

THE ARISE REPORT

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Join us this summer
for listening sessions!

By Presdelane Harris, organizing director
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Listening is both a value and a process. It is foundational to Alabama Arise's approach to shaping and advancing policies that matter most to those marginalized by poverty.

Arise depends on what we hear each year to help guide our work toward a better Alabama. We want to hear from you and others in communities around the state. Arise membership is not required for us to come and listen to your concerns and hopes.

We listen so that we can work together more strategically to make positive change happen. Watch your email inbox for information on summer listening sessions happening across Alabama.

Please contact an Arise regional organizer to set up a virtual or in-person session in your community this summer! We also are glad to host a workshop on the new *Alabama Tax and Budget Handbook* in your area. (See page 3.)

Arise celebrates progress, vows to keep pushing after 2026 session

By David Stout, legislative director | david@alarise.org

Alabama Arise, with great support from our members, recently completed another successful legislative session. Our shared advocacy helped ensure funding for critical anti-hunger programs and new laws on parole reform and voting rights restoration. We also worked together to stop or reduce the harm of bad legislation.

Here is a look at what happened with key bills and programs this year.

HUNGER RELIEF

Arise advocacy shored up funding for important anti-hunger programs for Alabama children. Thanks to nearly 700 contacts from Arise supporters, lawmakers agreed to provide \$7.3 million to keep funding an expansion of the state's no-cost school breakfast program that began last year. Legislators also continued funding for Summer EBT, known as SUN Bucks in Alabama. This summer meal program serves more than 500,000 children across our state.

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We will stand strong for inclusive democracy

By Robyn Hyden, executive director
robyn@alarise.org

The U.S. Supreme Court struck a blow against inclusive democracy on April 29, gutting Voting Rights Act provisions that protect Black and Hispanic voters against efforts to dilute their voting power. That ruling will affect Alabamians directly.

Louisiana v. Callais further entrenches power in the hands of the few. It imperils the diversity of our elected bodies and representation of all communities. Many fair districts likely will vanish as legislatures gut representation for voters of color without checks from the courts.

At press time, legislators were preparing to return for a special session to set the stage for redrawing Alabama's U.S. House and state Senate maps at the 11th hour, even though some voters already have cast absentee ballots in the upcoming primary election. Know that Alabama Arise will stand with all of you to oppose any efforts to remove fair representation.

Now is a good time to check your voter registration and polling place, and make sure your friends are ready to vote. The enclosed election guide outlines key information for upcoming elections and some questions you should ask your candidates. Arise also will release a nonpartisan voter guide this year to highlight incumbent lawmakers' positions.

Congress should reverse SNAP cost shift to Alabama

By Carol Gundlach, senior policy analyst | carol@alarise.org
and LaTrell Clifford Wood, hunger policy advocate | latrell@alarise.org

Grocery prices are persistently high, and many Alabamians are struggling to put food on the table. Alabama Arise believes freedom from hunger is a basic human right and has worked for decades to make food more affordable.

Arise has advocated to remove the state sales tax from groceries and to expand access to federal nutrition programs like school meals and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps. But to ensure those programs work for Alabamians, we also must ensure Congress puts the needs of the people first.

In the coming months, federal lawmakers will seek to pass a new Farm Bill. Congress should ensure this legislation reverses harmful SNAP cuts and takes other measures to reduce hunger.

WHY THE FARM BILL MATTERS TO ALABAMA FAMILIES

The Farm Bill is a major act of Congress, usually passed every five years. The last full Farm Bill reauthorization came in 2018. Congress has approved several extensions since, but not a major rewrite.

While the Farm Bill provides essential aid and support for farmers, its biggest component is SNAP food assistance. The Farm Bill authorizes nearly all SNAP funding. What Congress chooses to fund through the bill will determine if many families can afford the food they need.

The U.S. House passed the Farm Bill on April 30, voting largely along party lines. The bill now goes to the U.S. Senate, which likely will take it up sometime this spring or summer. Alabama's senators, Tommy Tuberville and Katie Britt, will be key players in the bill's negotiations. Tuberville sits on the Senate Agriculture Committee, and Britt sits on the Senate Budget Committee.

Arise is urging the Senate to prioritize key SNAP reforms that the House's Farm Bill neglected. The most important of these priorities is to reverse or suspend the upcoming SNAP benefit cost shift from the federal government to states.

