COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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This Commission wishes to acknowledge the dedicated service and leadership of Dr. Martha Kime Piper, late president of Winthrop College and Vice Chairman of the Commission on the Future of South Carolina.
FINAL REPORT OF
THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE
OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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The recommendations of this document reflect a consensus of the members of the Commission on the Future of South Carolina. It should not be assumed that every member of the Commission subscribes to every recommendation.
Dear Fellow South Carolinians,

In 1986, the Commission on the Future of the South demonstrated the value of long-range governmental planning with its report, "Halfway Home and a Long Way to Go." Shortly thereafter, Governor Carroll Campbell answered my request for a similar planning device, with an executive order creating the Commission on the Future of South Carolina.

I believe that this report of the Commission on the Future of South Carolina is an excellent example of the bipartisan spirit in which the Commission was created. It should also be noted that the work of the Commission, including the Assembly on the Future of South Carolina, has been privately funded.

Winston Churchill once said, "The price of greatness is responsibility." South Carolina can only achieve greatness in a global sense if it plans, and is prepared, for the future. The Commission on the Future of South Carolina, and the hundreds of people involved with the Commission, assumed that responsibility and have given South Carolinians a document that represents a comprehensive strategy for our state's advance into the Twenty-First Century.

Sincerely,

Nick Theodore

Nick Theodore
THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

CREATION AND MISSION

Upon request of Lieutenant Governor Nick Theodore, Governor Carroll A. Campbell, Jr. created the Commission on the Future of South Carolina by Executive Order (#87-11) on April 16, 1987. Its membership consisted of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, 11 state government agency heads, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and 16 at-large citizen members, eight appointed by the Governor and eight appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. Lieutenant Governor Nick Theodore chaired the Commission. Staff for the Commission was provided by the Lieutenant Governor's Office. The Coordinating Council for Economic Development provided funding, with private funds generously contributed.

As stated in the Executive Order, the Commission existed for several reasons. First, South Carolina is in the midst of profound and widespread change – in economics, in population, in its relationship with the nation and the world community. These changes have reshaped the face of the state in the past several decades, and appear to be continuing unabated into the 21st century, now only a few short years away. Second, in order to best shape its destiny, the state needs a comprehensive strategy to insure that growth, development, and change are channeled in proper directions to benefit South Carolina and all its citizens. Finally, such a long-range plan should be developed through the initiative and efforts of a nonpartisan citizens' commission, with membership drawn from both the public and private sectors, and reflecting a wide range of political and philosophical viewpoints.

The Commission on the Future of South Carolina held its initial organizational meeting on September 23, 1987, in Columbia. Governor Campbell addressed the Commission and challenged its members to have the vision to outline a path for the State as it approaches 21st century. He urged the Commission to remember the human component of change and progress, and to produce recommendations that would lead to economic, educational, and social improvements for the benefit of the children of today, who are our legacy for tomorrow.

Lieutenant Governor and Commission Chairman Nick Theodore expressed similar sentiments in his introductory remarks to the Commission. He praised the caliber of the Commission members, thanked them for their willingness to devote the time and effort necessary to make the work of the Commission a success, and challenged them to be farsighted in planning for the State’s future. He stressed that today’s solutions won’t solve tomorrow’s problems, and urged creativity and innovation in designing the vehicle to transport the state into the next century.

The Commission on the Future of South Carolina accepted the charge and the challenge presented by Governor Campbell and Lieutenant Governor Theodore. It has
engaged in an intensive study of the long-term issues and trends that will shape the state’s future in the 21st century and beyond, debated and decided upon recommended courses of action for state and local policymakers to consider and adopt, and set forth a process and mechanism to compile, publicize, pursue, and oversee the Commission’s work. The state and its policymakers have the results of the hard work and thoughtful consideration of the Commission and the participants in the Public Forum and the Assembly on the Future of South Carolina as they determine policies and chart courses of action for South Carolina’s future.

This report documents the work of the Commission, highlights the information presented by a variety of sources, and presents the recommendations of the Commission after nearly a year and a half of study and debate. The Commissioners hope that this report - written in a more concise, understandable and accessible style than so many government reports, will be circulated widely throughout the State and will lay the foundation for wide-ranging and productive debate about South Carolina’s future course.

Much data has been analyzed; many long-term trends have been identified. Concrete, achievable recommendations have been made. The Commission on the Future of South Carolina hopes this process will be the catalyst for the positive attitudes and progressive programs South Carolina needs as it moves toward the 21st century.

BUILDING A BASE – THE BACKGROUND PRESENTATION PROCESS

One of the Commission’s first tasks was to give all Commissioners, each an expert in his or her own field, a common base of knowledge from which to assess the state’s needs, possibilities, and priorities. Seven Commission meetings were devoted to hearing presentations from a variety of experts on the state’s history, current conditions, and future needs in a variety of areas. A brief summary of the highlights of these presentations will demonstrate the breadth of the Commission’s background preparation.

After meeting in September 1987 to organize and lay the procedural groundwork, the Commission met in Columbia in October 1987 for an overview of South Carolina from the national, regional, and state perspective. Dr. Jesse White, Executive Director of the Southern Growth Policies Board (SGPB), set the tone by discussing South Carolina in the context of the Southern region and its relation to the rest of the nation. He stressed that South Carolina must expand its national and international horizons and must realize it is affected as much by what happens in Latin America or the Far East as by what happens in Washington, D.C. or California.

The SGPB recently conducted the same process on a regional level that the Commission on the Future of South Carolina is undertaking on a state level. SGPB’s widely-acclaimed final report, “Halfway Home and a Long Way to Go”, contained 10 concrete objectives for the South to attain by 1992. They are:

1) Provide a nationally competitive education for all Southern students;
2) Mobilize resources to eliminate adult functional illiteracy;
3) Prepare a flexible, globally competitive work force;
4) Strengthen society as a whole by strengthening at-risk families;
5) Increase the economic development role of higher education;
6) Increase the South’s capacity to generate and use technology;
7) Implement new economic development strategies aimed at homegrown business and industry;
8) Enhance the South’s natural and cultural resources;
9) Develop pragmatic leaders with a global vision; and
10) Improve the structure and performance of state and local government.

