

1 STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
2 JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE  
3 TO SCREEN CANDIDATES  
4 FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY BOARDS OF TRUSTEES  
5  
6  
7

8 S C R E E N I N G S  
9  
10

11 DATE: Monday, April 20, 2015

12 TIME: 12:30 p.m.

13 LOCATION: Gressette Building  
14 1101 Pendleton Street  
15 Room 209  
16 Columbia, South Carolina

17 REPORTED BY: NISHA GORDON  
18 Court Reporter  
19  
20

21 - - - - -

22 COMPUSCRIPTS, INC.  
23 Client Focused. Deadline Driven.

24 CHARLESTON COLUMBIA HILTON HEAD GREENVILLE MYRTLE BEACH

25 1-888-988-0086  
www.southcarolinacourtreporters.com

1 COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR HARVEY S. PEELER, JR.

3 SENATOR THOMAS C. ALEXANDER

4 SENATOR ROBERT W. HAYES, JR.

5 SENATOR JOHN L. SCOTT, JR.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM R. WHITMIRE

7 REPRESENTATIVE PHYLLIS J. HENDERSON

8

9 ALSO PRESENT:

10 MARTHA CASTO, Staff

11 JULIE PRICE, Staff

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 PROCEEDING 12:45 p.m.

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If there's no  
3 objection, we'll go ahead and get started. I would like  
4 to call the meeting to order.

5 This is the meeting of the Joint  
6 Legislative Committee to Screen Candidates for College  
7 and University Boards of Trustees. I'd like to welcome  
8 everyone and welcome the members. We have a couple more  
9 that are coming in, but if there's no objection, we'll  
10 go ahead and get started.

11 We have Senator Scott, Senator Hayes,  
12 Representative Alexander, and Representative Whitmire  
13 here, and I'm Harvey Peeler.

14 And first, we'd like to call up Robert F.  
15 Sabalis from Orangeburg. He seeks a Congressional Seat  
16 for the Lander University Board.

17 If you would, raise your right hand,  
18 please, sir.

19 DR. SABALIS: (Complying.)

20 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to  
21 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
22 truth, so help you God?

23 DR. SABALIS: I do.

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If you would,  
25 take a seat. Make sure your light is burning green.

1 DR. SABALIS: It is.

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

3 MS. CASTO: Members of the Committee,  
4 inside your notebook is a skinny on each candidate.

5 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record,  
6 if you would, state your full name in case I've  
7 mispronounced it.

8 DR. SABALIS: My name is Robert Sabalis.

9 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good.

10 I came pretty close. Thank you.

11 Would you like to give a brief explanation  
12 to the Committee on why you'd like to serve on the  
13 Lander Board?

14 DR. SABALIS: Yes. Thank you.

15 I'm a clinical psychologist by training. I  
16 worked for the University of South Carolina School of  
17 Medicine for 29 years until I moved to Washington in  
18 2000 to work for the Association of American Medical  
19 Colleges.

20 I returned to Orangeburg in 2012, so we've  
21 been back for about three years. And I worked halftime  
22 from home as a medical school accreditor.

23 During my time in medical education, or in  
24 education as a whole, two things have always impressed  
25 me; one of which is the quality of a liberal arts

1 education as preparation for a variety of fields in  
2 industry employment.

3           And the second is the fact that South  
4 Carolina universities, and maybe in particular Lander  
5 University, makes it its mission to seek out students in  
6 this region who might not otherwise consider an  
7 education and then provides a superb education and the  
8 quality of educational support necessary to be  
9 successful in that education.

10           When a board vacancy became available in  
11 Orangeburg last year when the current board member died  
12 unexpectedly of cancer, some members of the board  
13 contacted me about my potential interest in serving in  
14 this position. I had no prior contact with Lander  
15 University, though I had been on the campus before. So  
16 I investigated. I went and met with the president, with  
17 the legislative liaison, went to the library for a  
18 couple of hours and spent time going through history  
19 books and meeting minutes and publications of the  
20 university, and I was very impressed.

21           So because Lander provides a liberal arts  
22 education, and that's always been one of my passions,  
23 and because they're committed to finding those students  
24 in South Carolina who might not otherwise seek a college  
25 education and provide them with a superb education, I'm

1 interested in doing whatever I can to support their  
2 mission and their implementation of that mission.

3 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

4 It always impresses me when someone does  
5 their homework, and it sounds like you have.

6 DR. SABALIS: I have. Thank you. I've  
7 tried to anyway.

8 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

9 Questions or comments from members of the  
10 Committee?

11 Mr. Whitmire.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you,

13 Mr. Chairman.

14 Welcome, Dr. Sabalis.

15 DR. SABALIS: Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Very impressive  
17 resume, by the way.

18 Question three, "In what areas do you think  
19 the college or university can improve?"

20 I really like this answer. I wish we'd get  
21 this more, but do you know what -- have you done any  
22 research on what percentage of students return for a  
23 second year or do not at Lander?

