

Form 5500 Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan This form is required to be filed for employee benefit plans under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and sections 6057(b) and 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ▶ Complete all entries in accordance with the instructions to the Form 5500.	OMB Nos. 1210-0110 1210-0089 2023 This Form is Open to Public Inspection
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Part I	Annual Report Identification Information
For calendar plan year 2023 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2023 and ending 12/31/2023	
A	This return/report is for: ☐ a multiemployer plan ☐ a multiple-employer plan (Filers checking this box must provide participating employer information in accordance with the form instructions.) ☒ a single-employer plan ☐ a DFE (specify) _____ ☐ the first return/report ☐ the final return/report ☐ an amended return/report ☐ a short plan year return/report (less than 12 months)
C	If the plan is a collectively-bargained plan, check here. ▶ ☒
D	Check box if filing under: ☒ Form 5558 ☐ automatic extension ☐ the DFVC program ☐ special extension (enter description)
E	If this is a retroactively adopted plan permitted by SECURE Act section 201, check here. ▶ ☐

Part II	Basic Plan Information—enter all requested information
1a	Name of plan SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
1b	Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ 006
1c	Effective date of plan 01/01/2000
2a	Plan sponsor's name (employer, if for a single-employer plan) Mailing address (include room, apt., suite no. and street, or P.O. Box) City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code (if foreign, see instructions) SOUTHERN STATES, LLC 30 GEORGIA AVENUE HAMPTON, GA 30228
2b	Employer Identification Number (EIN) 03-0493527
2c	Plan Sponsor's telephone number 770-946-4562
2d	Business code (see instructions) 335900

Caution: A penalty for the late or incomplete filing of this return/report will be assessed unless reasonable cause is established.

Under penalties of perjury and other penalties set forth in the instructions, I declare that I have examined this return/report, including accompanying schedules, statements and attachments, as well as the electronic version of this return/report, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete.

SIGN HERE	Filed with authorized/valid electronic signature.	10/15/2024	TIM DUNCAN
	Signature of plan administrator	Date	Enter name of individual signing as plan administrator
SIGN HERE			
	Signature of employer/plan sponsor	Date	Enter name of individual signing as employer or plan sponsor
SIGN HERE			
	Signature of DFE	Date	Enter name of individual signing as DFE

3a Plan administrator's name and address ☒ Same as Plan Sponsor	3b Administrator's EIN 3c Administrator's telephone number
4 If the name and/or EIN of the plan sponsor or the plan name has changed since the last return/report filed for this plan, enter the plan sponsor's name, EIN, the plan name and the plan number from the last return/report: a Sponsor's name c Plan Name	4b EIN 4d PN
5 Total number of participants at the beginning of the plan year	5 134
6 Number of participants as of the end of the plan year unless otherwise stated (welfare plans complete only lines 6a(1) , 6a(2) , 6b , 6c , and 6d). a(1) Total number of active participants at the beginning of the plan year a(2) Total number of active participants at the end of the plan year b Retired or separated participants receiving benefits c Other retired or separated participants entitled to future benefits d Subtotal. Add lines 6a(2) , 6b , and 6c e Deceased participants whose beneficiaries are receiving or are entitled to receive benefits f Total. Add lines 6d and 6e g(1) Number of participants with account balances as of the beginning of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) g(2) Number of participants with account balances as of the end of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item) h Number of participants who terminated employment during the plan year with accrued benefits that were less than 100% vested	6a(1) 110 6a(2) 209 6b 0 6c 4 6d 213 6e 0 6f 213 6g(1) 132 6g(2) 137 6h 1
7 Enter the total number of employers obligated to contribute to the plan (only multiemployer plans complete this item)	7

8a If the plan provides pension benefits, enter the applicable pension feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:
 2E 2F 2G 2J 2K 2T 3D

b If the plan provides welfare benefits, enter the applicable welfare feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:

9a Plan funding arrangement (check all that apply) (1) ☐ Insurance (2) ☐ Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts (3) ☒ Trust (4) ☐ General assets of the sponsor	9b Plan benefit arrangement (check all that apply) (1) ☐ Insurance (2) ☐ Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts (3) ☒ Trust (4) ☐ General assets of the sponsor
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10 Check all applicable boxes in 10a and 10b to indicate which schedules are attached, and, where indicated, enter the number attached. (See instructions)

a Pension Schedules

- (1) ☒ **R** (Retirement Plan Information)
- (2) ☐ **MB** (Multiemployer Defined Benefit Plan and Certain Money Purchase Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary
- (3) ☐ **SB** (Single-Employer Defined Benefit Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary
- (4) ☐ **DCG** (Individual Plan Information) – Number Attached _____
- (5) ☐ **MEP** (Multiple-Employer Retirement Plan Information)

b General Schedules

- (1) ☒ **H** (Financial Information)
- (2) ☐ **I** (Financial Information – Small Plan)
- (3) ☐ **A** (Insurance Information) – Number Attached 0
- (4) ☒ **C** (Service Provider Information)
- (5) ☐ **D** (DFE/Participating Plan Information)
- (6) ☐ **G** (Financial Transaction Schedules)

Part III Form M-1 Compliance Information (to be completed by welfare benefit plans)

11a If the plan provides welfare benefits, was the plan subject to the Form M-1 filing requirements during the plan year? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) ☐ Yes ☐ No

If "Yes" is checked, complete lines 11b and 11c.

11b Is the plan currently in compliance with the Form M-1 filing requirements? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) ☐ Yes ☐ No

11c Enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the 2023 Form M-1 annual report. If the plan was not required to file the 2023 Form M-1 annual report, enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the most recent Form M-1 that was required to be filed under the Form M-1 filing requirements. (Failure to enter a valid Receipt Confirmation Code will subject the Form 5500 filing to rejection as incomplete.)

Receipt Confirmation Code _____

SCHEDULE C (Form 5500) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Service Provider Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.	OMB No. 1210-0110
		2023
		This Form is Open to Public Inspection.

For calendar plan year 2023 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2023 and ending 12/31/2023

A Name of plan SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ 006
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 SOUTHERN STATES, LLC	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 03-0493527

Part I

Service Provider Information (see instructions)

You must complete this Part, in accordance with the instructions, to report the information required for **each person** who received, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of monetary value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or the person's position with the plan during the plan year. If a person received **only** eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures, you are required to answer line 1 but are not required to include that person when completing the remainder of this Part.

1

Information on Persons Receiving Only Eligible Indirect Compensation

- a

Check "Yes" or "No" to indicate whether you are excluding a person from the remainder of this Part because they received only eligible indirect compensation for which the plan received the required disclosures (see instructions for definitions and conditions).....