Many of these objectives found their way into the discussion and recommendations of the Commission on the Future of South Carolina, as did Dr. White’s advice that a body such as the Commission must produce a clear set of well-defined, achievable objectives and a process for their adoption and implementation if it is to achieve the fullest measure of success.

With a better understanding of the state’s place relative to its Southern and national neighbors, the Commissioners heard from Dr. Bobby Bowers, the Director of the Division of Research and Statistical Services of the State Budget and Control Board. He discussed the demographic changes taking place in the state that are projected to occur by the early years of the 21st century. He noted that the state’s population is growing rapidly, from 2.59 million people in 1970 to 3.12 million in 1980, to a projected 4 million by the year 2000. This population growth is not evenly distributed across the state, however. The vast majority of the growth is occurring in the state’s metropolitan and coastal counties, with little growth or even actual population loss occurring in the majority of the state’s counties.

Dr. Bowers also pointed out that the other great factor affecting the state’s population is the significant aging of its citizens. South Carolina’s age distribution has begun to change; this is projected to continue over the next several decades, with the average age of the state’s residents expected to increase from 28 years in 1980 to 35.7 years by the year 2000. This is a result both of the lower birth rates of recent years and the larger numbers of South Carolinians living longer lives. This growing elderly population will have important ramifications for the state’s future in the areas of taxation, health care, housing, and employment.

The next presenter, Dan Mackey, Executive Director of the South Carolina Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR), used the state’s changing demographic and economic features as a starting point to venture some predictions.
on the changes that such trends will bring to South Carolina. He presented the Commissioners with a recent study by the ACIR which attempted to project the future form and functions of state and local government in South Carolina in the year 2000. According to the study, "Roles and Relationships: South Carolina Government in the Year 2000", eight long-term problems or issues require the attention of the state's policy leaders:

1) The state's aging population;
2) The state's changing work force;
3) Need for a new business climate for economic development;
4) Need for growth management in the state;
5) Infrastructure development needs;
6) State/local government relation issues;
7) Alternative government service provision mechanisms;
8) Environmental issues, especially coastal zone management.

Mr. Mackey suggested several additional issues for the Commission on the Future to consider. These included the vital need for leadership development at all levels of government, the growing urban/rural dichotomy in the state's population and their needs, efficiency versus equity in allocating economic development resources, and adult illiteracy. He urged that the Commission stress cooperative intergovernmental efforts in planning for the state's future.

With this general overview in place, the Commission turned its attention to the vital area of education at its November 1987 meeting. The fact that education has become a priority is a very good sign for the future, according to the four presenters at this session.

The Commissioners heard that primary and secondary education in South Carolina face two general challenges, both of which must be met if the state is to provide its citizens with educations adequate to meet the needs of a changing world. The first challenge is to successfully implement educational reforms and improvements already enacted and for which the state has gained national attention. The second challenge is to provide quality education to students who will, demographers tell us, come increasingly from minority, low per-capita income, single-parent households which put them at high risk of failure in the educational system. There also may be a looming crisis in leadership in the state's school systems as perhaps half of the administrative leadership of the school districts may leave in the next five to seven years for careers in other fields.

Statistics indicate that today's average worker will change jobs seven times and careers three times in the course of a working life, requiring continuous retraining and reeducation for new careers. In addition, because of the rapid pace of technological developments and the changing nature of the workplace, by the year 2000 it is projected that
some 70 percent of all jobs will require at least some post-secondary (beyond high school) education, while 30 percent will require at least a bachelor’s degree. South Carolina does not currently produce sufficient numbers of graduates with these credentials. Higher education will play an increasingly important role in preparing the state’s citizens for future economic opportunities. We must face the fact, however, that South Carolina’s higher education participation rate of 30 percent (the percentage of the population aged 18 to 24 enrolled in post-secondary study) lags behind the Southeastern and United States averages. This demands improvement.

At its December 1987 meeting, the Commission learned the important features of the state’s current economic system and prospects for the future of the South Carolina economy. Five presenters covered a wide variety of economic topics, ranging from the state’s place in the world economy to the importance of tourism to the state’s economic well-being. Dr. Max Lennon, President of Clemson University, discussed the importance of thinking of the State’s economy in global terms and the insufficiency of continuing to be attentive only to Southeastern or national economic factors. He cited a number of factors affecting the nation’s economic future, including:

- The proportion of the U.S. labor force aged 16-24 will shrink from 30 percent in 1985 to 16 percent by the year 2000;

- An estimated 29 percent of the net growth in the U.S. workforce over the next 15 years will occur from expanded minority-group participation;

- The high school dropout rate in the U.S. is running 25-30 percent for all students, but surpasses 50 percent for minority groups in some areas;

- Women will account for 63 percent of new entries into the nation’s work force by the year 2000;

- By the year 2000, 2-3 percent of the nation’s work force will need retraining annually;

- Some 13 percent of all adults in the U.S. are functionally illiterate.

In the future, the United States, and in particular South Carolina, cannot compete with the rest of the world solely on the basis of cheap labor. In order to be competitive in the 21st century’s international economy, the United States and South Carolina must compete intellectually and technically with well-educated and hard-working peoples around the world. World knowledge and understanding, especially foreign language skills, will be crucial to South Carolina’s attempt to obtain its share of the world’s economic benefits.

Other presenters discussed the state’s current economic trends in more detailed local terms. South Carolina’s economy has, over the course of the past several decades, shifted from an almost exclusive dependence on textiles and agriculture to a more
broadly diversified economy consisting of several types of manufacturing, a growing financial and professional sector, and rapidly expanding service and wholesale and retail trade sectors.