Congress last year passed HR 1, aka One Big Beautiful Bill Act. This budget reconciliation bill could result in major SNAP cuts in Alabama and nationwide.

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Check out Arise's new *Alabama Tax and Budget Handbook!*

By Chris Sanders, communications director | chris@alarise.org

All Alabamians should have the resources they need to reach their potential and ensure a healthy, secure future. To realize that vision, we must make our state's upside-down tax system more equitable. And we must secure adequate funding for unmet vital needs like Medicaid expansion and public transportation.

Alabama Arise's new 2026 edition of *The Alabama Tax and Budget Handbook* explains how we can achieve those goals together. Packed with colorful graphs and illustrations, the handbook helps Alabamians better understand how budgets and taxes affect their everyday lives. It highlights how the state pays for key public services that benefit all of us, and it walks readers through how Alabama's budgets become law each year.

The handbook also suggests dozens of policy changes to improve Alabama's tax system and to ensure adequate funding for essential services like education and healthcare. Key recommendations include:

- Update the sales tax on goods and services, including eliminating the grocery tax.
- Make the income tax more progressive by increasing the standard deduction and establishing a state Earned Income Tax Credit.
- Eliminate the federal income tax deduction, a skewed tax break that overwhelmingly benefits the wealthiest households.
- Increase overall property tax rates while increasing the homestead exemption to protect homeowners with low incomes.
- Enhance budgetary flexibility through gradual earmarking reform.

Visit alarise.org/taxandbudgethandbook to read the handbook and request a print copy today.



Two organizations, one mission

By Jacob Smith, advancement and operations director | jacob@alarise.org

At Alabama Arise, our work never stops! We just wrapped another busy legislative session where we focused on supporting bills that help Alabamians and fighting those that don't. And Arise staff will be all over the state this summer connecting with people like you.

You may not realize it, but when you join Arise, you're getting the benefit of two organizations: Alabama Arise, a 501(c)(3) group, and Alabama Arise Action, a 501(c)(4). Those technical designations may not mean much to you, but they allow us to maximize your membership.

With Alabama Arise, we invite you to attend our Annual Meeting, listening sessions and advocacy trainings. With Arise Action, you can join us at Legislative Day and in taking action on key bills. Each organization helps realize our shared vision of a better Alabama.

Will you consider making a gift to help both organizations continue and grow their respective work? Your gift to Alabama Arise is tax-deductible. While your gift to Arise Action is not, it does increase your power, including by funding lobbying for the people.

Thank you for your membership! If you have any questions, please email me at jacob@alarise.org.

Healthcare, food aid still may be at risk of further federal funding cuts

By Debbie Smith, Cover Alabama campaign director | debbie@alarise.org

Healthcare and hunger relief programs may avoid further harmful federal cuts this year. But Alabama Arise members should remain vigilant and keep speaking out against proposed cuts, both now and in the future.

Congress is moving quickly on a budget reconciliation bill, with leadership aiming to pass it by June 1. Senate Republicans on April 21 introduced a proposal that excludes spending cuts and narrowly focuses on funding for ICE and the Border Patrol. However, we worry that other lawmakers may push for cuts to health coverage or food assistance. This could put healthcare and food access at risk for millions of Americans, including here in Alabama.

FURTHER CUTS WOULD HURT THOSE WITH GREATEST NEEDS

Budget reconciliation bypasses the Senate filibuster and allows legislation to pass with a simple majority. This means decisions with far-reaching consequences could move quickly, with limited opportunity for debate or compromise. This is the same process used last year to make major nationwide cuts to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps, under HR 1, the so-called One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

Medicaid plays an important role in providing health coverage to those who

need it most in Alabama. The program primarily serves children, seniors, people with disabilities and pregnant women. Alabama already operates one of the country's most bare-bones Medicaid programs. Our program has little to no room for cuts without directly impacting people who rely on it for life-saving care.

Because we have not yet expanded Medicaid to cover adults with low incomes, Alabama largely avoided major Medicaid cuts under HR 1. While that softened the immediate impact, it also means further cuts would fall squarely on Alabamians with the greatest needs.

That includes children who rely on routine care, seniors in nursing homes, and individuals with disabilities who depend on consistent treatment and support.