24 DR. SABALIS: It's about 40 percent who do  
25 not return and about 60 percent who graduate in four

1 years.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And is that the  
3 norm for the state or --

4 DR. SABALIS: I think that's pretty high,  
5 but I think that those students who leave probably leave  
6 for a bigger institution rather than just quit college.  
7 So if the institution is going to continue to grow, I  
8 think it would be good for them, good for the school, to  
9 work on increasing the retention rates of those  
10 first-year students into second year into graduation.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I totally agree.

12 And my other question is question five, the  
13 percentage of in-state versus out-of-state students.

14 I agree with you, the 80/20. What is it at  
15 Lander now?

16 DR. SABALIS: It's about that. It's about  
17 80/20.

18 And in their mission statement, they talk  
19 about the fact that it's a good thing to have students  
20 from other places to expand the mix of students and the  
21 kinds of conversations that take place in the classrooms  
22 and the laboratories and the dormitories. But you don't  
23 want to have so many out-of-state students that the  
24 in-state students who need the opportunity won't have it  
25 available to them.

1                   And I think they did the same thing I did  
2                   when I was the admissions officer at the School of  
3                   Medicine here in Columbia. If you're going to accept  
4                   some of your class from out-of-state, you look first for  
5                   those students who have ties to the state, who have  
6                   relatives here, who have been to school here, and who  
7                   want to stay in South Carolina.

8                   REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I totally agree.  
9                   And we have some other institutions that would look at  
10                  it that way.

11                  I'm sure you'll do a fine job.

12                  (Representative Henderson enters the room.)

13                  DR. SABALIS: Thank you very much.

14                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

15                  Now Representative Henderson has arrived.

16                  Welcome.

17                  REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you.

18                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

19                  REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Sorry I'm late.

20                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

21                  SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

22                  Let me also welcome you.

23                  I want to go back and visit and just a  
24                  little information on a bordering state, Georgia, for  
25                  example, who has made some changes to its legislature to



1 those students who are border-state students, as they  
2 call it. They have now made some changes in the  
3 legislature to let their students -- South Carolina  
4 students come at the same tuition cost.

5 What's your take on that, and how will it  
6 also affect Lander being that close to, of course,  
7 bordering Georgia?

8 DR. SABALIS: I admire Lander's commitment  
9 to the students in the seven counties in South Carolina  
10 that surround Greenwood. I've always questioned when a  
11 state school would create a border agreement like that,  
12 and I think --

13 SENATOR SCOTT: Well, their legislation  
14 just changed it. It became state law right here in very  
15 specific schools and now will allow them to take in --

16 DR. SABALIS: Right.

17 SENATOR SCOTT: -- South Carolina students  
18 at the same --

19 DR. SABALIS: At the same rate.

20 SENATOR SCOTT: Yes.

21 So that's going to affect our out-of-state  
22 students.

23 DR. SABALIS: Absolutely. Absolutely.

24 Absolutely.

25 I'm not sure that I see that as a plus. I

1 think it's a plus for the students, but not a plus for  
2 this state. It's a plus for Georgia, but perhaps not a  
3 plus for South Carolina, and I think there's a potential  
4 loss there of very good students who will go to Georgia  
5 and perhaps not come back.

6 SENATOR SCOTT: Also, Lander just  
7 instituted an emergency management master's degree  
8 program that you can take online. I think in about 30  
9 hours, you can get your master's degree. I don't know  
10 how familiar you are with it. So you're attracting  
11 police officers and other public safety individuals who  
12 want master's degrees in that particular area.

13 What's your take on that?

14 DR. SABALIS: I think there are three  
15 master's degree programs that you can complete online  
16 now. Online education is obviously one of the things of  
17 the future, and you need to get ahead of the curve. And  
18 I think for someone as busy as law enforcement officers,  
19 that's a good opportunity.

20 I am always concerned, though, that some of  
21 that online program ought to take place on campus so  
22 that there's a personal relationship with students and  
23 they know who to contact as problems arise.

24 SENATOR SCOTT: I think that one does  
25 require some visitations over a period of time.

1 DR. SABALIS: I'm not familiar with the  
2 specifics of that program yet.

3 SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you so much.

4 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other  
5 questions or comments?

6 Hearing none, what's the desire of the  
7 Committee?

8 MR. HAYES: Favorable.

9 SENATOR SCOTT: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: A Second is  
11 heard.

12 All in favor say aye.

13 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

14 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed no; and  
15 the ayes have it.

16 Thank you, sir.

17 DR. SABALIS: Thank you very much.

18 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We appreciate  
19 your willingness to serve, and we're thankful to whoever  
20 convinced you to do this.

21 DR. SABALIS: Thank you very much.

22 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

23 Now Winthrop University. Glen A. McCall  
24 from Rock Hill, At-Large Seat 10.

25 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole

1 truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

2 MR. McCALL: I do, sir.

3 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: On the record,  
4 would you give us your full name.