No

Yes

☒
- b

If you answered line 1a "Yes," enter the name and EIN or address of each person providing the required disclosures for the service providers who received only eligible indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed (see instructions).

(b)

Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

(b)

Enter name and EIN or address of person who provided you disclosures on eligible indirect compensation

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2. Information on Other Service Providers Receiving Direct or Indirect Compensation. Except for those persons for whom you answered "Yes" to line 1a above, complete as many entries as needed to list each person receiving, directly or indirectly, \$5,000 or more in total compensation (i.e., money or anything else of value) in connection with services rendered to the plan or their position with the plan during the plan year. (See instructions).

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

THE VANGUARD GROUP

23-1945930

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
15 19 25 28 50	RECORDKEEPER	19052	Yes ☐ No ☒	Yes ☐ No ☐		Yes ☐ No ☐

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

SWERDLIN AND COMPANY

5901PEACHTREE, DUNWOODY RD
ATLANTA, GA 30328

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
13 17 50	TPA	7980	Yes ☐ No ☒	Yes ☐ No ☐		Yes ☐ No ☐

(a) Enter name and EIN or address (see instructions)

NORTHWESTERN MUTUAL

720 E WISCONSIN AVE
P O BOX 3181
MILWAUKEE, WI 53202

(b) Service Code(s)	(c) Relationship to employer, employee organization, or person known to be a party-in-interest	(d) Enter direct compensation paid by the plan. If none, enter -0-.	(e) Did service provider receive indirect compensation? (sources other than plan or plan sponsor)	(f) Did indirect compensation include eligible indirect compensation, for which the plan received the required disclosures?	(g) Enter total indirect compensation received by service provider excluding eligible indirect compensation for which you answered "Yes" to element (f). If none, enter -0-.	(h) Did the service provider give you a formula instead of an amount or estimated amount?
26 27 51 50	INVESTMENT ADVISOR	1799	Yes ☐ No ☒	Yes ☐ No ☐		Yes ☐ No ☐

Part I Service Provider Information (continued)

3. If you reported on line 2 receipt of indirect compensation, other than eligible indirect compensation, by a service provider, and the service provider is a fiduciary or provides contract administrator, consulting, custodial, investment advisory, investment management, broker, or recordkeeping services, answer the following questions for (a) each source from whom the service provider received \$1,000 or more in indirect compensation and (b) each source for whom the service provider gave you a formula used to determine the indirect compensation instead of an amount or estimated amount of the indirect compensation. Complete as many entries as needed to report the required information for each source.

(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	
(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	
(a) Enter service provider name as it appears on line 2	(b) Service Codes (see instructions)	(c) Enter amount of indirect compensation
(d) Enter name and EIN (address) of source of indirect compensation	(e) Describe the indirect compensation, including any formula used to determine the service provider's eligibility for or the amount of the indirect compensation.	

Part II Service Providers Who Fail or Refuse to Provide Information

4 Provide, to the extent possible, the following information for each service provider who failed or refused to provide the information necessary to complete this Schedule.

(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
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(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide
(a) Enter name and EIN or address of service provider (see instructions)	(b) Nature of Service Code(s)	(c) Describe the information that the service provider failed or refused to provide

Part III Termination Information on Accountants and Enrolled Actuaries (see instructions)
(complete as many entries as needed)

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

a Name:	b EIN:
c Position:	
d Address:	e Telephone:

Explanation:

SCHEDULE H (Form 5500) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Financial Information This schedule is required to be filed under section 104 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ► File as an attachment to Form 5500.	OMB No. 1210-0110
		2023
		This Form is Open to Public Inspection

For calendar plan year 2023 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2023 and ending 12/31/2023		
A Name of plan SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN	B Three-digit plan number (PN) ►	006
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 SOUTHERN STATES, LLC	D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 03-0493527	

Part I	Asset and Liability Statement
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1 Current value of plan assets and liabilities at the beginning and end of the plan year. Combine the value of plan assets held in more than one trust. Report the value of the plan's interest in a commingled fund containing the assets of more than one plan on a line-by-line basis unless the value is reportable on lines 1c(9) through 1c(14). Do not enter the value of that portion of an insurance contract which guarantees, during this plan year, to pay a specific dollar benefit at a future date. **Round off amounts to the nearest dollar.** MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 1b(1), 1b(2), 1c(8), 1g, 1h, and 1i. CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 1d and 1e. See instructions.

Assets		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
a Total noninterest-bearing cash	1a		
b Receivables (less allowance for doubtful accounts):			
(1) Employer contributions	1b(1)		
(2) Participant contributions	1b(2)	0	7081
(3) Other	1b(3)		
c General investments:			
(1) Interest-bearing cash (include money market accounts & certificates of deposit)	1c(1)	1538533	1588335
(2) U.S. Government securities	1c(2)		
(3) Corporate debt instruments (other than employer securities):			
(A) Preferred	1c(3)(A)		
(B) All other	1c(3)(B)		
(4) Corporate stocks (other than employer securities):			
(A) Preferred	1c(4)(A)		
(B) Common	1c(4)(B)		
(5) Partnership/joint venture interests	1c(5)		
(6) Real estate (other than employer real property)	1c(6)		
(7) Loans (other than to participants)	1c(7)		
(8) Participant loans	1c(8)	324029	340972
(9) Value of interest in common/collective trusts	1c(9)		
(10) Value of interest in pooled separate accounts	1c(10)		
(11) Value of interest in master trust investment accounts	1c(11)		
(12) Value of interest in 103-12 investment entities	1c(12)		
(13) Value of interest in registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds)	1c(13)	1830306	2442350
(14) Value of funds held in insurance company general account (unallocated contracts)	1c(14)		
(15) Other	1c(15)		

1d Employer-related investments:		(a) Beginning of Year	(b) End of Year
(1) Employer securities	1d(1)		
(2) Employer real property	1d(2)		
e Buildings and other property used in plan operation	1e		
f Total assets (add all amounts in lines 1a through 1e)	1f	3692868	4378738
Liabilities			
g Benefit claims payable	1g		
h Operating payables	1h		
i Acquisition indebtedness	1i		
j Other liabilities	1j		
k Total liabilities (add all amounts in lines 1g through 1j)	1k	0	0
Net Assets			
l Net assets (subtract line 1k from line 1f)	1l	3692868	4378738

Part II Income and Expense Statement

2 Plan income, expenses, and changes in net assets for the year. Include all income and expenses of the plan, including any trust(s) or separately maintained fund(s) and any payments/receipts to/from insurance carriers. Round off amounts to the nearest dollar. MTIAs, CCTs, PSAs, and 103-12 IEs do not complete lines 2a, 2b(1)(E), 2e, 2f, and 2g.