ALABAMA'S HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IS UNDER STRAIN

Other parts of the healthcare system are also under strain. Congress allowed enhanced Premium Tax Credits for Healthcare.gov coverage to expire in December, making Marketplace plans under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) more expensive.

At least 20,000 fewer Alabamians enrolled in these plans in 2026 as a result. Many who enrolled had to select a lower-quality plan with higher

out-of-pocket costs to stay insured.

This increase in the uninsured and underinsured population harms our whole healthcare system. Hospitals, especially in rural areas, face growing financial pressure as they provide care to more uninsured patients while receiving less reimbursement.

These challenges are interconnected. When people lose coverage, they often delay care until conditions worsen. That leads to more serious health issues and higher costs down the line. Hospitals absorb much of this burden. And in communities where margins are already thin, this can threaten access to care for everyone. More cuts to Medicaid or ACA coverage would only deepen these problems.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

This is a critical moment. Congress is acting quickly, and the outcome will have lasting consequences for Alabama families and communities. That is why your voice matters right now. Lawmakers need to hear directly from you about the importance of protecting access to food and healthcare.

Please take action today. Contact your members of Congress and tell them to oppose any cuts to food assistance, Medicaid and ACA coverage. The health and well-being of our communities depend on it.

SNAP COST SHIFT

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Alabama Arise senior policy analyst Carol Gundlach (second from left) joined Hunger Free Alabama allies Laura Lester from Feeding Alabama (left) and Elisa Munoz from the Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network (right) to meet with U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell (second from right) on April 28 in Washington, D.C. The advocates urged Sewell to help delay the SNAP cost shift in the Farm Bill. (Photo courtesy of Elisa Munoz)

Since the food stamp program was created 60 years ago, the federal government has covered the full cost of SNAP benefits. The federal and state governments also have divided the cost of running the program.

HR 1, however, will shift more of those SNAP costs to states. The law will require most states to pay for a percentage of SNAP benefits – up to 15% for some states.

HR 1 also requires states to pay for 75% of SNAP administration costs, up from the current 50%. Unless Congress changes this requirement, Alabama will have to provide up to \$261 million in additional SNAP funding in next year’s General Fund to maintain basic food assistance.

Arise fears that the Legislature may be unable or unwilling to do so, with potentially devastating consequences for more than 750,000 Alabamians.

The new Farm Bill should reverse these

harmful SNAP cost shifts to Alabama and other states. At minimum, Congress should delay the cost shifts to give states more time to figure out how to cover the new expenses.

WHAT SHOULD CONGRESS DO TO IMPROVE SNAP?

Congress should use the Farm Bill reauthorization as an opportunity to take other steps to make SNAP better. One big change would be to loosen or end time limits imposed on some SNAP participants who are unable to meet rigid work reporting requirements.

Most SNAP participants are children, seniors or people with disabilities. Even so, more than 1 in 3 SNAP participants in Alabama (35%) lived in households with work-based income in 2024.

And overall, 5 in 6 participants (83%) have incomes at or below the poverty line. These facts point to an essential truth: Families are struggling to keep food on the table because of low

wages and an affordability crisis, not unwillingness to work.

Congress can strengthen SNAP by protecting participants from a form of benefit theft known as skimming. Lawmakers should require that SNAP EBT cards have the same chip technology protections provided to credit and debit card holders.

Congress also should require the U.S. Department of Agriculture to continue publishing its annual Food Insecurity Report. This report collects critical data over time about how many Americans are hungry and how anti-hunger programs make a difference.

ARISE WILL CONTINUE SPEAKING OUT FOR HUNGER RELIEF IN ALABAMA

Over the next few months, Alabama Arise will make sure our senators hear our voices on the importance of SNAP. We will continue meeting and communicating with their offices and will follow up on a sign-on letter we sent to Tuberville and Britt expressing our concerns about the SNAP cost shift and its impact on state budgets. We also will keep working to bring more business leaders and allies into the conversation.

We will be asking you, our members and supporters, to raise your voices on the importance of SNAP for our families and communities. Please watch for action alerts, and please share your thoughts and concerns with your members of Congress.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Natalie Bishnoi wants to know your sign – and your dreams for Alabama

By Whitney Washington, communications associate | whitney@alarise.org



Alabama Arise has had an inclusive membership model from the start. We long have encouraged individuals to join Arise, but our organization began nearly four decades ago as a coalition of member groups.