5 MR. McCALL: Glenn Allen McCall.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

7 Would you like to give us a brief statement  
8 on why you'd like to continue to serve on the Winthrop  
9 Board?

10 MR. McCALL: Yes, sir.

11 First, thank you all for this opportunity  
12 to come before you. I have served on the Winthrop Board  
13 I think now for four years, three years as the  
14 superintendent of education designee, and we had this  
15 at-large seat come available. The governor's office  
16 asked if I could move into that role plus several of my  
17 colleagues on the board because we had a bylaw where if  
18 you were a designee, then you could not serve as an  
19 officer on the executive committee.

20 So I was before this committee, I guess, a  
21 year ago or a little less than a year ago. So I would  
22 like to continue serving on the Winthrop Board because I  
23 think there are some great opportunities, but also, we  
24 have challenges that we have to deal with in higher ed.  
25 Winthrop is an excellent campus. We have great

1 employees and professors, but we, like all institutions,  
2 have questions as it relates to college-aged students  
3 decreasing.

4 As you talked about earlier, online  
5 education is increasing. And we're right at the border,  
6 as you know, with Charlotte, and the North Carolina  
7 Legislature also has a bill that will be coming up, I  
8 guess, before their session end where out-of-state  
9 students bordering states can come into their state as  
10 an in-state tuition.

11 So I feel we have to prepare ourselves for  
12 that. We have to be nimble. And as you know -- and  
13 there has been much talk about enrollment growth being  
14 stagnant or flat over the last ten years, so we have to  
15 work hard to put plans in place to help the university  
16 as a board to work through those issues. And we're  
17 going to have to make the difficult decisions because  
18 our cash flow -- we're definitely meeting obligations,  
19 and I don't mean to say we're not, but we also have to  
20 reward our employees and professors there at the  
21 university, and we have to grow enrollment.

22 So I think my skill set and that I serve  
23 right now here at the finance committee will help. We  
24 are making some tough decisions in trying to control our  
25 non-personnel costs and doing a great job with that. So

1 I think it's a challenging time for higher ed, but I  
2 think that those that accept the challenges are going to  
3 win in the end.

4 And so that's why I would like to serve,  
5 sir.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, and I  
7 sure appreciate your willingness to serve.

8 Like Senator Scott mentioned earlier about  
9 Georgia, and then you indicated that North Carolina is  
10 doing the same thing --

11 MR. McCALL: That's correct.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- what -- look  
13 into your crystal ball. Why do you think they're doing  
14 that? Is their student head count diminishing, or  
15 what's the reason for that?

16 MR. McCALL: Yes.

17 Personally, I think they're being proactive  
18 because we all know that college-aged kids that will  
19 move into college over the next six to ten years is  
20 declining. So they're preparing for that by bringing in  
21 neighboring state kids into their system to continue the  
22 revenue stream that we all so desperately need. They're  
23 a little better than us, but due to state  
24 appropriations, they're struggling with the same  
25 challenges, enrollment growth challenges.

1           CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: It seems from the  
2 political standpoint, they are state supported with  
3 in-state dollars, taxpayer dollars, that live within the  
4 state. I just was curious, you know, and wonder what  
5 kind of pushback they got from their local taxpaying  
6 citizens. I know you can't answer that, but --

7           MR. McCALL: No.

8           CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- I mean, I'm  
9 just curious.

10          MR. McCALL: But I do think that -- I would  
11 hope that as this is debated here in Columbia that maybe  
12 we can equally offer that to our bordering universities,  
13 the out-of-state students, to help with the offset of  
14 some of the enrollment decline.

15          CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If you could  
16 monitor that and see of its effectiveness in any way,  
17 I'd be curious to know.

18          MR. McCALL: Sure.

19          CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

20          SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

21                 2011, 2013, the Parent PLUS program, which  
22 is a program designed after these students have  
23 exhausted all these federal funds, the parents -- and  
24 that's the monies out-of-state students were getting,  
25 the extra money to be able to be out of state. They cut

1 that program on the HBC side. Forty-five percent of the  
2 students who were getting that money that were going to  
3 HBCUs got cut, so that means the other 55 percent, of  
4 course, would be those students coming out of regular  
5 schools.

6 And then that result, it has put all these  
7 schools in a situation for recruiting, enrollment, and  
8 retention. If you don't have the extra money, well, you  
9 can't pay the tuition. So if I've got a student where I  
10 can fill a slot who is in a bordering state, it's far  
11 better for me to bring that student in than to have a  
12 vacant spot at that school.

13 And so schools across this country -- and  
14 I'll be speaking on that a little bit later on in the  
15 month of June in Atlanta -- these students will have to  
16 go to wherever the parents can afford to get them in,  
17 which means a lot of these students will be driving to  
18 school and driving back home so they don't have to pay  
19 for meal plans and pay for housing. So we are in a  
20 major fight between students, colleges, and funding as  
21 we move forward.