Income		(a) Amount	(b) Total
a Contributions:			
(1) Received or receivable in cash from: (A) Employers	2a(1)(A)	152724	
(B) Participants	2a(1)(B)	358033	
(C) Others (including rollovers)	2a(1)(C)		
(2) Noncash contributions	2a(2)		
(3) Total contributions. Add lines 2a(1)(A) , (B), (C), and line 2a(2)	2a(3)		510757
b Earnings on investments:			
(1) Interest:			
(A) Interest-bearing cash (including money market accounts and certificates of deposit)	2b(1)(A)		
(B) U.S. Government securities	2b(1)(B)		
(C) Corporate debt instruments	2b(1)(C)		
(D) Loans (other than to participants)	2b(1)(D)		
(E) Participant loans	2b(1)(E)	17250	
(F) Other	2b(1)(F)		
(G) Total interest. Add lines 2b(1)(A) through (F)	2b(1)(G)		17250
(2) Dividends: (A) Preferred stock	2b(2)(A)		
(B) Common stock	2b(2)(B)		
(C) Registered investment company shares (e.g. mutual funds)	2b(2)(C)	119694	
(D) Total dividends. Add lines 2b(2)(A) , (B), and (C)	2b(2)(D)		
(3) Rents	2b(3)		
(4) Net gain (loss) on sale of assets: (A) Aggregate proceeds	2b(4)(A)		
(B) Aggregate carrying amount (see instructions)	2b(4)(B)		
(C) Subtract line 2b(4)(B) from line 2b(4)(A) and enter result	2b(4)(C)		
(5) Unrealized appreciation (depreciation) of assets: (A) Real estate	2b(5)(A)		
(B) Other	2b(5)(B)		
(C) Total unrealized appreciation of assets. Add lines 2b(5)(A) and (B)	2b(5)(C)		

		(a) Amount	(b) Total
(6) Net investment gain (loss) from common/collective trusts.....	2b(6)		
(7) Net investment gain (loss) from pooled separate accounts.....	2b(7)		
(8) Net investment gain (loss) from master trust investment accounts.....	2b(8)		
(9) Net investment gain (loss) from 103-12 investment entities.....	2b(9)		
(10) Net investment gain (loss) from registered investment companies (e.g., mutual funds)	2b(10)		260390
c Other income	2c		
d Total income. Add all income amounts in column (b) and enter total	2d		908091

Expenses

e Benefit payment and payments to provide benefits:			
(1) Directly to participants or beneficiaries, including direct rollovers	2e(1)	193812	
(2) To insurance carriers for the provision of benefits.....	2e(2)		
(3) Other	2e(3)		
(4) Total benefit payments. Add lines 2e(1) through (3)	2e(4)		193812
f Corrective distributions (see instructions)	2f		
g Certain deemed distributions of participant loans (see instructions)	2g		
h Interest expense	2h		
i Administrative expenses:			
(1) Salaries and allowances	2i(1)		
(2) Contract administrator fees.....	2i(2)	28409	
(3) Recordkeeping fees.....	2i(3)		
(4) IQPA audit fees.....	2i(4)		
(5) Investment advisory and investment management fees	2i(5)		
(6) Bank or trust company trustee/custodial fees	2i(6)		
(7) Actuarial fees	2i(7)		
(8) Legal fees	2i(8)		
(9) Valuation/appraisal fees	2i(9)		
(10) Other trustee fees and expenses	2i(10)		
(11) Other expenses	2i(11)		
(12) Total administrative expenses. Add lines 2i(1) through (11)	2i(12)		28409
j Total expenses. Add all expense amounts in column (b) and enter total	2j		222221

Net Income and Reconciliation

k Net income (loss). Subtract line 2j from line 2d	2k		685870
l Transfers of assets:			
(1) To this plan	2l(1)		
(2) From this plan	2l(2)		

Part III Accountant's Opinion

3 Complete lines 3a through 3c if the opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is attached to this Form 5500. Complete line 3d if an opinion is not attached.

a The attached opinion of an independent qualified public accountant for this plan is (see instructions):

(1) ☒ Unmodified (2) ☐ Qualified (3) ☐ Disclaimer (4) ☐ Adverse

b Check the appropriate box(es) to indicate whether the IQPA performed an ERISA section 103(a)(3)(C) audit. Check both boxes (1) and (2) if the audit was performed pursuant to both 29 CFR 2520.103-8 and 29 CFR 2520.103-12(d). Check box (3) if pursuant to neither.

(1) ☒ DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 (2) ☐ DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d) (3) ☐ neither DOL Regulation 2520.103-8 nor DOL Regulation 2520.103-12(d).

c Enter the name and EIN of the accountant (or accounting firm) below:

(1) Name: **SMITH & HOWARD, P.C.**

(2) EIN: **58-1250486**

d The opinion of an independent qualified public accountant is **not attached** as part of Schedule H because:

(1) ☐ This form is filed for a CCT, PSA, DCG or MTIA. (2) ☐ It will be attached to the next Form 5500 pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.104-50.

Part IV Compliance Questions

4 CCTs and PSAs do not complete Part IV. MTIAs, 103-12 IEs, and GIAs do not complete lines 4a, 4e, 4f, 4g, 4h, 4k, 4m, 4n, or 5. 103-12 IEs also do not complete lines 4j and 4l. MTIAs also do not complete line 4l. DCGs do not complete lines 4e, 4f, 4k, 4l, and 5, and DCGs generally complete the rest of Part IV collectively for all plans in the DCG, except as otherwise provided (see instructions).

During the plan year:

	Yes	No	Amount
a Was there a failure to transmit to the plan any participant contributions within the time period described in 29 CFR 2510.3-102? Continue to answer "Yes" for any prior year failures until fully corrected. (See instructions and DOL's Voluntary Fiduciary Correction Program.)		☒	
b Were any loans by the plan or fixed income obligations due the plan in default as of the close of the plan year or classified during the year as uncollectible? Disregard participant loans secured by participant's account balance. (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part I if "Yes" is checked.)		☒	
c Were any leases to which the plan was a party in default or classified during the year as uncollectible? (Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part II if "Yes" is checked.)		☒	
d Were there any nonexempt transactions with any party-in-interest? (Do not include transactions reported on line 4a. Attach Schedule G (Form 5500) Part III if "Yes" is checked.)		☒	
e Was this plan covered by a fidelity bond?	☒		500000
f Did the plan have a loss, whether or not reimbursed by the plan's fidelity bond, that was caused by fraud or dishonesty?		☒	
g Did the plan hold any assets whose current value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?		☒	
h Did the plan receive any noncash contributions whose value was neither readily determinable on an established market nor set by an independent third party appraiser?		☒	
i Did the plan have assets held for investment? (Attach schedule(s) of assets if "Yes" is checked, and see instructions for format requirements.)	☒		
j Were any plan transactions or series of transactions in excess of 5% of the current value of plan assets? (Attach schedule of transactions if "Yes" is checked and see instructions for format requirements.)		☒	
k Were all the plan assets either distributed to participants or beneficiaries, transferred to another plan, or brought under the control of the PBGC?		☒	
l Has the plan failed to provide any benefit when due under the plan?		☒	
m If this is an individual account plan, was there a blackout period? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-3.)		☒	
n If 4m was answered "Yes," check the "Yes" box if you either provided the required notice or one of the exceptions to providing the notice applied under 29 CFR 2520.101-3.			