The operations team representative who supports relationships with these member groups is Arise development associate Natalie Bishnoi.

Natalie, a Huntsville native, joined Arise after years of volunteer advocacy work and a tenure at the Food Bank of North Alabama. There, she co-managed a regional food hub, working with

Alabama farmers. Later, she helped lead several programs focused on food access across an 11-county region.

“Much of my work centered on building relationships between farmers, schools and community partners, and strengthening the local food system in Alabama,” she said.

RELATIONSHIPS ARE NATALIE'S WORK

Natalie's work at Arise also focuses on building relationships. In her role, she gets to see some of the inner workings of Arise's more than 150 member groups. Those insights inspire her to think big about what we can achieve together, she said.

“Being connected to so many groups and individuals working toward systemic change has really expanded my perspective on what's possible,” she said.

Besides her work with community groups, Natalie leads Arise's grant writing as well.

“Being part of the effort that has helped secure funding for Arise has

been meaningful,” she said, “especially knowing those resources help support member-led advocacy across the state.”

NEW WAYS OF CONNECTING

Natalie is excited to help Arise continue to develop its member outreach.

“We're developing ways to better understand how groups are connecting with Arise and where we can grow,” she said. “It's a great opportunity to make sure we're meeting members where they are and supporting them more effectively.”

For the future, Natalie said she wants to see Arise stay grounded in its member-led foundation. She also wants to see us do even more to engage folks who may not have been part of advocacy spaces before.

“I care deeply about people, and I'm really curious about what shapes their experiences,” she said. “That shows up in my work, in my advocacy, and even in something a little offbeat like astrology. If we spend enough time together, I will probably ask for your birth details to run your chart.”

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Arise members show up at the State House!



Hundreds of Alabama Arise members and supporters came to the State House in Montgomery this year to advocate for a better Alabama, at both Arise Legislative Day on Feb. 24 and Cover Alabama Advocacy Day on March 10. Front page: Arise board president Dr. Shakita Brooks Jones speaks about no-cost school breakfast during the Legislative Day news conference. Left and top right: Legislative Day attendees leave messages for their legislators. Bottom right: Cover Alabama Advocacy Day attendees gather for a workshop session to discuss challenges and solutions for Alabama’s healthcare system. (Photos by Julie Bennett and Arise staff)

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

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(For the record, Natalie is a Taurus.)

USING NATURE TO HELP REST AND RESET

Though Natalie’s job doesn’t intersect with Arise’s policy work on a daily basis, she said she is quite familiar with what goes on at the State House. Asked to describe the 2026 regular session in three words, she said, “As a loquacious person, this is difficult, but I will try: Quick. Challenging. Hopeful.”

All Arise staff members feel the challenges of working for long-term structural change, often in a difficult

environment. Natalie said she is intentional about trying to find time to rest, connect with nature and model healthy behaviors for her kids.

“My birthday is on Earth Day, and I’ve always felt a strong connection to nature and getting outside is one of the best ways for me to reset,” she said.

Natalie said she also values getting to spend time with her community in Huntsville.

“Annual events, like the Panoply Arts Festival, Microwave Dave Day and Porch Fest, are some of my favorites because