22 So in looking -- and I'll have a bill  
23 hopefully ready on one day this week that we'll begin to  
24 take a look at what that's going to do. I don't suggest  
25 that these bordering schools, but even schools that are



1 sitting in the middle of the state of the smaller  
2 schools, will be losing students because those are the  
3 students that we're having selected to come out and come  
4 to our schools.

5 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

6 Senator Hayes, did you have --

7 SENATOR HAYES: No.

8 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator  
9 Alexander, did you want to comment?

10 SENATOR ALEXANDER: No. I'm good, sir.

11 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mister --

12 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. McCall --

13 MR. McCALL: Yes.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- you may have  
15 gone over this last year, but with my memory, I can't  
16 remember. Could you go over the judgments in the civil  
17 cases that you were a party to and I think your wife,  
18 please?

19 MR. McCALL: Yes, yes.

20 One is a foreclosure where we -- a property  
21 that was foreclosed on. There were no actual judgments  
22 that we had to pay because the value of the property was  
23 more than what it sold for.

24 The second one is an unsecured judgment  
25 that was being worked out. The lender didn't want to

1 make a payment agreement because it was cheaper for them  
2 to actually write off the loans, sell it to a third  
3 party, and that's how that happened.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That's all I  
5 have.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Hayes.

7 SENATOR HAYES: I just want to -- not so  
8 much a question. I just want to thank Mr. McCall for  
9 his service on the Winthrop Board and so many other  
10 things that he does. He is a true public servant, and I  
11 think he's made a big difference in his time on the  
12 Winthrop Board already. He has really worked to get  
13 their finances in order.

14 And we have had a transition period from  
15 our president to Georgia over here and a president who  
16 didn't stay very long after that, and now I think we've  
17 got a good president coming on board, and he's been very  
18 much involved in helping us get through the leadership  
19 issues at Winthrop. So I speak very highly of him, and  
20 I think -- I'm just glad to see he's willing to serve  
21 another term.

22 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other  
23 questions or comments?

24 Senator Hayes moves for a favorable report,  
25 and a second from Senator Scott.

1 All in favor say aye.

2 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

3 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed no; and  
4 the ayes have it.

5 MR. McCALL: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you again  
7 for your service.

8 MR. McCALL: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The next, Old  
10 Exchange Building Commission. Greg --

11 MR. OHANESIAN: Ohanesian.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- Ohanesian.

13 MR. OHANESIAN: Ohanesian.

14 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ohanesian?

15 MR. OHANESIAN: Yes, sir.

16 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Thank you.

17 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole  
18 truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

19 MR. OHANESIAN: I do.

20 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Tell us again.

21 How do you pronounce your name?

22 MR. OHANESIAN: Ohanesian.

23 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ohanesian.

24 MR. OHANESIAN: (Nodding head.)

25 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

1                   This is for the Old Exchange Building  
2 Commission At-Large Seat. You are an incumbent.

3                   MR. OHANESIAN: Yes, sir.

4                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to  
5 explain to the Committee why you'd like to consider to  
6 serve on this commission?

7                   MR. OHANESIAN: Thank you.

8                   I have a natural interest in history and  
9 then American and South Carolina history in particular.  
10 I'm an attorney, by the way, 34 years. A member of the  
11 Sons of the American Revolution, and I have a strong  
12 interest in American Revolutionary Board history.

13                   There are three buildings in the United  
14 States at -- three public buildings -- excuse me -- at  
15 which the Declaration of Independence was read: Faneuil  
16 Hall in Boston, Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and  
17 the Old Exchange Building in Charleston. This is a very  
18 significant building, a jewel, in my opinion, that we  
19 have in South Carolina.

20                   The Commission's mission, basically, is to  
21 preserve that building to make it as available as  
22 possible to the public. We have approximately -- or  
23 last year had approximately 60,000 visitors to the Old  
24 Exchange Building. We worked together with the Old  
25 Slave Mart and with the College of Charleston in terms

1 of trying to improve the tourist flow to the Exchange  
2 Building.

3 I guess I've lost my thought. If you all  
4 have a question, it might help me move forward.

5 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: That's all right.  
6 You've said enough, if you're through.

7 MR. OHANESIAN: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Brevity is a plus  
9 with this committee.

10 Thank you.

11 How long have you served on the commission?

12 MR. OHANESIAN: Five years, and I was  
13 elected vice chair two years ago.

14 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Were you  
15 practicing law back when Senator Lindsey was serving in  
16 the Senate?

17 MR. OHANESIAN: Yes, sir, I did.

18 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you have any  
19 Lindsey stories? I know you can't tell them today.

20 MR. OHANESIAN: If I might, in 1982 I  
21 ventured in a campaign against Senator Lindsey;  
22 obviously, not successful.

23 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good.

24 MR. OHANESIAN: So yes, I have a number of  
25 Lindsey stories.

1                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER:  Senator  
2     Alexander.

