate voted:

Cathy Davis: 113

Neil Garrett: 89

Chris Clark: 77

There were enough delegates denied registration, denied voting ability, and denied the ability to attend the convention to change the outcome of the election.

Chairwoman candidate Chris Clark spoke out against the denial of delegates online. Chairman Bob Fetterly responded to the post: See attached: (Example 6).

Thank you for your time reviewing this matter. Please let me know you received this document, and contact me with any concerns.

Sincerely,  
Chris Clark

Christine B. Clark | Media Specialist  
Cell: 864-230-9633



Arguably, myself personally, one of the most difficult situations I had to arbitrate, if you will, or participate in. Excuse me. So, the problems in Pickens, to just say a few comments about it. This wasn't about a onesie or twosie. This wasn't about somebody sneaking in their best friend's deli. This wasn't about somebody who made a clever little error.

**This was very, very serious.** And I urge everyone to listen to this report and think about the difficult decision the committee had made. And think about both decisions, either decision we were going to make, had significant ramifications.

And we took this responsibility very seriously. And I commend the committee for their hard work and paying attention and listening and hearing this whole issue. Okay.

So, starting off with the problems in Pickens clearly started before we were even started. What we could determine was it started when the P1 forms were issued. And the chairman arbitrarily set a cap of 400 people because there were 400 forms.

And miraculously, the venue only seated 400. So, there were 752 possible delegate positions in Pickens County. This former chairman, and I do say former chairman, present chairman Pickens was not involved with this. We make that very clear, not involved with this.

He decided, I can't say it on his own, I don't know that, but he decided that emails and text messages and exchanges in the exhibits all show that 400 was the limit. That's all he was going to allow.

Next. That's a violation of state rule because most of us here that are chairmen and ECs know that only the state executive committee can set the limit on the number of delegates who participate in conventions. And that's done by picking a certain primary.

Normally, the June primary, that's how we've done it historically here in South Carolina. And based upon those numbers, there's a formula that determines the delegates. We don't just willy-nilly in the air pick a number out because we like it and it's an even number. No, it doesn't work that way. Sorry. Okay.

So, the limit set tainted the entire process. It poisoned the entire process. Every branch, every twig, every leaf on that tree was tainted by the decisions made by this individual that tainted the process before day one all the way through to the end. That was very clear.

The former chair said, again, numerous communications, that 400 Form 1's were accounted for, and he wasn't accepting any more. Okay.

Let's just take that number. Just remember that number. Coincidentally, the P1 report, which we all had to submit, and we all know how much work was into the P1 report, 332 names show up.

So, the committee asked, many of the members of the committee asked, where are the other 68 Form 1's that this individual said were all accounted for? Then, in addition to that, we find out there were 21 Form 1s that were submitted between, it looks like between the make-up meeting and

the five-day letter, the window, if you will, where there were open delegate positions were allowed to fill in. Those 21 forms were not accepted. Mind you, we were told by the existing chair that the margin of victory of the delegate was 12.

That was the margin of victory in Pickens County, 12. Remember the 21? Remember that 68? Many more were likely excluded from reorg. Based upon what we saw, it is impossible for us to determine how many hundreds of people were possibly disenfranchised from reorg. How many people were not able to even attend a precinct meeting because of this arbitrary limit set by, again, the former chairman? So, there was a very active and lively discussion that went on for probably the better part of 20 minutes to a half hour with the committee, and I commend the committee for their participation, their active participation in this. And to a person, we all said this is one of the most difficult decisions we have to make in many years, and I can tell you in my own case, and I've been involved in union negotiations and arbitrations and everything else my whole career, this is tough. This is a real tough one because you had two choices.

You could seat them and basically throw away the rules. Just throw them away, rip them up, and just start over with a blank sheet of paper and no pen because you can do whatever you want, so don't write anything down. You don't even need any more rules.

That's what would happen if we seated that delegation based upon all these findings. And again, this is what we found out in a five-minute presentation from the complainant. [unintelligible]

Okay. So the committee then brought the two sides in, the contestant and the present chair, and conducted a vote in front of them, and the vote was overwhelmingly 34-6 in favor of not seating Pickens delegation. Again, a very, very difficult decision and not a pleasant one, and that's the report, and I think that's it.

**Appeals speech to seat PCRCP delegates at SCGOP state convention May 3, 2025**

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, the PCRCP convention was held and 287 of 339 delegates attended in order to vote for the leadership of their choice, and for the state delegates to represent them here today. That group of almost 300 people is in danger of being disenfranchised.