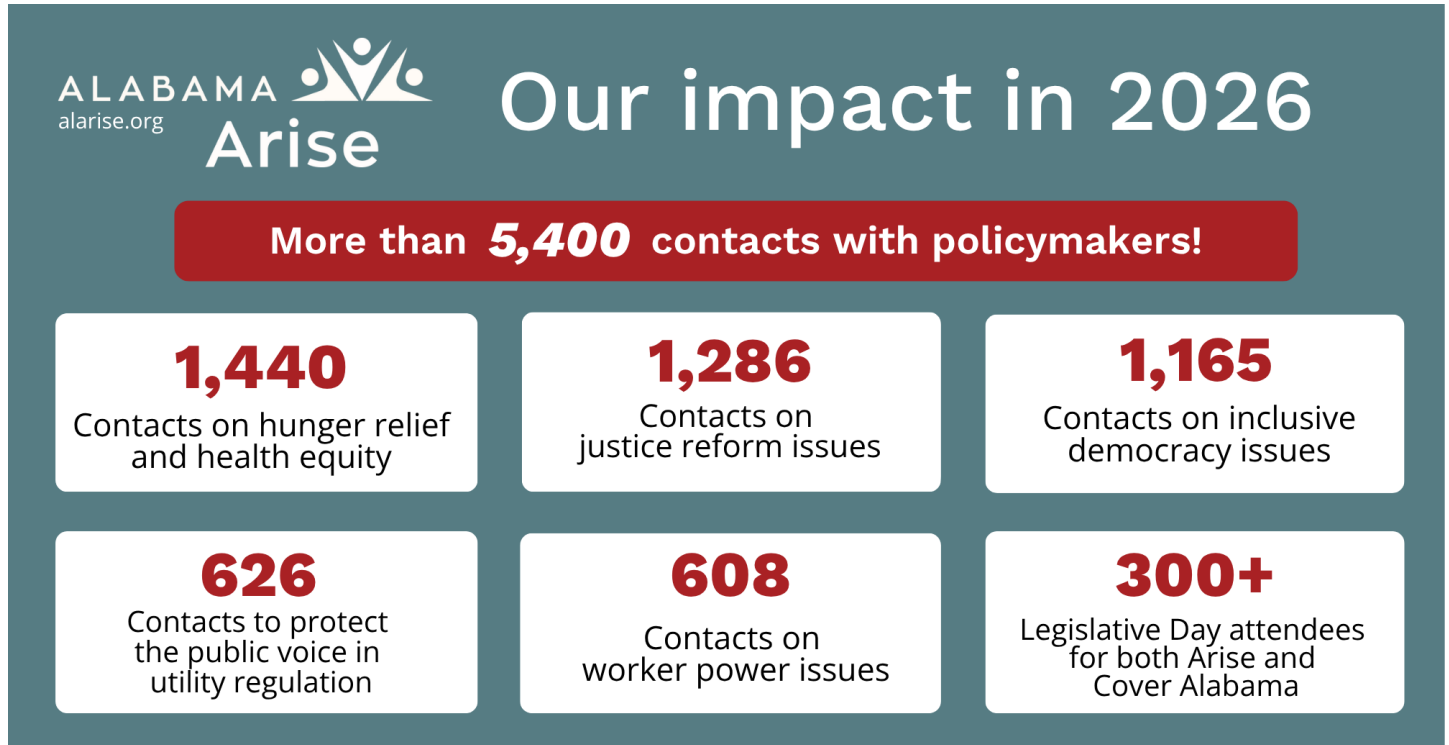
they bring people together and highlight so much local talent,” she said.


Arise members make Natalie’s work possible. She encourages members to stay connected by donating to both Arise and Alabama Arise Action, our 501(c)(4) partner organization, to sustain our policy and legislative work.

“But just as important is staying engaged,” she said. “Responding to action alerts, contacting your representatives and sharing your lived experiences all contribute to making a real difference.”

SESSION OVERVIEW

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ALABAMA 
alarise.org **Arise**

Our impact in 2026

More than 5,400 contacts with policymakers!

- 1,440** Contacts on hunger relief and health equity
- 1,286** Contacts on justice reform issues
- 1,165** Contacts on inclusive democracy issues
- 626** Contacts to protect the public voice in utility regulation
- 608** Contacts on worker power issues
- 300+** Legislative Day attendees for both Arise and Cover Alabama

Lawmakers unfortunately enacted **SB 57** by Sen. Arthur Orr, R-Decatur, which will limit food choice for participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). But Arise advocacy helped make those limits narrower than they otherwise would have been.

Arise supporters also successfully opposed Orr’s **SB 61**. The bill would have imposed burdensome eligibility requirements for Medicaid and SNAP participants and would have reduced or eliminated food assistance for some SNAP participants.

TAX REFORM

Efforts to continue reducing the total state sales tax on groceries received a boost when the Legislature passed

HB 527 by Rep. James Lomax, R-Huntsville. The law will give Alabamians a one-time, two-month state grocery tax holiday from May 1 through June 30.

We hope this will build momentum for lawmakers to eliminate the state grocery tax for good next year.

Lawmakers protected Medicaid funding this year by passing **SB 143** and **SB 145**, both by Sen. Greg Albritton, R-Atmore. These laws permanently renew the state’s nursing home and hospital provider taxes, respectively.

