

A Study Of The Court Revenue System



November 8, 2002

Enabling Authority

The Court Revenue Study was authorized by Part 1B, Section 72.92 of the 2000-2001 Appropriations Act as follows:

72.92 (GP: Court Revenue Study) The Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee are directed to coordinate a panel to study statutory provisions for the distribution of revenue generated by the State's various courts. The purpose of the panel is to assess the effectiveness of existing processes and consider alternative methods of accounting for and distributing court fines and fees. In conducting this study, the panel may determine the amounts of court revenues distributed to various entities, however it is not the purpose of the panel to recommend changes to the existing distribution shares. The panel shall consist of the following members: one from the Senate Finance Committee, one from the House Ways and Means Committee, one Governor's appointee, one from the State Treasurer's Office, one from the Division of Court Administration, one from the State Auditor's Office, one from the Association of Counties, and one from the Municipal Association. Staff support shall be provided by the Senate Finance Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, and the Division of Court Administration. The panel shall submit a report to the Governor, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee

Members of Court Revenue Study Committee

Senator David L. Thomas, Chairman
Representative Harry B. (Chip) Limehouse
Ms. Paige Parsons (State Treasurer's Office)
Mr. Gary M. Cannon (Municipal Association)
Ms. Rosalyn W. Frierson (Court Administration)
Mr. Dale M. Rhodes (Governor's appointment)
Ms. Barbara A. Scott (Association of Counties)
Mr. Thomas L. Wagner (State Auditor)

Introduction

Throughout South Carolina's court system, persons who initiate legal action or who are convicted of an offense make payments to courts as required by the South Carolina Code of Laws. These payments are collected by the different courts of the State and utilized for a variety of purposes. Although there is no consolidated reporting requirement for the collection of court fines and fees, it is estimated that \$125 million a year is collected by the State's courts.

The revenue generated by our courts is distributed to many different entities based on legal statutes. Of the total revenue generated by court fines and fees, approximately half is related to the individual fine or fee levied and the other half is related to an "assessment" that is added to individual fines. The current rate for the assessment is 100%; i.e., when a person is required to pay a fine as the result of a violation of law, the person must also pay an amount that equals the fine as an administrative assessment. While revenue from fines is generally retained by local governmental entities, the revenues produced by the assessment on fines is divided among many entities, including local governments, the state government, and individual state agencies. Attachment 1 shows the current assessment distribution by type and percentage, for each type of court. As can be seen by reviewing Attachment 1, the distribution of assessment revenues is complex. Attachment 2 is a flow chart that attempts to describe the collection and distribution of court revenues at the state level.

Of the estimated \$125 million in court revenues collected in FY 2000, approximately \$50 million was remitted to state government and individual state agencies. Attachment 3 shows actual and estimated dollar amounts received by the various courts in FY 2000. By extrapolation, the total amounts retained locally are estimated. While this chart presents estimates of local court revenues, the amounts shown for the state are actual figures therefore the overall estimates should be reasonably accurate.

Because of the significant amount of revenue generated by the state's court system, it is important that adequate accountability for the collection and distribution of court revenue be assured. Unfortunately, over the past several years, a number of concerns have arisen regarding the amounts collected and how those amounts are distributed. Although there is limited factual evidence showing a problem with accountability, sufficient concern existed to compel the Governor to write local governments in June of 2000, stating that "...court assessment revenue is not being accurately collected or remitted" (Attachment 4). Prior to the Governor's letter, several audits of local governments were initiated by a group of state agencies under the auspices of the State Auditor's Office. Some of the comments contained in the reports of those audits are as follows:

- "Neither the County Treasurer nor the General Sessions Court administrator have formal policies and procedures pertaining to the collection and distribution of court fines and assessments"
- "Clerk of Court collections for fines and fees that should have been turned over to the Treasurer on a monthly basis had not been turned over for fifteen months"
- "An incorrect assessment rate was used to calculate the amount to remit to the State Treasurer."
- "The County Treasurer did not properly report general sessions court assessment collections"

As a result of the concerns expressed by a variety of persons and organizations regarding the collection and distribution of court revenues, Proviso 72.92 of the FY 2000-2001 Appropriation Act was adopted. During FY 2000-2001, the Court Revenue Study Committee created by Proviso 72.92 met to receive testimony and initiate inquiries necessary to reach a consensus regarding the level of accountability for court revenue collections and to prepare related recommendations to the State Legislature.