Agriculture, the backbone of the state’s economy through the late 19th century, has drastically declined in importance as an employer, although it is still an important sector in terms of economic activity generated. It remains especially vital as one of the few industries available in many of the state’s rural areas. The textile industry, too, is still a major foundation of the state’s economy. Though it has experienced significant difficulties during the 1970s and 1980s, it has emerged as a restructured, modernized industry with prospects for good profitability in the future. Tourism is a booming sector which now ranks as one of the state’s top industries.

The Commission learned that economic growth and prosperity are not evenly distributed across South Carolina (90 percent of all jobs created in the state between 1980 and 1986 were located in only 14 urban and coastal counties.) It was also noted that small businesses (those employing fewer than 100 people) account for over 70 percent of jobs created in the state each year. This points out the need to support and nurture this particular sector in order to maximize economic opportunity for all South Carolinians. Finally, it was pointed out that the state’s former exclusive focus on industrial development and recruiting branch manufacturing plants from companies in other parts of the country has been expanded to include encouragement homegrown small businesses and recruiting research and development facilities, regional and national corporate headquarters, and high-technology manufacturing industries.

In January 1988 the Commission met on the campus of Winthrop College in Rock Hill. This was part of a policy of convening Commission meetings in all parts of South Carolina to give the Commission the widest possible recognition and to expose the Commissioners to the state’s diverse geography and population. The dual topics for January were state and local government and transportation issues and trends.

Regarding state government in South Carolina, it was pointed out that South Carolina has a heavily state-oriented service delivery system compared to some other states where more services are funded and provided by local governments. South Carolina has only two-thirds of the fiscal resources of the average state with which to provide needed government services. South Carolina’s per capita personal income level rose from 38 percent of the national average in 1929 to 78 percent in 1974, but then declined to 76% in 1985. These figures are important if for no other reason than to demonstrate that the magnitude of the state’s expenditure needs is staggering.

It was estimated that capital improvement funds needed by state and local governments for items such as water and sewer facilities, highways, and schools already total some $3.9 billion, while the state’s annual capital improvements appropriation is far less than $100 million.

Betty Jo Rhea, Mayor of Rock Hill, represented the views of the state’s municipalities. She pointed out that the state’s rapidly growing population is also urbanizing rapidly, as the vast majority of the state’s population growth is taking place in or immediately
adjacent to the state’s larger cities. By the year 2000 it is projected that seven of every 10 South Carolinians will live in 15 metropolitan and coastal counties. Ms. Rhea listed three vital needs of the state’s municipalities, including:

- A balanced revenue system to prevent continued excessive dependence on the property tax;

- Modification of the state’s current restrictive annexation laws to provide for more orderly expansion of municipalities to encompass suburban development feeding off municipalities;

- Allowing cities and counties to serve as the base for delivery of services to the state’s citizens. General purpose local government needs to be strengthened, and recognition is needed that special purpose districts, once useful tools for providing urban services to unserved areas, are now an impediment to strengthening city and county government.

Mary Barry, Chairman of the Lancaster County Council, represented the interests of counties. She pointed out that county government as we know it is a relatively recent creation, existing only since the Home Rule Act of 1975. Like cities, counties are creations of the state, existing at the pleasure of the General Assembly. Home rule county government is still in its infancy, struggling both to define and implement its role in the public service delivery system and to establish its credibility as a full governmental partner in the minds of the state’s citizens and other governmental leaders. Ms. Barry named three vital needs for counties:

- A clearer understanding of the role of counties as local service providers, especially with regard to limitations on county powers still existing under the Home Rule Act and with regard to the status of special purpose districts as alternative service providers with the power to preempt county service provision plans;

- Fiscal autonomy via revenue alternatives to the unpopular and overworked property tax;

- Understanding the importance of counties in the state’s economic development strategy, including the fact that economic development efforts will be stymied by inadequate infrastructure (roads, water and sewer facilities, recreational resources) for which county government is frequently the provider.

Three presenters covered a variety of transportation topics. Regarding the state’s highways, for instance, vehicle miles traveled in South Carolina double approximately every 18 years, meaning the state’s slowly expanding highway system is becoming more and more overburdened. Since it is unlikely the highway system can or should expand to serve completely the rapidly growing demand, other methods of relieving the burden
on the state's roads, such as flex-time work hours, car pools, and more and better mass transportation, will have to be used more frequently. The gasoline tax increases that went into effect in 1987 and 1988 are tied to using the funds to implement an economic development highway plan for the state.

Regarding ports, it was pointed out that the port of Charleston is the third largest container shipping port on the East and Gulf Coasts of the United States, handling over $8 billion worth of cargo from 2,000 vessels in 1986. The ports play a crucial role in internationalizing South Carolina's economy and providing other domestic economic opportunities, and will require further investment in the form of harbor dredging, expanded dockside facilities, and better highway access in order for the ports to be the economic tool they can be.

Regarding airports, a similar theme of investing in facilities for economic development success was heard. The state is making serious efforts to attract better commercial airline service by inducing an airline to establish a hub here, but further investment in the form of second runways and terminal and parking expansions will be necessary at the state's commercial airports to make them suitable for hub status. Likewise, general aviation airports that support private and corporate aircraft, now available in 45 of the 46 counties, will require upgraded facilities and maintenance to remain competitive with facilities in other states. South Carolina's airport system plan is underfunded currently by approximately $8 million per year, making needed investment difficult.

In February 1988 the Commission continued its travels, meeting in Aiken on the campus of the University of South Carolina – Aiken. The theme for the session was the wide variety of human needs-related topics, including social service issues, health and human service trends, and corrections and penology.