3                   SENATOR ALEXANDER:  Thank you,  
4     Mr. Chairman.

5                   And I appreciate your service, and I see  
6     where it says that you visit the Old Exchange Building  
7     regularly, at least four times a year.  Is that the --  
8     are the meetings held on a quarterly basis?

9                   MR. OHANESIAN:  They are held on a  
10    quarterly basis.

11                  SENATOR ALEXANDER:  And has your attendance  
12    been -- how would you characterize that during your  
13    service of those five years?

14                  MR. OHANESIAN:  I've missed only one  
15    meeting in the five years.

16                  SENATOR ALEXANDER:  And you would have no  
17    issues going forward with the ability to continue to  
18    serve in that capacity?

19                  MR. OHANESIAN:  Oh, no, not a bit.  No,  
20    sir.

21                  SENATOR ALEXANDER:  Okay.  Thank you,  
22    Mr. Chairman.

23                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER:  Thank you.

24                  Any other questions?

25                  Mr. Whitmire.

1                   REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you,  
2                   Mr. Chairman.

3                   How much does it cost fundingwise to  
4                   maintain the building every year?

5                   MR. OHANESIAN: We generally run about a  
6                   \$600,000 budget. When you talk about old buildings --  
7                   and particularly those a couple of hundred years or more  
8                   run into cycles where there is a higher degree of  
9                   maintenance at one point than at another, but our  
10                  typical years are \$600,000, which is a bit less than our  
11                  revenues. We tend to make just a bit more than that.

12                  We do have reserve accounts to handle those  
13                  high-maintenance operations. We're getting ready, for  
14                  example, to repaint and rewash the front end of the  
15                  building, and we think we have enough funds in hand to  
16                  do that without having to come to the state legislature  
17                  to request more monies.

18                  REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You're probably  
19                  the only ones.

20                  MR. OHANESIAN: We do our best to conserve  
21                  both the building and monies that we have.

22                  REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Let me ask you  
23                  one other question.

24                  You talked about trying to get more  
25                  business there.

1 MR. OHANESIAN: Yes.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Have you got a  
3 plan in place, or are you formulating a plan to --  
4 because 60,000 -- it seems to me like we can get at  
5 least 100,000 people there.

6 MR. OHANESIAN: Yes, and I quite agree.

7 One of the things we need to focus on as a  
8 commission is drawing the school children of our state  
9 to the building. This is a -- again, I love the  
10 building, and it is a great jewel, a great asset that we  
11 have in South Carolina. We, in my opinion, don't have  
12 enough of our grade-school children coming to this  
13 building to see it.

14 I'm up in Marlboro County. I've sponsored  
15 a couple of school trips, fifth graders, because that  
16 was the history class, American History class, and they  
17 take them at fifth grade to Charleston and to the Old  
18 Exchange Building. We need to do more to encourage the  
19 children, the schoolchildren of our state, and to work  
20 with the principals and teachers to encourage these  
21 trips to --

22 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Is it free for  
23 the schools? Is there a --

24 MR. OHANESIAN: No, it isn't. That's how  
25 we fund a lot of our preservation efforts in the



1 building. There's a slight charge. I think it's five  
2 bucks per child, which isn't a whole lot.

3 One of the other great assets of the  
4 building is the Great Hall, which is on the second  
5 floor. This is where Washington was entertained when he  
6 came until 1791. We do wedding receptions, corporate  
7 events in that hall and, of course, charge as much as we  
8 think we can get, 2,500, usually, an evening. But  
9 there's still a lot of evenings where this hall is not  
10 used, and we need to work in that direction to encourage  
11 even more corporate use of that Great Hall.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. Thank you.

13 MR. SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

14 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

15 SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, sir.

16 In attracting those young children to come  
17 to that -- let's call it campus, just for the sake of  
18 discussion --

19 MR. OHANESIAN: Okay.

20 SENATOR SCOTT: -- what amenities would it  
21 have to accommodate? Most of these children, when they  
22 come, they have to have a place for them to gather in  
23 large groups, as well as accommodations for food, water,  
24 and restroom facilities. Is the Exchange designed with  
25 a pattern such as that where you have to make some other

1 kinds of changes? 11:00, 11:30, school children, of  
2 course they want time to leave the Exchange, especially  
3 if they made a trip there from someplace else, to get a  
4 little lunch.

5           And then the tours, are there tour guides  
6 there as well to kind of get them through? Have those  
7 kind of issues been kind of sorted out to try to figure  
8 out how we get them there and how we maintain their  
9 attention so the next class, or that same history class,  
10 may want to come back the next year?

11           MR. OHANESIAN: Excellent question.

12           SENATOR SCOTT: Elaborate a little bit on  
13 that.

14           MR. OHANESIAN: Yeah.

15           When I was making arrangements to bring  
16 these students from Marlboro County -- I have a house in  
17 Charleston as well, and so we served lunch at that house  
18 after they went to the Old Exchange Building. There  
19 are, of course, other restaurants down in the Charleston  
20 area, but you've hit on something essential; and that  
21 is, trying to handle lunch for large groups of students.