Recent History of Court Revenue System

Section 36 of Part II of the 1994-95 Appropriation Act significantly changed the method by which court revenues are distributed after being collected by the state's courts. Prior to January 1, 1995, when the new law went into effect, various fees were levied upon convicted individuals in a process that was confusing and difficult to administer. Over a period of years, many unique surcharges were attached to different offenses for the purpose of supporting governmental programs related to those offenses. This practice created an extremely complicated and extensive array of fees and charges that local courts had to understand and comply with. To add to this problem, annual changes to the fee array were common.

The new law was designed to simplify the distribution process without changing any actual revenue flows. Instead of a list of special add-on fees and charges that must then be forwarded to particular governmental entities, the new law established an administrative "assessment" which was added to the basic court fine or fee. The idea was that local financial entities would only have to make a single calculation instead of tracking multiple specific fees and charges. The amount generated by the assessment percentage was then to be forwarded to the State Treasurer's Office where appropriate distributions were made to the different benefiting governmental entities.

The new law also directs the State Auditor to periodically examine the books of the various courts and local financial entities to ensure accountability for these funds. Prior to the enactment of the 1995 law, different state agencies that received court revenues were allowed to conduct their own audits. When the new law was debated, the State Auditor's Office estimated that it would require \$1.4 million to implement the audit requirements contained in the law. However, this funding was never provided and the State Auditor has been unable to initiate the audit program. Since 1995, other audit requirements related to the collection and distribution of court revenues have been incorporated into statutes. These new audit requirements will be discussed in a separate chapter of this report.

In the 1997 session of the General Assembly, the Victims' Bill of Rights Act 141 revised the 1995 assessment rates to their current format. This act increased the assessment rate in General Sessions Court and Magistrate Court to 100% of the fine, with the local government retaining 38% and 12% respectively for victims' programs. The intent of these changes was that by increasing the assessment rates, the victims' bill could be funded and the changes would be revenue neutral to the state agencies receiving assessment revenues.

In the 1998 session of the General Assembly, Act 343 included additional surcharges, the requirement for a legislative report by the State Auditor, and an extension of a "hold harmless" provision (intended to assure that state agency assessment revenues would not decline) first enacted in 1997. Additional changes approved in 1998 raised the assessment rates for municipal court to 74% of a fine and directed that some of the additional revenue created by that increase go to purchase law enforcement video cameras.

In the 2000 session of the General Assembly, a permanent proviso (Part II of the Appropriation Act) was adopted that again increased the assessment in municipal court. This time the assessment was raised to 100% of a fine, which placed the municipal court's assessment rate at the same level as that of magistrates' court and general sessions court. The increased revenue produced by the higher assessment was used to fund the Governor's Task Force on Litter and to offset local government's share of operating costs associated with a juvenile detention facility located in Columbia.

Correlating Court Revenue and Offense History

One basis for the concerns expressed by various entities regarding observed revenue trends was the apparent variance between rapidly increasing court activity and the amount of funding submitted to the State Treasurer. In an effort to determine whether recorded changes in court offense activity could be linked to revenue generation, the Study Committee initiated a statistical analysis of information maintained by the State Treasurer's Office and South Carolina Court Administration. The analysis covered the

most recent five-year period. The methodology of the analysis was to correlate the historical pattern of individual court revenue collections against total cases disposed for the same jurisdictions for the same period of time. The premise of the analysis was that as the number of cases disposed by courts increased, there would be a statistically significant and proportional increase in revenues generated by those courts.

After a considerable amount of work was completed using regression analysis, the Study Committee concluded that there was no meaningful correlation between court offense history and court revenue. In some jurisdictions, revenues increased far in excess of what might be expected based on changes in offense history. In other jurisdictions, the reverse was true. Based upon this analysis, the Study Committee concluded that the assumption of a direct and proportional link between court offense history and court revenue is not valid.