5a Has a resolution to terminate the plan been adopted during the plan year or any prior plan year? ☐ Yes ☒ No
If "Yes," enter the amount of any plan assets that reverted to the employer this year _____.

5b If, during this plan year, any assets or liabilities were transferred from this plan to another plan(s), identify the plan(s) to which assets or liabilities were transferred. (See instructions.)

5b(1) Name of plan(s)	5b(2) EIN(s)	5b(3) PN(s)

5c Was the plan a defined benefit plan covered under the PBGC insurance program at any time during this plan year? (See ERISA section 4021 and instructions.) ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not determined

If "Yes" is checked, enter the My PAA confirmation number from the PBGC premium filing for this plan year _____.

SCHEDULE R (Form 5500) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Retirement Plan Information This schedule is required to be filed under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and section 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ▶ File as an attachment to Form 5500.	OMB No. 1210-0110 2023 This Form is Open to Public Inspection.
For calendar plan year 2023 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2023 and ending 12/31/2023		
A Name of plan SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN		B Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ 006
C Plan sponsor's name as shown on line 2a of Form 5500 SOUTHERN STATES, LLC		D Employer Identification Number (EIN) 03-0493527
Part I	Distributions	
All references to distributions relate only to payments of benefits during the plan year.		
1 Total value of distributions paid in property other than in cash or the forms of property specified in the instructions.....		1 0
2 Enter the EIN(s) of payor(s) who paid benefits on behalf of the plan to participants or beneficiaries during the year (if more than two, enter EINs of the two payors who paid the greatest dollar amounts of benefits): EIN(s): 45-0404698		
Profit-sharing plans, ESOPs, and stock bonus plans, skip line 3.		
3 Number of participants (living or deceased) whose benefits were distributed in a single sum, during the plan year		3
Part II	Funding Information (If the plan is not subject to the minimum funding requirements of section 412 of the Internal Revenue Code or ERISA section 302, skip this Part.)	
4 Is the plan administrator making an election under Code section 412(d)(2) or ERISA section 302(d)(2)? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A		
If the plan is a defined benefit plan, go to line 8.		
5 If a waiver of the minimum funding standard for a prior year is being amortized in this plan year, see instructions and enter the date of the ruling letter granting the waiver. Date: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____		
If you completed line 5, complete lines 3, 9, and 10 of Schedule MB and do not complete the remainder of this schedule.		
6 a Enter the minimum required contribution for this plan year (include any prior year accumulated funding deficiency not waived)		6a
b Enter the amount contributed by the employer to the plan for this plan year		6b
c Subtract the amount in line 6b from the amount in line 6a. Enter the result (enter a minus sign to the left of a negative amount)		6c
If you completed line 6c, skip lines 8 and 9.		
7 Will the minimum funding amount reported on line 6c be met by the funding deadline? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A		
8 If a change in actuarial cost method was made for this plan year pursuant to a revenue procedure or other authority providing automatic approval for the change or a class ruling letter, does the plan sponsor or plan administrator agree with the change? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A		
Part III	Amendments	
9 If this is a defined benefit pension plan, were any amendments adopted during this plan year that increased or decreased the value of benefits? If yes, check the appropriate box. If no, check the "No" box. ☐ Increase ☐ Decrease ☐ Both ☐ No		
Part IV	ESOPs (see instructions). If this is not a plan described under section 409(a) or 4975(e)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code, skip this Part.	
10 Were unallocated employer securities or proceeds from the sale of unallocated securities used to repay any exempt loan?..... ☐ Yes ☐ No		
11 a Does the ESOP hold any preferred stock? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
b If the ESOP has an outstanding exempt loan with the employer as lender, is such loan part of a "back-to-back" loan? (See instructions for definition of "back-to-back" loan.) ☐ Yes ☐ No		
12 Does the ESOP hold any stock that is not readily tradable on an established securities market? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
For Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see the Instructions for Form 5500.		
Schedule R (Form 5500) 2023 v. 230707		

Part V Additional Information for Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans

13 Enter the following information for each employer that (1) contributed more than 5% of total contributions to the plan during the plan year or (2) was one of the top-ten highest contributors (measured in dollars). See instructions. *Complete as many entries as needed to report all applicable employers.*

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

a Name of contributing employer

b EIN

c Dollar amount contributed by employer

d Date collective bargaining agreement expires (If employer contributes under more than one collective bargaining agreement, check box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, enter the applicable date.) Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

e Contribution rate information (If more than one rate applies, check this box ☐ and see instructions regarding required attachment. Otherwise, complete lines 13e(1) and 13e(2).)

(1) Contribution rate (in dollars and cents) _____

(2) Base unit measure: ☐ Hourly ☐ Weekly ☐ Unit of production ☐ Other (specify): _____

14 Enter the number of deferred vested and retired participants (inactive participants), as of the beginning of the plan year, whose contributing employer is no longer making contributions to the plan for: a The current plan year. Check the box to indicate the counting method used to determine the number of inactive participants: ☐ last contributing employer ☐ alternative ☐ reasonable approximation (see instructions for required attachment) b The plan year immediately preceding the current plan year. ☐ Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment) c The second preceding plan year. ☐ Check the box if the number reported is a change from what was previously reported (see instructions for required attachment)	14a 14b 14c	
15 Enter the ratio of the number of participants under the plan on whose behalf no employer had an obligation to make an employer contribution during the current plan year to: a The corresponding number for the plan year immediately preceding the current plan year b The corresponding number for the second preceding plan year	15a 15b	
16 Information with respect to any employers who withdrew from the plan during the preceding plan year: a Enter the number of employers who withdrew during the preceding plan year b If line 16a is greater than 0, enter the aggregate amount of withdrawal liability assessed or estimated to be assessed against such withdrawn employers	16a 16b	
17 If assets and liabilities from another plan have been transferred to or merged with this plan during the plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment..... ☐		