A complaint was lodged by an unsuccessful candidate for PCRCP chair. That original complaint against the leadership of the PCRCP stated there was an issue that could “change the outcome of the election” of the PCRCP chair.

The state credential committee has expanded this far beyond the original complaint without any other complainants and has ventured into speculation.

I attended the state committee meeting prepared to answer the election complaint and was not allowed to hear the actual presentation.

The complaint changed drastically to allegations of:

- 61 Form 1s that were not accounted for – that has turned into 68 now I hear
- That the number of delegates was limited, and that
- Delegates were turned away

To our knowledge, we are now being charged with different issues

Change to a smaller venue was necessary to adhere to SCGOP convention timing. A larger venue was originally secured but had to change.

No delegates have come forward to affirm that they were turned away from the convention proceedings, and no one challenged the credential report given at the convention.

It’s alleged 61 Forms 1s are unaccounted for – PCRCP was not given the opportunity to address this change in the complaint. I would have had a chance to provide documents from Pickens and account for the form 1s in question. Only 4 form 1s are not accounted for.

So let me summarize:

The original complaint came from a candidate who came in a distant third:

There are no other complaints regarding the PCRCP convention.

The time to challenge the credential report of the County Convention is when that report is made- there were no other challenges, and the report was accepted unanimously.

The only remaining issue is any form 1s unaccounted for – the new administration is committed to resolving this issue left from the previous leadership in a timely manner and believes that they can account for all 4 of the form 1s.

By denying the duly elected seats here today, the state convention body would be disenfranchising the almost 300 voting delegates at the Pickens County convention.

All it took was one allegation against OUR President Trump for him to be facing 31 felony charges and over 500 years in prison.

In much the same way Pickens has a single accuser and is facing disenfranchisement of ALL 24 of our voting members.

This is a total fabrication, and I believe I have answered ALL charges. If you choose to disqualify – you are doing it over 4 unaccounted for form 1s, and a venue change that was required to comply with SCGOP rules. No one filed complaint of being denied entry – that's all hearsay.

I ask that you take a stand today for DUE PROCESS. Vote for Pickens 24 delegates to be seated.

If it can happen to Pickens it can happen to your county.

\*This speech was the result of collaboration of several PCRP patriots

May 5, 2025

RE: An encounter with a man and a woman (I believe a couple)

Dear Bob Fetterly:

I am writing in regards to an encounter I was involved in at the check in table at Reorg. for Pickens County/March 8, 2025. I was checking in and verifying that people in Pickens County were registered to vote and what they were assigned to a precinct. Also, if they were wanting to become a state delegate we needed to verify if their information was correct and that they were qualified to be on the ballot. I had Angie Fetterly and Polly Keller on each side of me also helping to check people in. A couple came up to me wanting to be checked in, I asked for their ID's and verified their addresses. The man asked me how long it would take to vote, and I stated that check in was until 1:00pm and the precincts would get together at a table and fill out forms and vote for the officers for their precinct. It could take up to (2) hours depending on how many were in their precinct. The woman stated that they could not stay that long that they had other plans. The man stated that he just came here to vote. I stated again that voting for state delegates and new leadership for the county would be in April at the county convention. The woman proceeded to say we can't stay we have plans, this afternoon and told the man let's just go. I stated that if they couldn't stay, they could go to the makeup day on March 11<sup>th</sup> and just sign up then if they were in a hurry. The man stated that they just came to vote and I reiterated that today was just to vote on officers for their precinct and fill out the forms for the state, the county convention is in April where the votes for delegates and officers for the county would take place. At this he asked me what the date was for the convention was and I reached over and asked Angie Fetterly. We both thought at the time that the date was April 22 for the county convention, so I proceeded to tell him that. He and the woman stated they would be in Israel then and would not be able to attend. The woman kept saying come on let's go we won't even be here. I finally asked them both that I would do whatever they wanted me to do if they still wanted be signed up today or wait until the make up date. They both decided to walk away without signing up at least with me. Later I found out that the date for county convention was changed to later in April and tried to find them with no success. All the information was available on the website so I just figured they would come back on make up day. It was my understanding that they both were told that they would be voting for delegates and new leadership at Reorg. and that was not the case. I thought it was over at that point so I moved on to the next person in line.

I did ask others about what was said by the couple because I thought it was odd they kept stating that they were to vote and the man was very aggravated that he could not. Other people checking in were told that they would be voting for new leadership that day also and I had to explain that would be another day.

Best Regards,

Alesa Pinkerton

Note: Ms. Pinkerton was sent this picture of Barrett Connelly and his wife; she confirmed this was the couple she references in her statement.



*Figure 1: Bannett Connelly and wife*