During an extended discussion, Study Committee members offered two possible reasons for the apparent incongruity between court offense history and court revenues. First, some judges may be reluctant to fine individuals the same amount when they know that assessment rates are continuing to increase. The effect of the assessment increases over the past several years has been to increase the total amount that defendants must pay. Some judges may feel that the rates have become too high and, within their legal flexibility, have acted to reduce the impact of the higher assessments by lowering the related fine. A second possibility is that although actual fine/assessment penalties levied by judges may well have increased with the passage of higher assessment percentages, the ability of the courts to collect those fine/assessments has deteriorated. In other words, as defendants incur a higher fine/assessment total, the actual collection rate as a percentage of the fine/assessment total has decreased.

Audit Requirements Related to Court Revenues

The South Carolina Code of Laws contains several statutes that address audit requirements related to the collection, distribution, and reporting of court revenues. Following is a listing of relevant Code sections:

Section 14-1-206 (E) To ensure that fines and assessments imposed pursuant to this section and Section 14-1-209(A) are properly collected and remitted to the State Treasurer, the annual independent external audit required to be performed for each county pursuant to Section 4-9-150 must include a review of the accounting controls over the collection, reporting, and distribution of fines and assessments from the point of collection to the point of distribution and a supplementary schedule detailing all fines and assessments collected by the clerk of court for the court of general sessions (emphasis added), the amount remitted to the county treasurer, and the amount remitted to the State Treasurer.

- (1) To the extent that records are made available in the format determined pursuant to subsection (E)(4), the supplementary schedule must include the following elements: (a) all fines collected by the clerk of court for the court of general sessions (emphasis added); (b) All assessments collected by the clerk of court for the court of general sessions (emphasis added); (c) the amount of fines retained by the county treasurer; (d) the amount of assessments retained by the county treasurer; (e) the total funds, by source, allocated to victim services activities, how those funds were expended, and any balances carried forward.
- (2) The supplementary schedule must be included in the external auditor's report by an "in relation to" paragraph as required by generally accepted auditing standards when information accompanies the basic financial statements in auditor submitted documents.
- (3) Within thirty days of issuance of the audited financial statement, the county must submit to the State Treasurer a copy of the audited financial statement and a statement of the actual cost associated with the preparation of the supplemental schedule required in this subsection. Upon submission to the State Treasurer, the county may retain and pay from the fines and assessments collected pursuant to this section the actual expense charged by the external auditor for the preparation of the supplemental schedule required in this subsection, not to exceed one thousand dollars each year.
- (4) The clerk of court and county treasurer shall keep records of fines and assessments required to be reviewed pursuant to this subsection in the format determined by the county council and make those records available for review.

Section 14-1-207 (E) and Section 14-1-208 (E) contain identical wording to that of **Section 14-1-206 (E)** above except that 207 refers to magistrate's court and 208 refers to municipal court.

Section 14-1-211 (D) To ensure that surcharges imposed pursuant to this section are properly collected and remitted to the city or county treasurer, the annual independent external audit required to be performed for each municipality pursuant to Section 5-7-240 and each county pursuant to Section 4-9-150 must include a review of the accounting controls over the collection, reporting, and distribution of surcharges from the point of collection to the point of distribution and a supplementary schedule detailing all surcharges collected at the court level, and the amount remitted to the municipality or county.

- (1) The supplementary schedule must include the following elements: (a) all surcharges collected by the clerk of court for the general sessions, magistrate's, or municipal court; (b) the amount of surcharges retained by the city or county treasurer pursuant to this ____ section; (c) the amount of funds allocated to victim services by fund source; and (d) how those funds were expended, and any carry forward balances.
- (2) The supplementary schedule must be included in the external auditors report by an "in relation to" paragraph as required by generally accepted auditing standards when information accompanies the basic financial statements inn auditor submitted documents.

In an effort to determine compliance with the above audit related statutes, the Study Committee directed that audit reports submitted by local financial entities to the State Treasurer's Office be reviewed. In July of 2001, Committee staff met with representatives of the State Treasurer's Office to review audit reports that covered the fiscal year 1999-2000, which ended June 30, 2000. It is noteworthy that the review was conducted a full year after the close of the fiscal year to which the audits under review applied.

Across South Carolina, there are approximately 300 "local financial entities" that are required to comply with the audit statutes described above. These include county and municipal entities. As of July 2001, the State Treasurer had received approximately 175 of the required reports. Of the audit reports received by the State Treasurer, less than 100 included the required supplemental schedule related to court revenues. Although some relatively small percentage of municipal entities do not have any court activity to report, it appears that less than half of the required supplemental schedules for fiscal year 1999-2000 had been submitted to the State Treasurer's Office more than twelve months after the close of that fiscal year.