Part VI	Additional Information for Single-Employer and Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans
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18 If any liabilities to participants or their beneficiaries under the plan as of the end of the plan year consist (in whole or in part) of liabilities to such participants and beneficiaries under two or more pension plans as of immediately before such plan year, check box and see instructions regarding supplemental information to be included as an attachment..... ☐	
19 If the total number of participants is 1,000 or more, complete lines (a) and (b): a Enter the percentage of plan assets held as: Public Equity: _____% Private Equity: _____% Investment-Grade Debt and Interest Rate Hedging Assets: _____% High-Yield Debt: _____% Real Assets: _____% Cash or Cash Equivalents: _____% Other: _____% b Provide the average duration of the Investment-Grade Debt and Interest Rate Hedging Assets: ☐ 0-5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ 10-15 years ☐ 15 years or more	
20 PBGC missed contribution reporting requirements. If this is a multiemployer plan or a single-employer plan that is not covered by PBGC, skip line 20. a Is the amount of unpaid minimum required contributions for all years from Schedule SB (Form 5500) line 40 greater than zero? ☐ Yes ☐ No b If line 20a is "Yes," has PBGC been notified as required by ERISA sections 4043(c)(5) and/or 303(k)(4)? Check the applicable box: ☐ Yes. ☐ No. Reporting was waived under 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) because contributions equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution were made by the 30th day after the due date. ☐ No. The 30-day period referenced in 29 CFR 4043.25(c)(2) has not yet ended, and the sponsor intends to make a contribution equal to or exceeding the unpaid minimum required contribution by the 30th day after the due date. ☐ No. Other. Provide explanation: _____	

Part VII	IRS Compliance Questions
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21a Does the plan satisfy the coverage and nondiscrimination tests of Code sections 410(b) and 401(a)(4) by combining this plan with any other plans under the permissive aggregation rules? ☒ Yes ☐ No 21b If this is a Code section 401(k) plan, check all boxes that apply to indicate how the plan is intended to satisfy the nondiscrimination requirements for employee deferrals and employer matching contributions (as applicable) under Code sections 401(k)(3) and 401(m)(2). ☐ Design-based safe harbor method ☐ "Prior year" ADP test ☒ "Current year" ADP test ☐ N/A	
22 If the plan sponsor is an adopter of a pre-approved plan that received a favorable IRS Opinion Letter, enter the date of the Opinion Letter <u>06 / 30 / 2020</u> (MM/DD/YYYY) and the Opinion Letter serial number <u>Q702814A</u> .	

**SOUTHERN STATES, LLC
HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2023 and 2022
and
SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE**

**with
INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Plan Administrator and Participants of the Southern States, LLC Hourly Employees Savings Plan

We have performed an audit of the financial statements of Southern States, LLC Hourly Employee Savings Plan (the "Plan"), an employee benefit plan subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 ("ERISA"), as permitted by ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) (ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit). The financial statements comprise the statements of net assets available for benefits as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, the related statement of changes in net assets available for benefits for the year ended December 31, 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management, having determined it is permissible in the circumstances, has elected to have the audit of the financial statements performed in accordance with ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) pursuant to 29 CFR 2520.103-8 of the Department of Labor's ("DOL") Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. As permitted by ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C), our audit need not extend to any statements or information related to assets held for investment of the Plan (investment information) by a bank or similar institution or insurance carrier that is regulated, supervised, and subject to periodic examination by a state or federal agency, provided that the statements or information regarding assets so held are prepared and certified to by the bank or similar institution or insurance carrier in accordance with 29 CFR 2520.103-5 of the DOL's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA (qualified institution).

Management has obtained a certification from a qualified institution as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, and for the year ended December 31, 2023, stating that the certified investment information, as described in Note 3 to the financial statements, is complete and accurate.

Opinion

In our opinion, based on our audit and on the procedures performed as described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit section:

- The amounts and disclosures in the accompanying financial statements, other than those agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America ("GAAP").
- The information in the accompanying financial statements related to assets held by and certified to by a qualified institution agrees to, or is derived from, in all material respects, the information prepared and certified by an institution that management determined meets the requirements of ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C).

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America ("GAAS"). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Plan and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with GAAP, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. Management's election of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit does not affect management's responsibility for the financial statements.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Plan's ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the financial statements are issued (or within one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued when applicable).

Management is also responsible for maintaining a current Plan instrument, including all Plan amendments, administering the Plan, and determining that the Plan's transactions that are presented and disclosed in the financial statements are in conformity with the Plan's provisions, including maintaining sufficient records with respect to each of the participants, to determine the benefits due or which may become due to such participants.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit

Except as described in the Scope and Nature of the ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) Audit section of our report, our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if, there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Plan's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Plan's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

Our audit did not extend to the certified investment information, except for obtaining and reading the certification, comparing the certified investment information with the related information presented and disclosed in the financial statements, and reading the disclosures relating to the certified investment information to assess whether they are in accordance with the presentation and disclosure requirements of GAAP.

Accordingly, the objective of an ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C) audit is not to express an opinion about whether the financial statements as a whole are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with GAAP.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Other Matter - Supplemental Schedule Required by ERISA

The supplemental Schedule of Assets (Held at End of Year) as of December 31, 2023, is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements but is supplementary information required by the DOL's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information included in the supplemental schedule, other than that agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, has been subjected to auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with GAAS. For information included in the supplemental schedule that agreed to or is derived from the certified investment information, we compared such information to the related certified investment information.

In forming our opinion on the supplemental schedule, we evaluated whether the supplemental schedule, other than the information agreed to or derived from the certified investment information, including its form and content, is presented in conformity with the DOL's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.

In our opinion:

- The form and content of the supplemental schedule, other than the information in the supplemental schedule that agreed to or is derived from the certified investment information, are presented, in all material respects, in conformity with the DOL's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA.
- The information in the supplemental schedule related to assets held by and certified to by a qualified institution agrees to, or is derived from, in all material respects, the information prepared and certified by an institution that management determined meets the requirements of ERISA Section 103(a)(3)(C).

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Smith and Howard".