JUSTICE REFORM

Arise successfully supported two justice reforms aimed at giving people eligible for parole a fairer

chance at their hearings. **HB 86** by Rep. Chris England, D-Tuscaloosa, will change guidelines to require the Board of Pardons and Paroles to consider applicants’ education, employment and low risk of reoffense. Another new law, **SB 254** by Sen. Sam Givhan, R-Huntsville, will give the parole board discretion over minor parole violations rather than automatically returning a person to prison.

A bill to allow incarcerated people to participate remotely in their parole hearings came heartbreakingly close to becoming law. **SB 240** by Sen. Will Barfoot, R-Pike Road, would have ensured the parole board could see or hear the person eligible for parole. It also would have allowed victims’

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SESSION OVERVIEW

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families to join virtually rather than having to travel to an in-person hearing. The bill passed both the House and Senate but died when the Legislature ended the session before accepting a proposed amendment from the governor.

INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY

Arise members met the challenge to help protect the public's voice at the Public Service Commission (PSC). Early in the session, a House committee quickly advanced **HB 392** by Rep. Chip Brown, R-Hollinger's Island, which would have changed the PSC from an elected body to one appointed by the governor. The bill also sought to allow the governor to appoint an energy secretary with power to set the PSC's agenda.

Arise supporters joined a statewide groundswell of opposition that killed the bill. Late in the session, though, lawmakers amended and passed **HB 475** – over the sponsor's objection – to create the energy secretary position. And they sadly removed good language that would have required formal rate hearings every three years.

HB 475 will expand the PSC from three members elected statewide to seven elected by congressional districts. Based on district demographics, a real possibility exists for two Black members to be elected to the PSC – a first in Alabama.

Sometimes victory looks like preventing a bad bill from passing. That was the case with **HB 13** by

Rep. Ernie Yarbrough, R-Trinity. The bill would have burdened many localities with enforcing federal immigration law. It also would have discouraged many victims living in immigrant communities from reporting crimes for fear of retaliation.

We celebrated progress on two voting rights bills this year. Lawmakers enacted **SB 24** by Sen. Linda Coleman-Madison, D-Birmingham, to streamline applications and notifications for formerly incarcerated people to restore their voting rights. And late in the session, **HB 486** by Rep. Adline Clarke, D-Mobile, won approval from the House Judiciary Committee. HB 486, known as the Alabama Voting Rights Act, is a comprehensive bill that would expand voting opportunities. We hope this is the first step toward expanding voting protections and voting rights in Alabama.

ADEQUATE STATE BUDGETS

State budgets were essentially flat, with most expenditures virtually the same as in the previous year. While the Education Trust Fund (ETF) is relatively healthy, the state General Fund (GF) struggles to meet its ongoing obligations. The GF funds non-education services like Medicaid and corrections.

Lawmakers may find it especially difficult next year to craft the GF budget for fiscal year 2028 without additional revenue. A notable challenge will be securing up to \$261 million that Alabama may need to pay for a portion of SNAP benefits

due to a federal cost shift under the so-called One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

The CHOOSE Act, which gives parents up to \$7,000 per student annually to attend private schools, is a threat to the ETF. Originally, tax credit eligibility was limited by income. But starting in 2027, any student can receive these vouchers regardless of income. Fully implemented, these credits could cost public schools almost \$500 million.

Arise celebrated progress on public transportation this year with the enactment of **SB 185** by Coleman-Madison. This law will create a pilot public-private partnership in Jefferson County to expand and improve public transportation and provide more residents with transportation to work. This innovative program will open doors for the state Department of Transportation to begin funding public transportation.

HEALTH EQUITY

Gov. Kay Ivey and the Legislature still refuse to expand Medicaid to cover adults with low incomes. But the healthcare news wasn't all bad this year. Two new laws will require insurers to cover screenings for breast cancer and prostate cancer at no cost to patients.

HB 642 by Rep. Marilyn Lands, D-Huntsville, would have guaranteed the right to contraception and added necessary protections for participants in IVF programs.

We expect this legislation, filed late in the session, to be reintroduced in the 2027 legislative session.

Alabama Arise and partners are building worker power across our state

By Adam Keller, Worker Power Campaign director | adam@alarise.org

Alabama Arise members last fall adopted worker power as the newest legislative priority in our fight for a better Alabama for all. And around the state, everyday people across industries, communities and faith traditions are coming together to build something bigger than any particular bill or policy: a movement for worker power and economic justice.