An examination of the audit reports that were submitted with the required supplemental schedule showed that the usefulness of the supplemental schedules varied. In the case of some local entities, the supplemental schedule appeared complete and contained information that could be used to cross check court revenue amounts actually forwarded to the State Treasurer's Office during the audit year. In other cases, the supplementary schedule was little more than a narrative comment and could not be used to reconcile funds sent to the State Treasurer's Office. In general, staff of the State Treasurer's Office felt the supplemental schedules that were submitted provided a degree of assurance with regard to overall accountability of the court revenue system. Available supplemental schedules were being examined and utilized by the State Treasurer's Office in an attempt to verify that court revenues were being correctly reported.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Study Committee found no reliable statistical evidence that local financial entities are deliberately withholding court revenues that, by statute, should be forwarded to the State Treasurer. The consensus among the various professionals who presented information to the Study Committee was that local officials were attempting to comply with complex and changing statutory requirements. While the amount of court revenue has not risen in a predictable linear fashion, the Study Committee does not consider this one factor acceptable evidence to prove a systemic problem.

The Study Committee did find that required statutory audit requirements related to the collection and distribution of court revenues were not being followed consistently by local entities. While this apparent failure may be the result of misunderstanding, sufficient time has passed since the passage of the relevant statutes for compliance to be at a much higher level. The Study Committee believes that current audit requirements are reasonable and, if followed, should provide the basis for adequate accountability in the court revenue system. The Study Committee also noted that there is no specific assigned responsibility among relevant state authorities regarding the review of supplied local audits and any necessary follow-up actions.

In order to increase compliance and clarify responsibility, the Study Committee makes the following recommendations.

- (1) Additional training should be offered to local entities regarding statutory requirements related to the collection, allocation, and audit of court revenues. The Association of Counties, the Municipal Association, and the Judicial Department should coordinate this training. This training should be offered at least once a year immediately following completion of the legislative session.
- (2) The existing audit requirements related to court revenue collection and distribution should be reviewed and modified as necessary to ensure that information provided in each supplemental schedule is sufficiently complete and detailed to allow the State Treasurer's Office a basis for reconciliation against actual revenue receipts. If a reconciliation by the State Treasurer's Office indicates a variance in revenue actually submitted compared to the amount reported based on year-end audit information, the involved local entities revenues for the current fiscal year should be adjusted accordingly. It should be noted that this adjustment could be in either direction; i.e., if the reconciliation shows that a local entity submitted too much revenue, the excess should be refunded from the current years' court revenue stream and if the reconciliation shows that a local entity submitted too little revenue, the entity's current year Aide to Subdivision account should be reduced accordingly.
- (2) Because the Committee recommends that reconciliation and oversight responsibilities of the State Treasurer's Office be increased, consideration should be given to allocating a reasonable amount of the court revenue stream to the State Treasurer's Office as reimbursement for incurred costs associated with this effort.
- (3) The existing audit requirements related to court revenue collections and distribution should be modified to incorporate a required review of all submitted supplemental schedules by the State Auditor's Office. The purpose of this review would be to determine if each local entity's supplied audit

information substantially complies with statutory requirements. When a determination by the State Auditor is made that substantial compliance has not been achieved, the State Auditor should have a statutory mandate to conduct follow-up audits as necessary to reasonably determine the basis for non-compliance. Reports of necessary follow-up audits should be supplied to appropriate executive and legislative branch authorities. The State Auditor's Office should be authorized to present invoices to the State Treasurer for the actual costs incurred in the required review of submitted supplemental schedules and for any subsequent follow-up audits. The State Auditor's Office should be authorized to outsource/contract with a CPA or CPA firm to perform any of these tasks that lack of staffing would not permit the State Auditor's Office to perform in-house.