The six presenters all took pains to point out the inter-connectedness of the problems and solutions in these human service areas. The various state departments serve many of the same clientele, whose economic, educational, health and social statuses often predispose them to a variety of problems crossing institutional lines of responsibility. South Carolina, for instance, has one of the nation's highest rates of teenage mothers on welfare, while 56 percent of the state's Aid to Families with Dependent Children caseload is comprised of households headed by women who were mothers before the age of 20. Over 70 percent of the babies born to South Carolina mothers aged 14 to 17 are illegitimate.

Presenters explained that teenage parents often drop out of the educational system and take low-paying jobs and public assistance to support too-early families. The children of such families often suffer from health and nutrition problems because of their impoverished circumstances, tend to do poorly in school because of physical problems and a home environment not understanding or supportive of education, drop out of school before graduating – thus hindering the chances of finding a responsible, well-paying job and achieving economic advancement – and often end up back on public assistance or in trouble with the law as a result of all these problems. Governmental programs dealing with isolated facets of each individual's situation will
offer no real solutions to the myriad of problems faced by these citizens until the root causes of poverty and social and educational deprivation are combatted on a wholesale basis.

One presenter postulated that there are three ways in which the state can spend money on state human and social service programs. The first is for prevention programs. The second is for appraisal of needs. The third is for the mitigation of failures. South Carolina is spending so much of its resources on mitigating failures and taking care of immediate crisis needs that it has little, if anything, left over for evaluating needs and enacting preventive programs that would save the funds now needed to deal with crises. The need for state agencies to coordinate their programs to provide the maximum benefit to their clients and for the state to appropriate sufficient matching funds to leverage the maximum federal funds available was also stressed.

Regarding the state corrections process, a presenter underscored the importance of viewing the criminal justice system as just that — a "system" of interconnected parts, each of which affects all other parts. He suggested the way to mitigate the effects of South Carolina’s overcrowded criminal justice system is to divert as many cases as possible from the full court/corrections process, via such methods as mediation and arbitration of nonviolent and acquaintance/relative offenses, numerous alternatives to incarceration for all but clearly dangerous offenders, and state policies encouraging safety and self-protection investments that will reduce the workload on law enforce ment officials.

Presenters also told the Commission that South Carolina has one of the highest incarceration rates in the nation in both the adult correctional and the juvenile detention systems. Both systems are overburdened, and the adult system is already under court order to reduce overcrowding. Several alternatives to continued incarceration are already in use, including a variety of probation, community service, and victim restitution programs. All these alternatives play a part in reducing or delaying the need for building new prisons or further overcrowding of existing facilities. These efforts, however, may not continue to offset the consequences of lengthier and more mandatory sentences for offenses like driving under the influence and illegal drug use.

Once again, it was stressed that the majority of those processed through the criminal justice and juvenile corrections systems come from at-risk backgrounds of poverty, unemployment, school dropout, and illiteracy. They have been clients of the state’s social and human service agencies. When these programs have been unsuccessful in overcoming the effects of at-risk backgrounds, these people eventually end up in court and are often incarcerated at great expense in the state’s already packed prisons. Long-range solutions to the root causes of poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy are the only solutions to the state’s corrections problems.

In March 1988 the Commission convened in Charleston, an appropriate setting for discussing environmental and coastal development issues. The point was made that the overall health of a state’s citizens and the condition of its natural environment are two factors of vital importance to investors seeking a location to operate a profitable busi-
ness enterprise in a pleasant and productive environment. Eventually, the demands of private enterprise may bring about much needed progressive changes in the state’s policies and attitudes toward preventive health and environmental programs. It will be in the best interest of businesses to encourage state policies that will ensure the health and well-being of the state’s available work force. Once again, foresighted preventive care is far less expensive than emergency remediation programs.

The issue of coastal protection versus coastal development is, of course, a perennial one, with valid arguments to be made on both sides. South Carolina’s coastal region is beginning to strain under the dual pressures of both permanent population growth (projected to be an average of 35 percent in all coastal counties and much higher in particular places by the year 2000) and tremendous growth in the transient tourist industry. On peak midsummer days, the population of the South Carolina coast may exceed 1 million. All types of public facilities, from very visible roads, parking lots and boating facilities to less obvious water and sewer plants, are bearing the brunt of this explosive increase. Slightly less than 50 percent of the state’s 163 miles of coastline are already developed, with approximately 42 percent in public ownership and facilities and approximately 8 percent in as yet undeveloped private ownership.

The challenge, as always, will be to balance the legitimate rights of property owners to develop their property for an appropriate return on their investment with the public’s right to prohibit the destruction of the beaches, dunes, and wetlands that are the common heritage of all South Carolinians. South Carolina has traditionally had a much weaker coastal management program than states such as Florida and North Carolina. But it is hoped that the beach management plan adopted by the General Assembly in 1988 will be the start of a successful balancing process that produces an acceptable consensus to use the coast appropriately while conserving its natural processes and beauty.

In April 1988 the Commission traveled to the Grand Strand area to meet on the campus of Coastal Carolina College in Conway. The topics were state and local government structure, trends and issues in the arts, and taxation and government finance. Seven speakers made presentations to the Commission.

Regarding state government structure, South Carolina has traditionally operated under a very decentralized system, with power widely dispersed among the General Assembly and a multitude of semi-autonomous boards and commissions. The governor has very little formal authority, and most of what administrative power there is must be exercised in conjunction with the Budget and Control Board.

Recommendations for structural change in South Carolina state government predominantly involve strengthening the governor and his executive powers and strengthening the policy-making ability of the General Assembly. These recommendations include adopting the "short ballot" (that is, having the governor appoint rather than the citizens elect a number of officers of administrative departments), improving staff capabilities and compensation, and professionalizing the legislature.
Regarding local governments, it was suggested once again that it is in the best interests of the state to ensure the fiscal health of its subdivisions by providing alternative revenue sources. Another proposed improvement would combat fragmentation in local government by allocating governmental resources and powers on a functional, rather than fragmented jurisdictional, basis. This would involve more intergovernmental cooperation and fostering a deeper sense of regionalism in local government affairs.