Atlanta, GA
October 10, 2024

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
STATEMENTS OF NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS
DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

ASSETS			
		<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Investments, at Fair Value		\$ 4,030,685	\$ 3,368,839
Receivables:			
Notes receivable from participants		340,972	324,029
Participant contributions		<u>7,081</u>	<u>-</u>
		<u>348,053</u>	<u>324,029</u>
Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits		<u>\$ 4,378,738</u>	<u>\$ 3,692,868</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS AVAILABLE FOR BENEFITS
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

Contributions:	
Participant	\$ 358,033
Employer	<u>152,724</u>
	<u>510,757</u>
 Interest Income on Notes Receivable from Participants	 <u>17,250</u>
 Investment Income:	
Dividends and interest	119,694
Net appreciation in fair value of investments	<u>260,390</u>
	<u>380,084</u>
 Deductions:	
Benefits paid to participants	(193,812)
Administrative expenses	<u>(28,409)</u>
	<u>(222,221)</u>
 Increase in Net Assets Available for Benefits	 685,870
 Net Assets Available for Benefits at Beginning of Year	 <u>3,692,868</u>
 Net Assets Available for Benefits at End of Year	 <u><u>\$ 4,378,738</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

NOTE 1 - DESCRIPTION OF PLAN

The following brief description of the Southern States, LLC (the “Company” or the “Plan Sponsor”) Hourly Employees Savings Plan (the “Plan”) is provided for general information only. Participants should refer to the Plan document for a more complete description of the Plan’s provisions.

(a) General

The Company established the Plan effective January 1, 2000, and amended and restated the Plan effective January 1, 2016. The Plan is a defined contribution plan covering substantially all hourly employees of the Company who have three months of service. The Plan is subject to the provisions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (“ERISA”).

(b) Trust and Custodial Agreement

The assets of the Plan are held for safekeeping and investment by Ascensus Trust Company (“Ascensus”) as part of a trust agreement between the Plan Sponsor and Ascensus.

(c) Contributions

Each year, participants may contribute up to 100% of eligible compensation, as defined by the Plan. Contributions are subject to certain statutory limitations under the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code (“IRC”). Participants may also contribute amounts representing distributions from other qualified defined benefit or contribution plans.

The Company contributes 50% of each participant’s contribution to the Plan, up to a maximum of 6% of the participant’s total compensation.

(d) Participant Accounts

Each participant’s account is credited with the participant’s contributions, allocations of Company matching contributions, Plan earnings or losses and is charged with an allocation of administrative expenses. Allocations are based on participant compensation or account balances, as defined. The benefit to which a participant is entitled is the benefit that can be provided from the participant’s vested account balance.

(e) Vesting

Participants are immediately vested in their contributions and any earnings thereon. Vesting in the Company’s contribution portion of their accounts is based on years of continuous service. Participants are 50% vested up until they reach 3 years of service. Thereafter, participants are 100% vested.

(f) Investment Options

Participants may direct all contributions and any related earnings into a number of available investment options that vary in degree of risk and investment objective. Participants may change their investment options daily. Additionally, the Plan Administrator may change the investment options available to participants at any time.

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

NOTE 1 - DESCRIPTION OF PLAN (Continued)

(g) Notes Receivable from Participants

Participants may borrow from their fund accounts a minimum of \$1,000 up to a maximum equal to the lesser of \$50,000 or 50% of their vested account balance. Each participant is limited to two outstanding notes receivable at a time. The notes receivable are secured by the balance in the participant's account and bear interest at rates that are commensurate with rates charged by other lenders on similar notes receivable. The interest rate for notes receivable outstanding at December 31, 2023 range from 4.25% to 9.50%. Principal and interest repayments are made ratably through payroll deductions over a period not to exceed five years unless the notes receivables were used to purchase a primary residence in which case the notes receivable terms may exceed five years.

(h) Payment of Benefits

On termination of service, death, disability, or retirement, a participant will receive their benefits as a lump sum amount equal to the value of the participant's vested interest in his or her account, unless they elect to receive their benefits in the form of installments. Additionally, under certain circumstances of financial hardship, the participant is allowed to withdraw funds from the Plan.

(i) Expenses

Certain administrative expenses of the Plan are paid by the Plan as provided in the Plan agreement. Certain other administrative expenses of the Plan are paid by the Plan Sponsor. Investment expenses are charged against the Plan's earnings on investments.

(j) Forfeited Accounts

Forfeitures of terminated participants' non-vested accounts are used to pay administrative expenses or reduce the future matching contributions of the Company. The balance of forfeited accounts was not significant at December 31, 2023 and 2022.

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements of the Plan were prepared using the accrual basis of accounting. The Plan follows accounting standards set by the Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB"). The FASB sets accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America ("GAAP").

(b) Contributions

Contributions from Plan participants and the matching contributions from the Company are recorded in the year in which the employee contributions are withheld from compensation.

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

(c) Use of Accounting Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with GAAP requires the Plan Administrator to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of net assets available for benefits and changes therein. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

(d) Investment Valuation and Income Recognition

The Plan's investments are reported at fair value. The fair value of a financial instrument is the amount that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date (the exit price).

Purchases and sales of securities are recorded on a trade date basis. Dividends are recorded on the ex-dividend date. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Net appreciation includes the Plan's gains and losses on investments bought and sold as well as held during the year.

(e) Notes Receivable from Participants

Notes receivable from participants are measured at their unpaid principal balance plus any accrued but unpaid interest. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Related fees are recorded as administrative expenses and are expensed when they are incurred. No allowance for credit losses has been recorded as of December 31, 2023 and 2022. If a participant ceases to make loan repayments and the Plan Administrator deems the participant loan to be in default, the participant loan balance is reduced, and a benefit payment is recorded.

(f) Risks and Uncertainties

The Plan invests in various investment securities. Investment securities are exposed to various risks, such as interest rate, market, and credit risks. Market risks include global events which could impact the value of investment securities, such as a pandemic or international conflict. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the values of securities will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect participants' account balances and the amount reported in the statement of net assets available for benefits.

At December 31, 2023 and 2022, one investment held by the Plan comprised approximately 39% and 46% of the Plan's total investments at fair value, respectively.

(g) Payment of Benefits

Benefits are recorded when paid.

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS (Unaudited)

The Plan Administrator has elected the method of annual reporting compliance permitted by 29 CFR 2520.103-8 of the Department of Labor's Rules and Regulations for Reporting and Disclosure under ERISA. Accordingly, Ascensus, the certifying entity of the Plan, has provided certification that the financial information included in the financial statements and supplemental schedule as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, and for the year ended December 31, 2023, provided to the Plan is complete and accurate. The information as to investment assets and transactions therein, and investment income (loss) included in the accompanying financial statements and supplemental schedule as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, and for the year ended December 31, 2023, is covered by such certifications and has not been audited by independent auditors.

NOTE 4 - FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

GAAP establishes a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1 measurements) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs in which little or no market data exists (Level 3 measurements). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy under GAAP are described below:

Basis of Fair Value Measurement

Level 1 - Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets that are accessible at the measurement date for identical, unrestricted assets or liabilities.

Level 2 - Quoted prices in markets that are not considered to be active or financial instruments for which all significant inputs are observable, either directly or indirectly.