Arise’s Worker Power Campaign aims to strengthen the voice of workers in every part of public life. While we respond to bills affecting workers’ rights and conditions during the legislative session, the campaign also works year-round to build relationships, educate communities and support workers fighting for dignity on the job.

MULTIPLE WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

That work is taking many forms. We were proud to join labor and community partners with Recall Injustice at Hyundai-Kia last fall in fighting for better and safer jobs in the auto supply chain, which has a huge and significant presence in Alabama.

We’re participating in the AFL-CIO “Labor in the Pulpit” program, where labor leaders speak with congregations about the shared values and power of faith and labor.

We hope congregations and faith-based member groups will consider working with us on these and other engagements to build bonds



Arise’s Adam Keller holds a sign alongside fellow members of the Good Neighbors Alabama coalition at the Bridge Crossing Jubilee in Selma in March. (Photo courtesy of Good Neighbors Alabama)

around the dignity that Alabama workers deserve.

Our campaign is spreading working-class solidarity online and in person, from rallies and conferences to small groups and one-on-ones. We’ve been traveling the state to engage with many important groups, including the Good Neighbors Alabama coalition and Jobs to Move America, Alabama Poor People’s Campaign, Alabama State Council of Machinists, United Campus Workers of Alabama, Communications Workers of America, Alabama Historical Association, League of Women Voters of Alabama, North Alabama Area Labor Council and more.

These conversations help connect workplace struggles to broader fights for economic justice and democracy. And the work is just getting started.

We’re organizing alongside partners to lift up key dates like Workers Memorial Day to highlight workers’ contributions and the importance of standing together for fair wages, safe workplaces and the freedom to organize. And we’re excited about our new partnership with Public School Strong and the potential to expand advocacy for the public education that our students, educators and communities deserve.

Building worker power isn’t just about what happens at the Legislature. It’s about strengthening the relationships, solidarity and collective action that make change possible, from the State House to the shop floor and beyond

With your continued help, we’re making it happen!



2026 ELECTION QUESTIONS

Where do candidates stand?

Meeting and talking with candidates as they campaign for your vote helps shape the conversation and let them know which issues are most important to their constituents. Below are some questions you can ask and info you can share when meeting candidates. Please let us know what you hear back!

Funding public services

Alabama's tax system is upside down. People with low incomes pay a higher share of their income in state and local taxes – double the amount paid by wealthier Alabamians. Alabama gives tax breaks and incentives to wealthy individuals and large corporations that are not accessible to low-income families and small businesses.

Alabama is the only state still providing the outdated federal income tax deduction, which costs our state \$1.3 billion in lost revenue every year and overwhelmingly benefits the wealthiest households. At the same time, when Arise proposes policy solutions to help folks get ahead, we often hear lawmakers claim the state doesn't have enough money.

Congress last year passed HR 1 (aka the One Big Beautiful Bill Act), which will cut \$1.5 trillion from services like healthcare and food assistance to give more tax breaks to billionaires and highly profitable corporations. Because of this cut, Alabama may need to pay up to \$261 million in additional state money to fund SNAP in 2027.

Questions for legislators or statewide candidates: Would you support getting rid of the outdated federal income tax deduction, which costs Alabama more than \$1 billion a year and mostly helps wealthy households, while also ending the state grocery tax to help everyone? If not, what is your plan to untax groceries sustainably and responsibly?

Alabama is one of three states with no state dollars set aside for public transportation, and one of five with no funds directed toward affordable housing. Would you support providing dedicated state funding for affordable housing through the Alabama Housing Trust Fund, and for transportation through the Public Transportation Trust Fund?

Question for congressional candidates: Will you work to repeal the harmful spending cuts in HR 1, particularly Medicaid and SNAP cuts that will hurt Alabama for decades?

Health equity

Rural hospitals across Alabama face ongoing financial strain. More than 1 in 3 Alabama counties offer no maternity care services. Around 160,000 Alabamians fall into the health coverage gap, earning too much to qualify for Medicaid but too little to afford private insurance. The income limit for a single parent with two children to qualify for Medicaid is just \$410 a month. That leaves many working families without affordable health coverage.