Regarding special purpose districts, of which there are by conservative definition over 300 and by wider definition over 500 in South Carolina, it was suggested by a representative of special purpose districts that there is still a place for such districts in the governmental scene. It was argued that these districts provide an alternative service provision mechanism for counties which find they cannot fund the requested level of service because of constitutional indebtedness limits. It was also suggested that the creation of special service districts by county governments provides a means by which counties may deal with the statutory requirement that all services provided out of general fund revenues must be provided county-wide or may not be provided at all. Special purpose districts, it was argued, provide the mechanism to provide some services only in certain areas where they are desired and where there is a willingness to pay for them.

When the subject turned to trends in the arts, the theme of relevance to economic development was struck once again. Cultural amenities and a lively arts community were touted as vital ingredients in the state’s economic development efforts. In fact, presenters made the point that the cultural “industry” itself employs over 10,000 people and generates direct spending of over $127 million and indirect spending of over $244 million per year, making it a major economic force in its own right. The state is involved in development of the arts through the South Carolina Arts Commission and its programs and grants for both individual artists and arts organizations. The next major area of emphasis discussed was arts education in the elementary and secondary schools. It was argued that such programs are just as important for the overall development of the intellectual and aesthetic abilities of the state’s youth as the renewed emphasis on reading and math skills, “the basics” of education reform.

For its final session at the end of the seventh and last day of background presentations, the Commission heard two speakers address the topic that perhaps more than any other was the unifying thread that ran through all the other presentations - trends and issues in taxation and other revenue raising. From the South Carolina perspective, state residents bear approximately the same overall state and local tax burden as the citizens of other states, based on the national averages. South Carolina’s tax burden is distributed a bit differently than in many other states, however.

From 1970 to 1985, South Carolina property tax revenues increased as a percentage of total tax collections, in contrast to the national trend of decreasing property tax revenues relative to sales and income tax revenues. South Carolina is still below the national average, however, in property tax burden. Conversely, sales tax revenue decreased as a proportion of the state’s total tax revenue, going against the national
necessary to chart a successful course for progress, and concerted and coordinated planning efforts are the foundation of meeting those goals.

Critical to the success of preparing for the future is leadership at all levels. The state can progress only as far as the extended vision of our most farsighted leaders of city, county, and state governments, school boards, chambers of commerce and development boards, civic, religious and community service organizations, and business enterprises - both large and small. Especially in the public sector, men and women of intelligence, education, and experience must be convinced to give of their time and effort in public service for the benefit of our local communities and the state which we all share. Their good sense and compassion will be the best guides we can follow in charting the course for our future and leaving a better state for our children to inherit. This better world will consist primarily of primary, secondary and higher educational systems that equal any in the nation, a diversified economy that is competitive nationally and internationally, and a quality of life enhanced by high quality cultural, historic, and natural institutions and resources.

PREPARING FOR ACTION – THE BACKGROUND PAPER PROCESS

The nine-month process of background presentations and the Public Forum provided the Commissioners with a solid understanding of the issues likely to be most important as South Carolina moves toward its future. The information was divided by the Commission’s Issues Committee into four major theme areas: education, the economy, the living environment, and government. In June 1988 the Issues Committee commissioned four authors or groups of authors to prepare background papers on each of these topics based on the background presentations previously made and on the authors’ own expertise for use by the participants in the Assembly on the Future.

The purpose of these papers was to provide the Assembly participants with the same basic level of knowledge in each of the topical areas that the Commissioners gained through the background presentations. The four sets of authors presented outlines of their proposed papers to the Commission at the July 1988 meeting on the campus of Furman University in Greenville. The discussion generated at that meeting gave the paper authors a better sense of their mission and of the feelings on the issues of the full Commission, and allowed for the preparation of papers that fully expressed the Commission’s understanding of the fundamental issues and important questions facing the state.

The education paper was prepared by John Norton, Executive Director of the South Carolina Center for Teacher Recruitment and Dr. James Rex, Senior Vice President for Development at the University of South Carolina. The paper was divided into four sections: 1) governance, dealing with the structure, size and powers of educational administration at the elementary, secondary, and higher education levels, 2) finance, dealing with funding systems for operations and capital improvements at all levels of education, 3) human resources, dealing with a wide variety of student, teacher, and
administrator issues, and 4) accountability, which provided an overview of current accountability measures in basic and higher education.

The government paper was written by Dr. Robert Botsch, professor of political science at the University of South Carolina - Aiken. This paper was divided into four sections: 1) background, which explained some fundamentals of South Carolina’s governmental system and political climate; 2) definition of the problems, which discussed the structural problems that prevent government from being more effective and responsive; 3) South Carolina’s values and problems, which discussed the state’s history of government and civic values and the problems that have resulted from certain civic traits; and 4) how to improve for the future, suggesting ways in which the state’s governmental system may be reformed within the limits imposed by our cultural and historical traits.

The paper covering the living environment was written by Dr. Robert Becker, Director of the Regional Resources Development Institute, and Dr. James Hite, professor of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at Clemson University. This paper was also divided into four sections. The first, "We South Carolinians", covered a variety of people-related factors, including the age, health, and location of the state’s population. The second, "Our Resources", discussed environmental issues such as water quality, waste disposal, coastal development, and others. The third section, "Bread and Roses", discussed the state’s cultural and artistic resources and their relation to the state’s overall quality of life. The fourth, "Special Places", dealt with such items as architectural heritage, natural features, and other factors that make the state a unique and special place to live.