Level 3 - Prices or valuations that require inputs that are both significant to the fair value measurement and unobservable.

The asset or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques maximize the use of relevant observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

Following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets measured at fair value.

Mutual Funds

Mutual funds represent investments with various investment managers. The fair values of these investments are determined by reference to the fund's underlying assets, which are principally marketable equity and fixed income securities. Shares held in mutual funds traded on national securities exchanges are valued at the net asset value ("NAV") as of December 31, 2023, and 2022. It is not probable that the mutual funds will be sold at amounts that differ materially from the NAV of shares sold.

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

NOTE 4 - FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (Continued)

Common Collective Trust

The Plan holds a common collective trust fund, the Putnam Stable Value Fund 25bps (the “Stable Return Fund”). The Plan’s interest in the common collective trust fund is based on information reported by the investment advisor using the audited financial statements of the common collective trust fund at year end. The investment income is allocated to participants based on their proportionate share of the net assets of the fund. Units of the Stable Return Fund are valued at NAV based on the last reported sales price of the underlying investments held.

The Stable Return Fund is designed to provide safety of principal with consistency of returns with minimal volatility by employing a strategy of investing in investment contracts and security-backed contracts while employing broad diversification among contract issuers and underlying securities. The Plan Sponsor is able to redeem the investment in the Stable Return Fund by providing a 12-month notice. There are no other significant restrictions on the ability to redeem the investment.

In accordance with GAAP, common collective trust funds held by a defined-contribution plan are required to be reported at fair value unless the Plan has elected to present the investment using the NAV as a practical expedient, as noted with the Stable Return Fund. The statements of net assets available for Plan benefits as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, present the fair value of the investment.

The tables below represent fair value measurement hierarchy of the Plan investment assets at fair value as of December 31:

	<u>2023</u>				
	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>NAV(*)</u>	<u>Total</u>
Mutual Funds	\$ 2,442,350	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,442,350
Common Collective Trust	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,588,335</u>	<u>1,588,335</u>
Total Fair Value Investments	<u>\$ 2,442,350</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,588,335</u>	<u>\$ 4,030,685</u>

	<u>2022</u>				
	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>NAV(*)</u>	<u>Total</u>
Mutual Funds	\$ 1,830,306	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,830,306
Common Collective Trust	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,538,533</u>	<u>1,538,533</u>
Total Fair Value Investments	<u>\$ 1,830,306</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,538,533</u>	<u>\$ 3,368,839</u>

(*) Certain investments that are measured at fair value using the NAV per share (or its equivalent) practical expedient have not been categorized in the fair value hierarchy. The fair value amounts presented in the tables above are intended to permit reconciliation of the fair value hierarchy to the amounts presented in the statements of net assets available for Plan benefits.

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022

NOTE 5 - RELATED PARTIES AND PARTY-IN-INTEREST TRANSACTIONS

Certain Plan investments are managed by Ascensus, the certifying entity of the Plan and therefore, these transactions qualify as party-in-interest. Notes receivable from participants are also defined by ERISA as party-in-interest transactions.

NOTE 6 - PLAN TERMINATION

Although it has not expressed any intent to do so, the Company has the right under the Plan to discontinue its contributions at any time and to terminate the Plan subject to the provisions of ERISA. In the event a decision is made by the Plan Administrator to terminate the Plan, all participants shall receive full distributions of the balances in their accounts.

NOTE 7 - INCOME TAX STATUS

The Plan is based on the Prototype Standardized 401(k) Profit Sharing Plan and Trust Document of Wachovia Bank, N.A., a subsidiary of Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., which received a favorable opinion letter from the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") dated June 30, 2020, stating that the Prototype Plan was designed in accordance with the provisions of the IRC. Accordingly, the Plan's net investment income (loss) is exempt from income taxes. The Company believes that the Plan continues to qualify and to operate as designed.

NOTE 8 - SECURE ACT 2.0

On December 23, 2022, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 which included SECURE Act 2.0. SECURE Act 2.0 contains over 90 new retirement provisions, with varying effective dates through 2027. Since SECURE Act 2.0 provisions include both required and optional elements, the Plan Administrator will determine the optional provisions to elect and amend the Plan document accordingly. Most of the significant provisions will become effective in 2024 and thereafter. Accordingly, there is no material impact to the Plan's 2023 financial statements.

NOTE 9 - SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Management has evaluated subsequent events through October 10, 2024, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
SCHEDULE H, LINE 4i - SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT END OF YEAR)
DECEMBER 31, 2023

EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 03-0493527
PLAN NUMBER: 006
FORM: 5500

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Identity of issue, borrower, lessor, or similar party	Description of investment, including maturity date, rate of interest, collateral, par or maturity value	Cost**	Current Value	
Common Collective Trust:				
Putnam	Putnam Stable Value Fund 25bps		\$	1,588,335
Mutual Funds:				
Vanguard	Vanguard 500 Index Adm			287,539
Vanguard	Vanguard Core Bond Adm			59,593
Vanguard	Vanguard Growth Index Adm			99,159
Vanguard	Vanguard Equity Income Adm			80,662
Vanguard	Vanguard Mid Cap Index Adm			315,304
Vanguard	Vanguard Balanced Index Adm			68,888
Vanguard	Vanguard High Yield Corp Adm			16,578
Vanguard	Vanguard Small-Cap Index Adm			33,063
Vanguard	Vanguard Real Estate Index Adm			48,768
Vanguard	Vanguard International Value Inv			21,099
Vanguard	Vanguard Developed Mkts Index Adm			58,348
Vanguard	Vanguard International Growth Adm			112,423
Vanguard	Vanguard Total Intl Bond Index Adm			10,832
Vanguard	Vanguard Interm-Term Bond Index Adm			88,658
Vanguard	Vanguard Small-Cap Growth Index Adm			32,739
Vanguard	Vanguard Emerging Mkts Stock Idx Adm			29,890
Vanguard	Vanguard Inflation-Protected Sec Adm			35,229
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Vanguard	Vanguard Target Retirement 2030			332,175
Vanguard	Vanguard Target Retirement 2035			146,944
Vanguard	Vanguard Target Retirement 2040			13,019
Vanguard	Vanguard Target Retirement 2045			33,160
Vanguard	Vanguard Target Retirement 2050			49,121
Vanguard	Vanguard Target Retirement 2055			20,987
Vanguard	Vanguard Target Retirement 2060			18,003
Vanguard	Vanguard Target Retirement 2065			3,229
				<u>2,442,350</u>
Notes Receivable:				
* Participant Loans	Notes Receivable with variable maturities and interest rates from 4.25% to 9.50%			340,972
			\$	<u>4,371,657</u>