Questions for legislators or statewide candidates: Do you support Medicaid expansion to keep rural hospitals open, reduce maternal and infant mortality, help families afford healthcare and help low-wage workers stay healthy enough to work? If not, what is your specific plan to stabilize rural hospitals and improve healthcare?

Questions for congressional candidates: Will you pledge to repeal the \$1 trillion in Medicaid cuts passed in HR 1, protect Medicare and make health insurance more affordable?

What will you do to hold healthcare corporations accountable for high costs?

Hunger relief

More than 750,000 Alabama families use SNAP to help put food on the table. In 2025, Congress enacted HR 1, aka the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which will shift more SNAP costs onto states. Alabama may have to pay an additional \$175 million next year just to ensure families continue to receive SNAP benefits.

About 1 in 6 Alabamians struggle with food insecurity, including more than 1 in 5 Alabama children. One positive step Alabama has taken in recent years is expanding no-cost school breakfast to more classrooms with increased state funding. We would like to expand this program to every school.

Questions for legislators or statewide candidates: Will you pledge to find new revenue to protect SNAP funding in next year's state budget? Will you pledge to expand funding for no-cost school breakfast and lunch programs?

Questions for congressional candidates: Will you help families put food on the table by fighting to protect SNAP funding and roll back cuts to SNAP in HR 1? If not, what is your proposed solution to reduce hunger?



2026 ELECTION INFORMATION

Key dates for the 2026 elections

Primary election: Tuesday, May 19, 2026

- May 4 is the voter registration deadline for the primary election.
- The election manager must receive absentee ballot applications by May 12 (by mail) or May 14 (in person).
- Completed absentee ballots must arrive at the election manager's office by May 18 (if hand-delivered) or by noon on May 19 (if returned by mail).

Runoff election (if necessary): Tuesday, June 16, 2026

- May 29 is the deadline to hand-deliver a voter registration form for the runoff. June 1 is the deadline to register online or postmark registration forms delivered by mail.
- The election manager must receive absentee ballot applications by June 9 (by mail) or June 11 (in person).
- Completed absentee ballots must arrive at the election manager's office by June 15 (if hand-delivered) or by noon on June 16 (if returned by mail).

General election: Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026

- Oct. 19 is the voter registration deadline for the general election.
- The election manager must receive absentee ballot applications by Oct. 27 (by mail) or Oct. 29 (in person).
- Completed absentee ballots must arrive at the election manager's office by Nov. 2 (if hand-delivered) or by noon on Nov. 3 (if returned by mail).

What to know about voter registration and absentee voting

- Alabama's voter registration deadline for the 2026 primary election is May 4. For the runoff election, the deadline is May 29 (hand delivery) or June 1 (online or postmarked by mail). For the general election, the deadline is Oct. 19.
- These deadlines are both for new voters to register and for current voters to update their information if they have moved to another location within Alabama.
- People who have faced domestic violence, or guardians of people who have faced domestic violence, may submit a form to protect their residential and mailing addresses from appearing on the public list of registered voters.
- Alabamians are not officially registered to vote until their county board of registrars reviews and approves their application.
- Alabamians applying for an absentee ballot must certify that they cannot vote in person on Election Day for a reason allowed under state law. Those reasons include absence from the county on Election Day or an illness that prevents a trip to the polling place.
- Visit alabamavotes.gov to learn more about voter registration and absentee voting.

What to know for the elections

- Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Election Day. If you're a registered voter in line by 7 p.m., stay in line! You'll be allowed to vote.
- A valid photo ID is required to vote. Visit alabamavotes.gov to learn more.
- Alabamians can vote in either the Democratic or Republican primary, but not both. Both ballots will include proposed constitutional amendments.
- State law forbids "crossover voting" in runoff elections. If a runoff election is necessary in June, people who vote in the Democratic primary will be able to vote only in a Democratic runoff, and people who vote in the Republican primary will be able to vote only in a Republican runoff. Voters who participate in neither party's primary can choose to vote in either party's runoff.
- The crossover voting rule *does not* apply to the general election in November. Voters may vote for whomever they wish in the general election, regardless of which primary (if any) they participated in earlier in the year.
- Voters' party choice for this year's primary election *does not* bind their choice for future primaries.
- Visit alabamavotes.gov to check your voter registration and polling place, find sample ballots by county and more.