Finally, the paper on economics was prepared by Dr. Randolph Martin of the Division of Research and the Department of Economics in the College of Business Administration of the University of South Carolina. This paper consisted of five major divisions: 1) a historical perspective on the development of the South Carolina economy, 2) an overview of employment trends in South Carolina, 3) the state’s human resources and training as they pertain to the economy, 4) substate economic issues - that is, differing economies in different parts of the state, and 5) a discussion of important issues and trends.

Using the four background papers and the background presentations to the Commission, the members of the Issues Committee formulated a series of questions to accompany each background paper. The questions formulated for each of the discussion topics were designed to elicit needed input from all representatives of various philosophies and perspectives. Some were meant to elaborate on important points that may, because of space limitations, have been touched on only briefly in the papers. Introductions and further detailed information were supplied during the Assembly.

THE ASSEMBLY ON THE FUTURE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

The Assembly on the Future of South Carolina, held October 6-9, 1988, on Hilton Head Island, was the high water mark for the citizens-at-large of South Carolina in the work-
ings of the Commission on the Future. Over 110 South Carolinians were chosen by
the Commission’s Participants Committee from among 325 applicants to participate in
the intensive four-day process. These participants reflected the diversity of the state’s
population in their gender, race, age, home region, occupation, and personal interests.
The privately financed Assembly on the Future brought together this diverse group of
South Carolinians, provided them with the same set of background materials and dis-
cussion questions, and gave them the opportunity to freely express their feelings about
the future of the state and the policies which ought to be pursued for everyone’s benefit.

The Assembly used the American Assembly process, which divides the participants
into discussion groups that remain together throughout the Assembly process. Par-
ticipants at the South Carolina Assembly were divided into four discussion groups, with
a discussion facilitator and a recorder assigned to each group. Each group discussed
simultaneously an identical set of discussion questions during the four-hour sessions
devoted to each of the four major topics: education, the economy, the living environ-
ment, and government. The staff recorded only those comments and ideas that could
be considered the consensus of each group.

After each session, the consensus statements of the four groups were collected,
reviewed, and compiled into overall consensus statements on each topic. These con-
sensus statements were compiled into a draft final report and distributed to all par-
ticipants in advance of the final session. On the last day of the Assembly, the four
discussion groups were reunited in a plenary session at which the draft final report con-
taining the consensus statements from the four sessions was considered. The As-
sembly participants considered the draft document paragraph by paragraph, line by
line. Only statements which met the test of being the consensus of the majority of the
participants were permitted to remain in the final report. Participants were free to sug-
gest amendments, additions, and deletions to any part of the report. Each suggestion
was put to a vote of the Assembly, and required majority approval to be included in the
report. At the end of the entire process, a final vote was taken to conclude the work
of the Assembly on the Future and to endorse the final report.

The report of the Assembly is an independent document for distribution in its own right,
in addition to being presented to the Commission on the Future for its consideration.
This statement of the feelings and opinions of a wide range of South Carolinians,
developed from a painstaking and thorough process of preparation, discussion, and
consensus building, should prove invaluable as a statement of the hopes and aspira-
tions of a respected group of concerned and hopeful citizens.

FINALIZING THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION

With the work of the Assembly on the Future in hand to complete the long process of
study and preparation, the Commission reached the point of preparing its final recom-
mendations on the future of South Carolina.
## THE ASSEMBLY ON THE FUTURE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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| Paula Cox        | Julie Craig | Cubby Culbertson |
| John Curry       | Thad Daise | Joe Davenport |
| Carolyn Davis    | Joe P. Dunn | June Durham |
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| Fred Samra       | Milton Sarlin | Ruth Seigler |
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| Pam Davis | Kim King | Sid Thomas |
| Lyles Glenn | Debbie Langston | Benjy Hamm |
| Peter O'Boyle | | |
At its November 1988 meeting on the campus of the University of South Carolina in Columbia, the Commission enlarged its Drafting Committee in order to incorporate the ideas and opinions of more Commission members into the draft report. The Commissioners also discussed the possibility of creating an independent body, perhaps a blue-ribbon citizens' committee, to monitor and help implement the Commission's final recommendations on an ongoing basis.

The Drafting Committee met at the AT&T Building in Columbia on November 29 and 30, 1988 to formulate recommendations to be submitted to the full Commission in December. These draft recommendations were the culmination of more than a year of intense discussion, thought, and expert opinion, plus the best judgment of more than 100 citizens who participated in the Assembly on the Future of South Carolina at Hilton Head in October 1988.

The full Commission met at the Liberty Life Corporation complex in Greenville on December 14, 1988. It adopted its final recommendations - with certain amendments, additions, and deletions to the draft report - in little more than seven hours. At that meeting the Commission also recognized the contributions of Harry Busbee of the South Carolina Department of Agriculture and Kenny Long of the State Reorganization Commission who participated in all Commission meetings and functions as designated representatives of their departments.

Finally, a professional writer and a Columbia advertising agency were employed to produce the final full report, the executive summary, and a mass-distribution brochure.

Now, after so many months of preparation, the report of the Commission on the Future of South Carolina was ready to be delivered to the people.
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

The final recommendations of the Commission were divided into the same four categories as were established during the Assembly process: education, the living environment, the economy, and government. Recommendations in each of the areas were further subdivided into three time frames: recommendations to be implemented by 1991, 1994, and 1999.

EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Complete implementation by 1991:

1. School districts in South Carolina must be consolidated/ redistricted by the legislature to an optimal size to take advantage of economies of scale and provide uniformity in local financing and apportionment of state funds. A minimum standard for district size should be established. Uniformity of board composition and selection must be established.

2. The General Assembly should propose a constitutional amendment to be submitted to the electorate for the implementation of state-conducted lotteries and/or pari-mutuel betting with the proceeds to be used for education.

3. Full formula funding must be provided for all public education, kindergarten through post-secondary.

4. The number of hours in the school day and days in the school year must be extended. This would permit time for remediation, curriculum enrichment, and supervised study time. In addition an incidental benefit would be reduction of child care needs. Physically comfortable classrooms must be provided to facilitate this recommendation.