22           One of the other things that has been  
23 considered is trying to encourage the students to bring  
24 bagged lunches and have their school cafeterias prepare  
25 these lunches and hand it to them on the bus in the

1 morning so that they have lunch in hand as they're  
2 traveling to the facility.

3 Yes, we have tour guides, and they are  
4 dressed in period costume.

5 SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

6 MR. OHANESIAN: They are very knowledgeable  
7 about American Revolutionary War history and  
8 particularly the history of the building. And we have  
9 developed in recent years the Dungeon of the Old  
10 Exchange, and it is a great attraction for little  
11 children. It's dark. It's beautiful architecture  
12 underneath the brickwork and that sort of thing, scaled  
13 individuals in charge and things like that, as the  
14 patriots would have been --

15 SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

16 GREG OHANESIAN: -- when the British  
17 occupied the city.

18 SENATOR SCOTT: Is there any film  
19 presentation for them to gather? Because you're going  
20 to try to keep kids' attention the whole time. You may  
21 want to look at some catering company too as you try to  
22 make sure -- \$5 or 7 or 10, especially if you're going  
23 to bring children there, so they've got a little food  
24 and they've got a little film presentation and then kind  
25 of walk them through it.

1                   Just some suggestions. Thank you so much.

2                   MR. OHANESIAN: Thank you, sir.

3                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator  
4 Alexander.

5                   SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

6                   And just for the record, I just want to  
7 clarify. Do you currently serve on the Voter  
8 Registration Election Commission?

9                   MR. OHANESIAN: I do not.

10                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir.

11                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Your relationship  
12 of the Exchange is a relationship with the Parks,  
13 Recreation and Tourism, and the tourism folks in  
14 Charleston is a relationship. Do y'all work in concert  
15 or --

16                  MR. OHANESIAN: Oh, very well, and we are  
17 coordinating efforts as we know that there are large  
18 groups coming into the city. Each of these historical  
19 buildings, including the Confederate Building on Market  
20 Street, we coordinate when we know they're bringing in a  
21 group. They let us know when --

22                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You're part of  
23 the map.

24                  MR. OHANESIAN: That's right.

25                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

1 GREG OHANESIAN: That's right.

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good.

3 Any other questions?

4 SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable.

5 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: This motion is a  
6 favorable report.

7 A second?

8 SENATOR HAYES: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I just heard it.

10 All in favor say aye.

11 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed no; and  
13 the ayes have it.

14 Thank you for your willingness to serve.

15 GREG OHANESIAN: Ladies and gentlemen,  
16 thank you very much.

17 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

18 Next, Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School,

19 Ms. Earle M. Bennett from West Columbia, At-Large

20 Seat --

21 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman,  
22 may I ask a question?

23 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Henderson.

24 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Are there three  
25 at-large seats, or are all three of these folks that

1 we're interviewing today running for the same at-large  
2 seat?

3 MS. CASTO: There are three at-large seats.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Okay.

5 MS. CASTO: All of these, yes.

6 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: All right.

7 MS. CASTO: So three people are running for  
8 three seats.

9 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Okay. Thank  
10 you.

11 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Bennett,  
12 raise your right hand.

13 DR. BENNETT: (Complying.)

14 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to  
15 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
16 truth, so help you God?

17 DR. BENNETT: I do.

18 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

19 For the record, if you would state your  
20 full name and then if you'd like to make a brief  
21 statement on why you'd like to serve.

22 DR. BENNETT: My full name is Katherine  
23 Earle McConnell Bennett.

24 And a brief statement?

25 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes, ma'am.

1                   I know it's uncomfortable to have these  
2 microphones in your face.

3                   DR. BENNETT: My chair is a little bit low,  
4 I guess.

5                   Well, my statement would be why I have  
6 opted to run again.

7                   I have been on the board for eight years.  
8 A little more than that, actually, because I've filled  
9 an unexpired seat. So it's been a little over eight  
10 years.

11                   Will Lou Gray has a special place in my  
12 heart because of the students that we get. I taught in  
13 career and technology education for many years. I  
14 learned about everyone having the opportunity to get an  
15 education, and many times, we have to make sure that we  
16 are providing alternative methods.

17                   When we get letters back from grandparents  
18 or from parents or brothers or sisters, they have seen  
19 relatives go through Wil Lou Gray at the outcome versus  
20 what it was like before they got there. It makes me  
21 want to be a part of that, if just a small part.

22                   We have a great staff. I'm always bragging  
23 on them. And we have great support from legislators.

24                   And I'm just very thankful to have the  
25 opportunity -- now that I am retired to have the

1 opportunity to serve, and I appreciate, Senator Peeler,  
2 you and the other Committee members for allowing me to  
3 come before your group this morning.