* Party-in-interest as defined by ERISA

** Cost information has not been included in Column (d) because all investments are participant directed

Form 5500 Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	Annual Return/Report of Employee Benefit Plan This form is required to be filed for employee benefit plans under sections 104 and 4065 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and sections 6057(b) and 6058(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code). ▶ Complete all entries in accordance with the instructions to the Form 5500.	OMB Nos. 1210-0110 1210-0089 2023 This Form is Open to Public Inspection
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Part I	Annual Report Identification Information
For calendar plan year 2023 or fiscal plan year beginning 01/01/2023 and ending 12/31/2023	

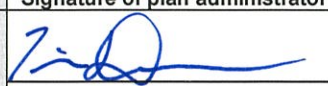
A This return/report is for:	☐ a multiemployer plan	☐ a multiple-employer plan (Filers checking this box must provide participating employer information in accordance with the form instructions.)
	☒ a single-employer plan	☐ a DFE (specify) _____
B This return/report is:	☐ the first return/report	☐ the final return/report
	☐ an amended return/report	☐ a short plan year return/report (less than 12 months)
C If the plan is a collectively-bargained plan, check here.	☒	
D Check box if filing under:	☒ Form 5558	☐ automatic extension
	☐ special extension (enter description)	☐ the DFVC program
E If this is a retroactively adopted plan permitted by SECURE Act section 201, check here.	☐	

Part II	Basic Plan Information—enter all requested information
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1a Name of plan SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN	1b Three-digit plan number (PN) ▶ 006
	1c Effective date of plan 01/01/2000
2a Plan sponsor's name (employer, if for a single-employer plan) Mailing address (include room, apt., suite no. and street, or P.O. Box) City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code (if foreign, see instructions) SOUTHERN STATES, LLC 30 GEORGIA AVENUE HAMPTON GA 30228	2b Employer Identification Number (EIN) 03-0493527
	2c Plan Sponsor's telephone number 770-946-4562
	2d Business code (see instructions) 335900

Caution: A penalty for the late or incomplete filing of this return/report will be assessed unless reasonable cause is established.

Under penalties of perjury and other penalties set forth in the instructions, I declare that I have examined this return/report, including accompanying schedules, statements and attachments, as well as the electronic version of this return/report, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete.

SIGN HERE		10/15/24	TIM DUNCAN
	Signature of plan administrator	Date	Enter name of individual signing as plan administrator
SIGN HERE		10/15/24	TIM DUNCAN
	Signature of employer/plan sponsor	Date	Enter name of individual signing as employer or plan sponsor
SIGN HERE			
	Signature of DFE	Date	Enter name of individual signing as DFE

3a Plan administrator's name and address ☒ Same as Plan Sponsor		3b Administrator's EIN	
4 If the name and/or EIN of the plan sponsor or the plan name has changed since the last return/report filed for this plan, enter the plan sponsor's name, EIN, the plan name and the plan number from the last return/report: a Sponsor's name c Plan Name		3c Administrator's telephone number 4b EIN 4d PN	
5 Total number of participants at the beginning of the plan year		5	134
6 Number of participants as of the end of the plan year unless otherwise stated (welfare plans complete only lines 6a(1), 6a(2), 6b, 6c, and 6d).			
a(1) Total number of active participants at the beginning of the plan year		6a(1)	110
a(2) Total number of active participants at the end of the plan year		6a(2)	209
b Retired or separated participants receiving benefits		6b	0
c Other retired or separated participants entitled to future benefits		6c	4
d Subtotal. Add lines 6a(2), 6b, and 6c.....		6d	213
e Deceased participants whose beneficiaries are receiving or are entitled to receive benefits.		6e	0
f Total. Add lines 6d and 6e.....		6f	213
g(1) Number of participants with account balances as of the beginning of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item).....		6g(1)	132
g(2) Number of participants with account balances as of the end of the plan year (only defined contribution plans complete this item).....		6g(2)	137
h Number of participants who terminated employment during the plan year with accrued benefits that were less than 100% vested.....		6h	1
7 Enter the total number of employers obligated to contribute to the plan (only multiemployer plans complete this item)		7	
8a If the plan provides pension benefits, enter the applicable pension feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions: 2E 2F 2G 2J 2K 2T 3D			
b If the plan provides welfare benefits, enter the applicable welfare feature codes from the List of Plan Characteristics Codes in the instructions:			

9a Plan funding arrangement (check all that apply) (1) ☐ Insurance (2) ☐ Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts (3) ☒ Trust (4) ☐ General assets of the sponsor	9b Plan benefit arrangement (check all that apply) (1) ☐ Insurance (2) ☐ Code section 412(e)(3) insurance contracts (3) ☒ Trust (4) ☐ General assets of the sponsor
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10 Check all applicable boxes in 10a and 10b to indicate which schedules are attached, and, where indicated, enter the number attached. (See instructions)

a Pension Schedules (1) ☒ R (Retirement Plan Information) (2) ☐ MB (Multiemployer Defined Benefit Plan and Certain Money Purchase Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary (3) ☐ SB (Single-Employer Defined Benefit Plan Actuarial Information) - signed by the plan actuary (4) ☐ DCG (Individual Plan Information) - Number Attached _____ (5) ☐ MEP (Multiple-Employer Retirement Plan Information)	b General Schedules (1) ☒ H (Financial Information) (2) ☐ I (Financial Information - Small Plan) (3) ☐ A (Insurance Information) - Number Attached _____ (4) ☒ C (Service Provider Information) (5) ☐ D (DFE/Participating Plan Information) (6) ☐ G (Financial Transaction Schedules)
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Part III Form M-1 Compliance Information (to be completed by welfare benefit plans)

11a If the plan provides welfare benefits, was the plan subject to the Form M-1 filing requirements during the plan year? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) ☐ Yes ☐ No

If "Yes" is checked, complete lines 11b and 11c.

11b Is the plan currently in compliance with the Form M-1 filing requirements? (See instructions and 29 CFR 2520.101-2.) ☐ Yes ☐ No

11c Enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the 2023 Form M-1 annual report. If the plan was not required to file the 2023 Form M-1 annual report, enter the Receipt Confirmation Code for the most recent Form M-1 that was required to be filed under the Form M-1 filing requirements. (Failure to enter a valid Receipt Confirmation Code will subject the Form 5500 filing to rejection as incomplete.)

Receipt Confirmation Code _____

SOUTHERN STATES, LLC HOURLY EMPLOYEES SAVINGS PLAN
SCHEDULE H, LINE 4i - SCHEDULE OF ASSETS (HELD AT END OF YEAR)
DECEMBER 31, 2023

EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 03-0493527
PLAN NUMBER: 006
FORM: 5500

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