5. The state must make financial provisions to meet major public school construction needs on a comprehensive and equitable basis.

6. Because of the economic impact dropouts have on our state, dropout prevention is absolutely essential. The current dropout rates perpetuate many social ills such as crime, teenage pregnancy, infant mortality and health problems. Students at risk of becoming dropouts must be targeted from kindergarten through high school with programs involving the total community – business, families, churches, civic clubs and others – in assisting those so identified to stay in school through a variety of programs. For example, a program must be imple
mented that prohibits the possession of a driver’s license until age 18 unless the licensee is enrolled in or has completed his or her high school education.

7. The Equity and Access Program to recruit and maintain minority students in college must be maintained and expanded.

8. South Carolina must establish a system to permit students to earn college tuition through a community service voucher system. This will enhance students’ access to state post-secondary institutions and expand students’ educational horizons.

Complete implementation by 1994:

1. The role of the State Board of Education as a policy making body must be strengthened and the office of the State Superintendent of Education made an appointive position.

2. The method of appointment and geographic distribution of State Board of Education members must be changed to appointment from Congressional districts by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The emphasis must be on lay leadership of the State Board of Education.

3. The state system of public education must be organized into two separate agencies – kindergarten through 12th grade and post-secondary education. The post-secondary education agency should be a coordinating agency, and further proliferation of education agencies should be avoided.

4. To enhance the quality of education, efforts must be increased to attract and retain high quality teachers by offering competitive compensation and professional status.

5. Because our future requires participation and competition in a global economy, foreign languages must be viewed as one of the basic educational skills and must be expanded in the middle and high school grades and introduced as early as preschool or elementary school. The Department of Education and the public schools should more fully use South Carolina Educational Television’s open- and closed-circuit television systems for instructional programming in the classrooms as a cost-effective method of delivering foreign language instruction, including such courses offered through the "Star Schools" program.

6. The University of South Carolina, the State Board of Technical and Comprehensive Education, and the Commission on Higher Education must examine the two-year system of education in South Carolina in order to fashion a structure and programs that will foster comprehensive program offerings and cost efficien-
cy in two-year education.

Complete implementation by 1999:

1. To help insure a qualified work force, the public and private sectors must work together to attain a goal of 95 percent literacy by the year 1999 through the use of existing and expanded education. Existing resources of the technical education system, higher education system, Department of Education and South Carolina Educational Television should be coordinated and expanded to achieve this goal.

LIVING ENVIRONMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Complete implementation by 1991:

1. Since our public schools are often the only place where many of our children are exposed to art and culture, particularly for the economically disadvantaged, the significance of our public schools in art and cultural awareness cannot be overemphasized. Cultural education is also one of the basics and must be woven into the instruction of English, history and other basic subjects.

2. Our environment must be protected from those who would despoil it through irresponsible littering. We must have a strong, statewide anti-litter program, to include:

   — use of photodegradable and biodegradable materials,
   — a strong, effective bottle bill,
   — rigid enforcement of anti-litter laws,
   — an expanded adopt-a-highway program,
   — a comprehensive educational program within the public schools with emphasis on community and personal pride,
   — sentencing of non-violent offenders to litter collection instead of prison.

3. South Carolina’s treatment, use, and disposal of all forms of waste carries significant interstate implications. To end South Carolina’s status as a dumping ground, our General Assembly must enact whatever measures are necessary to halt disposal from other states except under strict and equitable reciprocity arrangements with other states as defined in interstate compact agreements. In addition we must encourage the use of recycling, incineration, and other alternatives. The state must develop incentives to minimize hazardous waste through positive encouragement of source reduction as well as consideration of higher
taxes on the disposal of hazardous materials in a manner so as not to place South Carolina at a competitive disadvantage.

4. Criminal sanctions with mandatory jail sentences should be instituted for individuals within the corporate as well as governmental sectors who deliberately and recklessly endanger the health and safety of South Carolinians through violation or poor enforcement of South Carolina's environmental laws.

5. A viable living environment must include decent, safe and sanitary housing within the economic means of every South Carolinian. A comprehensive housing program must be developed to include code adoption and enforcement at the local level, and innovative financing mechanisms to include tax incentives at both the state and local level.

Complete implementation by 1994:

1. The goal of social services programs must be to foster and encourage independence, self-sufficiency and self-reliance; to move recipients into the workforce; and to strengthen and enhance personal responsibility and accountability. Implementation of this goal requires that the General Assembly:

   A. Provide for coordination of public and private health and human services at the local level;

   B. Develop a link between the public and private sectors to create and deliver social services. The private sector is willing to help provide social services; often, however, this willingness is stifled by regulatory difficulties with the public sector. In addition, volunteer, civic, and non-profit organizations must be considered integral parts of this service provision process. New or existing tax incentives for these organizations must be established and/or preserved.

   C. Provide for coordination within the public sector to reduce fragmentation of social services. Data linkages must be created within and between agencies in order to streamline access to social services.

2. The physical and mental health of our citizens is critical to our survival. A statewide health policy is essential. Such a policy must be adopted by the General Assembly and must include, but not be limited to: preventive care and wellness programs; methods to provide indigent health care; comprehensive health education; universal health insurance; long-term care for the elderly; incentives for medical personnel recruitment; and attention to catastrophic illness such as AIDS.

3. Health and natural resource responsibilities must be integrated into a single agency. This agency would: establish sound natural resource and environmental
policies; implement resource management plans to include protection, accurate monitoring, enforcement, and penalty guidelines; review proposed activities for overall environmental impact; and provide an efficient, accessible permitting process.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Complete implementation by 1991:

1. Recognizing that a high percentage of the addition to the future workforce will be women, the absence of child and adult day care programs can be a barrier to their employment. To remove these barriers, successful child and adult day care programs must be implemented. This may include incorporating the public school system, as well as private schools and churches, into the child and adult day care system. Governmental and business incentives must be developed.