4 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

5 Any questions or comments from members of  
6 the Committee?

7 MR. WHITMIRE: I have one.

8 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Bennett.  
9 Mr. Whitmire, not Mr. Bennett.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: How many students  
11 are at Wil Lou Gray?

12 DR. BENNETT: Well, we're on a trimester  
13 system, and we average about 375, 370, 476. But over an  
14 average, it's about 375.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What age groups  
16 do you have?

17 DR. BENNETT: Eighteen up.

18 MR. SMITH: Sixteen.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Is there --

20 DR. BENNETT: Sixteen. I'm sorry.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Sixteen.

22 Is there a cutoff, top end?

23 DR. BENNETT: I'm sorry. I will have to  
24 defer to the other two.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I can ask



1       somebody else later.

2               MR. SMITH:   Nineteen.

3               DR. BENNETT:  Nineteen.

4               REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE:  Sixteen to

5       nineteen?

6               MR. SMITH:   Yes.

7               DR. BENNETT:  I know these things.  I'm a

8       little nervous.

9               REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE:  Well --

10              DR. BENNETT:  This morning -- he

11       just hadn't seen me like this in a long time.

12              REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE:  You don't have

13       anything to fear from this group.

14              DR. BENNETT:  Oh.

15              REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE:  They are totally

16       supportive.

17              DR. BENNETT:  I've had a lot of things

18       going on in my life lately.

19              REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE:  And we just thank

20       you so much for your willingness to serve.  Wil Lou Gray

21       is a real asset to our state.  We're very fortunate to

22       have you.

23              DR. BENNETT:  Well, I feel like it's one of

24       our best-kept secrets, if you want to put it that way.

25       Like I said, I have worked with kids that have almost

1 lost their way, and that's where Wil Lou Gray comes in.  
2 If we can get these teenagers on track before they get  
3 into real problems and get them going in the right  
4 direction, then we've served a good purpose.

5 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you,  
6 Ms. Bennett.

7 Any other questions or comments?

8 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Favorable  
9 report.

10 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is a  
11 favorable report.

12 A second is heard.

13 All in favor say aye.

14 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

15 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no; and  
16 the ayes have it.

17 Thank you, Ms. Bennett.

18 DR. BENNETT: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: It wasn't that  
20 bad, was it?

21 DR. BENNETT: Pardon?

22 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: It wasn't that  
23 bad, was it?

24 DR. BENNETT: No, sir.

25 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, we have

1 Deborah S. Blalock from Charleston, At-Large Seat, Wil  
2 Lou Gray.

3 Let me swear you in, Ms. Blalock.

4 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole  
5 truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

6 MS. BLALOCK: I do.

7 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you have a  
8 brief statement on why you'd like to continue to serve?

9 For the record, if you would give you us  
10 your full name.

11 MS. BLALOCK: Sure.

12 Deborah Shogry Blalock.

13 Honestly, my reason is a little bit  
14 selfish. I have a friend that's a coworker who has been  
15 on the board of Wil Lou Gray, and he's just told me so  
16 much about this school and bragged about the school, and  
17 it sounds like something I'd love to be a part of. It  
18 sounds like -- Dr. Bennett said a well-kept secret in  
19 our state, and I'd like to share. I'd like to make it  
20 not be a secret and share the information with my  
21 community in Charleston.

22 Questions or comments for Ms. Blalock?

23 And you heard about this from a friend  
24 on --

25 MS. BLALOCK: I did.

1 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- this vacancy?

2 MS. BLALOCK: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

3 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman, I have --

4 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well, you have  
5 five children, so you should know what you're getting  
6 into.

7 MS. BLALOCK: I have five, 30 to 18. Yes,  
8 they're killing me.

9 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: God bless you.

10 Senator Scott, did you have a question?

11 SENATOR SCOTT: No.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator  
13 Alexander.

14 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you,  
15 Mr. Chairman.

16 With your schedule and everything, would  
17 there be -- would you envision any problem with you  
18 having to be able to attend meetings when necessary?

19 MS. BLALOCK: I don't think so. As you  
20 know, I have a great benefits package with the State of  
21 South Carolina, so I have a lot of leave built up after  
22 21 years.

23 And so I don't think that will be a problem  
24 at all.

25 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

1                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other  
2 questions?

3                   Mr. Whitmire.

4                   REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I see you're from  
5 Massachusetts. What part?

6                   MS. BLALOCK: I was born in the Berkshires  
7 in Lenox, Mass.

8                   REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Oh, I just toured  
9 up there with my wife last year. That's beautiful.

10                  MS. BLALOCK: Beautiful. It is beautiful.

11                  I love where I live now, and I --

12                  REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: How did you end  
13 up in South Carolina?

14                  MS. BLALOCK: My parents moved to  
15 Charleston when I was two.

16                  REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Oh, okay.

17                  MS. BLALOCK: I've been here 53 years.  
18 I've been here a long time.

19                  REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you for  
20 your willingness to serve.

21                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I probably should  
22 have asked an incumbent, but I was curious to know the  
23 difference between John de la Howe and Wil Lou Gray and  
24 if there's some overlap of admissions and if there's  
25 been any discussions of maybe even merging the two.