- (4) The existing audit requirements related to court revenue collections and distribution should be modified to require that, upon certification by the State Auditor pursuant to a follow-up audit, any shortage in court revenue collections that should have been forwarded to the State Treasurer must be made up by a levy against the current years' Aide to Subdivision funding for the involved entity. Conversely, if it is determined that a local entity transferred more to the State Treasurer than should have been transferred, the excess amount should be refunded out of the current years' court revenue stream.
- (5) The existing audit requirements related to court revenue collections and distribution should be modified to incorporate a required submission date. The Study Committee believes six months following the close of a fiscal year is a reasonable cut off date for submission of required audit information. In unusual circumstances, the State Auditor should be given authority to extend this deadline as needed.
- (6) The Study Committee recommends that existing statutes requiring the State Auditor to undertake comprehensive audits of local financial entities for the purpose of verifying that court revenues are correctly accounted for should be removed from the Code of Laws. The Study Committee believes that the cost to undertake this level of auditing by state authorities would be excessive and that other existing statutory audit requirements related to required local independent audits, modified as noted above, would provide adequate accountability for the court revenue system in South Carolina.

Distribution to Agencies by type of Fine or Assessment (10-1-2000)

Circuit/Family Court Fines, Fees (other than filing fees) 14-1-205

56% retained by county/44% sent to STO. State's portion distributed as follows:

72.93%	General Fund
16.73%	Mental Health for treatment of drug addicts in addiction centers
10.34%	State Office of Victims Assistance, Victim's Compensation Fund

Circuit/Family Court Filing Fees 14-1-204

44% retained by county/56% sent to STO. State's portion distributed as follows:

45.03%	General Fund
10.33%	Mental Health for treatment of drug addicts in addiction centers
6.38%	State Office of Victims Assistance, Victim's Compensation Fund
38.26%	Defense of Indigents Fund, Commission on Indigent Defense

DUI \$12 Assessments (General Sessions, Magistrate, and Municipal) 14-1-211

100% sent to STO. Distributed as follows:

84.00%	Disabilities and Special Needs for Head and Spinal Cord Injuries Family Support
16.00%	DHEC for Emergency Medical Services - Aid to Counties

DUI \$100 Surcharge (General Sessions, Magistrate, and Municipal) 14-1-211

100% sent to STO. Distributed as follows:

100.00%	MUSC for Spinal cord injury research
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Other Fines Remitted to STO

Body Piercing Violation \$2500, 100% to DHEC for enforcement of body piercing laws 14-1-211

Public Defender \$25 Application Fees, 100% to Office of Indigent Defense 17-3-30

Bond Estreatment 25% to STO for General Fund 17-15-260 (25% to Solicitor, 50% to County or 25/25 to County and Municipality if municipality originated the case)

Assessments - General Sessions (Assessments = 100% of fines imposed) 14-1-206

38% retained by county/62% sent to STO. State's portion distributed as follows:

47.17%	Probation, Pardon & Parole, shock incarceration program
16.52%	Department of Public Safety, criminal justice training
.50%	Department of Public Safety, Law Enforcement Hall of Fame
16.21%	Office of Indigent Defense
13.26%	State Office of Victim Assistance
5.34%	General Fund
1.00%	Attorney General's Office, support to counties (death penalty)

Assessments - Magistrate's Court (Assessments = 100% of fines imposed) 14-1-207

12% retained by county/88% sent to STO. State's portion distributed as follows:

35.12%	Probation, Pardon & Parole, shock incarceration program
22.49%	Department of Public Safety, criminal justice training
.65%	Department of Public Safety, Law Enforcement Hall of Fame
11.38%	Office of Indigent Defense
20.42%	State Office of Victim Assistance
8.94%	General Fund
1.00%	Attorney General's Office, support to counties (death penalty)

Assessments - Municipal Court (Assessments = 100% of fines imposed) 14-1-208

12% retained by city/88% sent to STO. State's portion distributed as follows:

