Governor

Open seat (Gov. Henry McMaster term-limited). Attorney General Alan Wilson won the GOP runoff with 68.6%; state Rep. Jermaine Johnson won the Democratic primary with 59.7%.



Jermaine Johnson

DEMOCRAT · OPEN SEAT

State representative from Columbia; business consultant.



Alan Wilson

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

South Carolina Attorney General since 2011; National Guard veteran of Iraq.

Where the candidates stand on the issues Pope Leo XIV has raised, in their own words and votes. Bracketed numbers link to sources. We do not rate, score, or endorse candidates.

WAR & PEACE

POPE LEO XIV *Leo invited citizens of every country involved in the war with Iran to contact their leaders and members of Congress "to work for peace and to reject war and violence."* Remarks at Castel Gandolfo, Apr. 7, 2026 (Vatican News via The Good Newsroom)

JERMAINE JOHNSON

No public position found.

ALAN WILSON

No public position found.

AI & THE DIGNITY OF WORK

POPE LEO XIV *"No one can be reduced to productivity, to cognitive performance, or to mere data."* Magnifica Humanitas presentation, May 25, 2026

JERMAINE JOHNSON

Backs a moratorium on rural data center growth until guardrails are set; says AI is "disrupting job markets" and would have a labor council fight wage theft.

[1] ABC News 4: Governor debate live updates
[2] Johnson campaign: Policies

ALAN WILSON

Opposes a data center moratorium, favoring local choice with guardrails and requiring data centers to ease costs on host communities.

[1] ABC News 4: Governor debate live updates

THE POOR & THE SAFETY NET

POPE LEO XIV *The preferential choice for the poor is "a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society."* Dilexi Te, Oct. 4, 2025

JERMAINE JOHNSON

Wants South Carolina to expand Medicaid; would create a labor advisory council to recommend a state minimum wage.

[1] ABC News 4: Governor debate live updates
[2] Johnson campaign: Policies

ALAN WILSON

Opposes Medicaid expansion, saying it "drains government resources" that could go to teacher and law enforcement pay.

[1] ABC News 4: Governor debate live updates

ELECTIONS & CIVIC LIFE

POPE LEO XIV *Authentic democracy, "far from being a mere procedure," "recognizes the dignity of every person and calls each citizen to participate responsibly in the pursuit of the common good."* Message to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Apr. 9, 2026

JERMAINE JOHNSON

No public position found.

ALAN WILSON

Campaign says he "Stood Strong For Election Integrity"; in 2013 he called Voting Rights Act preclearance "an extraordinary intrusion into state sovereignty" and cited voter ID laws.

[1] Wilson campaign site
[2] S.C. Attorney General statement (2013, archived)

LIFE OF THE UNBORN

POPE LEO XIV *Abortion "cuts short a growing life and refuses to welcome the gift of life."* Address to the Diplomatic Corps, Jan. 9, 2026

JERMAINE JOHNSON

Voted against South Carolina's 2023 fetal heartbeat abortion law; says medical decisions "are best left to families and their doctors."

[1] OnTheIssues: Jermaine Johnson on abortion
[2] Johnson campaign: Policies

ALAN WILSON

"Firmly pro-life and will always support laws that defend the unborn."

[1] Wilson campaign: Platform

THE DEATH PENALTY

POPE LEO XIV *Someone who opposes abortion but favors the death penalty "is not really pro-life."* AP via PBS NewsHour, Sept. 30, 2025

JERMAINE JOHNSON

No public position found.

ALAN WILSON

As attorney general, has defended executions in court, including asking the U.S. Supreme Court in 2025 to let a scheduled firing-squad execution proceed.

[1] Washington Times (Mar. 7, 2025)

IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

POPE LEO XIV *"Defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

JERMAINE JOHNSON

No public position found.

ALAN WILSON

Would "deny state benefits to illegal residents" and "enforce immigration law."

[1] Wilson campaign: Platform

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY & EDUCATION

POPE LEO XIV *Religious freedom is "the right of every person to worship according to conscience."* Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026

JERMAINE JOHNSON

No public position found.

ALAN WILSON

Would "expand school choice" and calls himself a defender of "religious liberty."

[1] Wilson campaign: Platform

CARE FOR CREATION

POPE LEO XIV *"We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures."* AP, Oct. 1, 2025

JERMAINE JOHNSON

Sponsored a bill requiring the state to reach at least 25% in-state production of food, energy and water.

[1] Johnson campaign: Policies

ALAN WILSON

Pledges to "continue to stand up to ESG mandates."

[1] Wilson campaign: Platform

Full guide and every race in South Carolina: standwithpopeleo.com/vote/south-carolina/ · **Take the Pope Leo voter pledge:** standwithpopeleo.com/vote/
This guide does not endorse any candidate or party. Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. Positions are summarized from candidates' own statements, votes, and campaign materials, with sources linked. Published by *Letters from Leo*. Spot an error? Email cjh@christopherhale.com.