2. As we consider the tax structure of South Carolina, we must recognize that the state does not exist in a vacuum. We must remain competitive in tax structure and services with surrounding states. Any consideration of the tax structure must include an examination of the whole. Making one change will not necessarily solve problems. The General Assembly must:

   A. Re-evaluate sales tax exemptions to eliminate inequities which may exist in the tax structure;
   
   B. Re-evaluate sales tax exemptions to address the current tax inequities as they apply to lower income citizens, particularly with regard to food and prescription drugs;
   
   C. Re-evaluate tax exemptions of non-profit activities. Those functioning as for-profit businesses must be taxed accordingly.

3. To preserve the viability of one of the state's primary economic resources, we must have a state beach renourishment policy with state and other funding for such projects. Public access to beaches must be a prerequisite to funding these projects.

Complete implementation by 1994:

1. State and local arts councils must enjoy funding by both the private and public sectors.

2. Continued development of homegrown and minority job opportunities will require continued attention to capital needs:

   A. The state must provide funding to generate small business "incubators";
B. Private venture capital groups must be encouraged through tax incentives;
C. The state must promote better access to risk capital for small business by establishing a loan guarantee fund for start-up and expanding firms.

3. To ensure that growth opportunities exist throughout the state:
   A. Transportation improvements must be made to link rural areas with growth centers. Funding for such improvements could be derived from toll roads, gasoline taxes, or other sources with full integration of the SHIMS (Strategic Highways for Improving Mobility and Safety) program;
   B. A strategy of regional cooperation for planning, economic development, and construction of quality infrastructure is essential;
   C. Economic development strategies must include measures to foster opportunities in all areas of the state, particularly in the rural and underdeveloped parts of the South Carolina.

GOVERNMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Complete implementation by 1991:
1. The General Assembly should enact legislation to permit consolidation of local governments.
2. The General Assembly must pass a local government finance act, which may include a property tax rollback, to provide alternative revenue sources for local governments. The General Assembly must order an analysis of the property tax burden in South Carolina compared with other states in order to ascertain recommended levels of property tax revenues to finance local government and public school programs.
3. The General Assembly must provide full formula funding for cities and counties as prescribed by state law.
4. The state ethics law and regulations must be strengthened at the state level. State legislators should be barred from lobbying for legislation for two years following their departure from the legislature.
5. Legislators must be prohibited from practicing before boards and commissions during their tenure as legislators.
6. The method of screening judges should be changed to an 18-member commission, with six appointed by the governor, six appointed by the General Assembly, and six appointed by the South Carolina Bar Association. This panel would approve three names and the General Assembly would select one of the three.
If none of the three were selected, the selection process would start over. There would be no nominations on the floor of the General Assembly.

7. State-run and -financed primary elections must be implemented. The State Election Commission’s plan to phase in a statewide electronic voting system must be put into effect.

8. To improve the quality of public services and their delivery:
   A. Salaries and other benefits of public employees must be competitive with the private sector;
   B. A strong continuing education program must be developed to provide training for both elected and appointed government officials at all levels.

9. South Carolina must make every effort to develop a national and international reputation as a state which does not tolerate illegal substances. To achieve this status, efforts must be undertaken and financed at the federal, state and local levels.

10. The problem of substance abuse in schools must be vigorously addressed via programs for prevention and intervention beginning when students enter school and continuing through the entire educational experience. The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board must terminate the licenses of establishments selling alcohol to minors. Those persons contributing to the delinquency of a minor must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Mandatory suspension of drivers licenses of persons convicted of substance abuse must be enacted.

**Complete implementation by 1994:**

1. Our executive branch of government must be strengthened. The necessary constitutional and statutory revisions must be proposed to create a system whereby the governor has direct control over agency heads. This reorganization must be accompanied by a study to determine the structure, responsibility and role of the many state boards, agencies, and commissions.

2. A constitutional amendment must be proposed to permit state Senators to serve six-year terms and House members to serve four-year terms, with one-third of the Senate and one-half of the House elected every two years.

3. The legislative session must be reduced to a maximum of forty days.

4. Specific emphasis must be given to urban policy issues in implementing the statewide strategic plan being developed by the Coordinating Council on Economic Development.

5. Where a special purpose district’s service area lies wholly within a single county, that county or other general purpose governmental body should be given the opportunity and authority to assume the functions of the special purpose dis-
trict. The remaining special purpose districts must be made accountable, including an audit, to an appropriate branch or branches of elected government.

6. In order to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort in school governance:
   A. Where there is an elected county board of education, there should be no other board with county-wide jurisdiction;
   B. Where there are elected district boards of education, there should be no county board except where the county board has fiscal authority to set millage.

7. State agencies should use the councils of government (COGs) as an extension of state planning staffs. The COGs must be funded according to a measurable standard of productivity. Multi-county service districts and COGs should encompass the same counties.

8. Education and training of inmates, to include literacy and job skill training, must be mandatory prerequisites for early release. These efforts should include the South Carolina Educational Television system, the Department of Education, the technical education system, and the higher education system as appropriate. Merit points would be earned which can be applied toward early release or parole.
IMPLEMENTATION

These carefully considered recommendations of the Commission on the Future of South Carolina are of little use unless they are implemented and monitored continuously.

Accordingly, the Commission will establish a private, nonprofit corporation to be named South Carolina 2000. The Corporation will include citizen members of the Commission, participants in the Assembly on the Future of South Carolina, and private sector sponsors. South Carolina 2000 will develop a broad base of support among citizens in the state to help gain approval of the Commission's recommendations. A limited staff and a professional lobbyist will be employed. Each year, South Carolina 2000 will prioritize recommendations for action and report its progress to the membership.
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