State Treasurer's Office

Extrapolation of Court Revenue based on FY 2000 information

Type Revenue	Court	Local/State Split	EXTRAPOLATED*		Local Amount Reported (Victims)	State Amount Reported and Remitted	EXTRAPOLATED Grand Total	
			Local Amount (General Fund)	Local (Gen Fund) Local (Victims) and State				
Circuit Court Fines & Fees	Circuit/Family*	56%/44%	\$ 6,703,475.48	\$ 5,267,016.45	\$ 11,970,491.93			
Circuit Court Filing Fees	Circuit*	44%/56%	\$ 3,347,702.46	\$ 4,260,712.22	\$ 7,608,414.68			
Court Fines	General**	100%/0%	\$ 3,765,639.71		\$ 3,765,639.71			
	Magistrate**	100%/0%	\$ 27,735,432.18		\$ 27,735,432.18			
	Municipal**	100%/0%	\$ 20,870,669.43		\$ 20,870,669.43			
DUI Assessments	General	0%/100%		\$ 30,251.90	\$ 30,251.90			
	Magistrate	0%/100%		\$ 72,417.42	\$ 72,417.42			
	Municipal	0%/100%		\$ 36,979.23	\$ 36,979.23			
Assessments	General	38%/62%		\$ 1,117,609.09	\$ 2,648,030.62	\$ 3,765,639.71		
	Magistrate	12%/88%		\$ 3,109,200.33	\$ 24,626,231.85	\$ 27,735,432.18		
	Municipal	16.22%/83.78%		\$ 2,539,936.24	\$ 13,204,603.86	\$ 15,744,540.10		
Conviction Surcharge	General	100%/0%		\$ 1,882,663.57	\$ 1,882,663.57			
	Magistrate	100%/0%		\$ 2,516,043.14	\$ 2,516,043.14			
	Municipal	100%/0%		\$ 1,362,430.12	\$ 1,362,430.12			
Public Defender Application Fees			\$ 62,422,919.27	\$ 188,475.73	\$ 188,475.73	\$ 188,475.73		
			\$ 12,527,882.49	\$ 50,334,719.28	\$ 50,334,719.28	\$ 125,285,521.04		
Prior Fiscal Year			\$ 60,799,620.50	\$ 10,970,312.43	\$ 48,495,970.72	\$ 121,297,513.82		
Increase/(decrease)			\$ 1,623,298.77	\$ 1,557,570.06	\$ 1,838,748.56	\$ 3,988,007.22		

* Local amount extrapolated based on State share reported.

** Local amount extrapolated based on assessment reported.

prepared by Paige Parsons
734-9822



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

JIM HODGES
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 11829
COLUMBIA 29211

June 20, 2000

Dear :

I am writing to ask for your assistance in addressing a critical situation facing our state's criminal justice system. Many integral criminal justice programs are suffering because a key source of funding, court assessment revenue, is not being accurately collected or remitted. You are in a position to help ensure that the law is complied with and those programs are properly funded.

General sessions, magistrate, and municipal courts are required by law to impose assessments on court fines. Assessments fund a variety of programs, ranging from law enforcement training to victim assistance. Specifically, court assessment moneys support: probation agents and restitution centers of the Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services; the Criminal Justice Academy of the Department of Public Safety; the Office of Indigent Defense; the State Office of Victim Assistance; drug rehabilitation efforts by the Department of Mental Health; state and local law enforcement videotaping equipment through SLED; the General Fund of the State; and assistance to counties for complex criminal litigation.

Current projections through April 2000 place revenues from court assessments at \$3.62 million below last fiscal year and \$650 thousand below the FY 1996-97 level, despite the fact that the number of convictions has remained constant. Since 1997, the amount remitted from general sessions courts has dropped 40.38 percent. That decrease is having a dramatic impact upon the ability of state agencies to provide necessary services to counties, municipalities, and citizens. Because of their considerable reliance upon court assessment funds for general operations, two state agencies in particular are experiencing substantial hardships from the revenue reduction. More than one-third of the Department of Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services' total agency budget, and 100 percent of the Criminal Justice Academy's budget are comprised of court assessment funds. It is imperative that our law enforcement professionals receive the most advanced and complete training possible to prepare them to properly serve, protect, and defend the citizens of our state.

We cannot afford to sit idly by and allow this situation to continue. Last year, we attempted to improve the collection process by legislatively strengthening audit requirements. While a step in the right direction, the measure has not reaped the benefits expected. Officials directly involved with or responsible for the oversight of the collection and remittance of court assessment revenues must cooperate and coordinate efforts to solve our dilemma. We must see to it that the law is complied with so that assessments are accurately assessed and accounted for and important programs are adequately funded.

I urge you to assist me in ensuring that court assessment revenues are accurately and timely collected and remitted as required by S.C. Code §14-1-200, et al. By doing your part to guarantee these funds are remitted properly, the State will be able to provide the people and local governments of this State the level of services they deserve and demand. I welcome your thoughts and suggestions on how to best achieve that objective.

Thank you for the service that you provide. If I can ever be of assistance to you, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jim Hodges