1 Have you --

2 MS. BLALOCK: I'm completely ignorant about  
3 that.

4 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: That's a good  
5 answer.

6 Motion is a favorable report.

7 And is there a second?

8 A Second.

9 All in favor say aye.

10 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

11 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no; and  
12 the ayes have it.

13 Thank you for willingness to serve.

14 Next, Robert N. Collar from Bluffton,  
15 At-Large Seat.

16 MR. COLLAR: Good morning.

17 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Raise your right  
18 hand.

19 MR. COLLAR: (Complying.)

20 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to  
21 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
22 truth, so help you God?

23 MR. COLLAR: I do.

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record,  
25 if you'd give us your full name.

1 MR. COLLAR: Robert Nicholas Collar.

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you have a  
3 brief statement on why you'd like to serve on the Wil  
4 Lou Gray Opportunity School Board?

5 MR. COLLAR: A brief statement in regards  
6 to that would be that I believe that it's a very  
7 well-run agency. I think it serves the youth of South  
8 Carolina extremely well, and I would love to be a part  
9 of it.

10 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Questions  
11 or comments for Mr. Collar?

12 Senator Alexander.

13 SENATOR ALEXANDER: For the record, I  
14 would -- as far as attendance and meetings and there,  
15 can you comment on your availability from that aspect.

16 MR. COLLAR: I'm available to make all  
17 meetings unless something else comes up, like anyone  
18 else. Me being from Bluffton, it's about a  
19 two-and-a-half-hour ride, but my work schedule allows me  
20 to get to the meetings. So I can do that.

21 SENATOR ALEXANDER: So you wouldn't  
22 envision there being an issue with -- we just want to  
23 make sure, or at least I do, that if and when we elect  
24 folks to boards, we want them to show up.

25 MR. COLLAR: Yep. I will be there, as that

1 wouldn't be a problem. Any other foreseen circumstance,  
2 other than car trouble or any other type of thing, but  
3 regular attendance is a priority of mine. I will be  
4 there.

5 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And you work for  
7 the Beaufort County School District.

8 MR. COLLAR: Yes, sir.

9 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Assessment and  
10 accountability coordinator.

11 MR. COLLAR: Yes, sir.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What is that?

13 MR. COLLAR: It is an in-house made-up  
14 position in regards to -- the assessment portion is I  
15 run all of the school's testing, the ACT, the SAT, the  
16 PLAN and PASS assessments, including the assessment of  
17 our students of special needs. The accountability  
18 portion is I have roughly 373 individuals that are under  
19 my disciplinary constraints, so I'm in charge of a  
20 quarter of disciplining the students there.

21 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. I'd say,  
22 wouldn't that be an asset at Wil Lou Gray?

23 MR. COLLAR: Sure.

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Hayes.

25 SENATOR HAYES: In your capacity, have you



1 had any dealings directly with Wil Lou Gray as far as  
2 some of your students going to Wil Lou Gray?

3 MR. COLLAR: Yes, sir. We've had several  
4 students to take the opportunity to go there. I think  
5 in the past five years, directly at Bluffton High  
6 School, I think we've had five students successfully get  
7 through, which has been a great help. That community,  
8 as far as the Lowcountry Region, hopefully what I've  
9 done is promote the school to give parents that  
10 opportunity to go visit first and then possibly, you  
11 know, gain acceptance into their program, and I believe  
12 that it's served them very well.

13 They weren't having traditional success at  
14 our public high school, and they chose to take the  
15 opportunity and they've done very well for themselves.

16 SENATOR HAYES: Do you have any suggestions  
17 on how Wil Lou Gray might improve?

18 MR. COLLAR: As far as, I think, promotion,  
19 marketing the school a little bit better, possibly  
20 taking advantage of the South Carolina Virtual Charter  
21 School, in that capacity. The strength of Wil Lou Gray  
22 is the fact that it is required that they stay on  
23 campus, the residential aspect, to pull them away from  
24 the setting that they're currently not being successful  
25 in.

1                   But promoting the school a little bit more  
2                   in the different pockets of South Carolina, I think that  
3                   would do well.

4                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative  
5                   Whitmire.

6                   REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Following up on  
7                   Chairman Peeler's question to a previous candidate, can  
8                   you give me a description of how Wil Lou Gray is either  
9                   similar or different from de la Howe school in McCormick  
10                  County?

11                  MR. COLLAR: I've only dealt with John de  
12                  la Howe, that school, on a couple of occasions, with  
13                  students choosing to go there instead of choosing Wil  
14                  Lou Gray as an alternative route to their education  
15                  process. I'm not with the inner workings of John de la  
16                  Howe, as I would be more familiar Wil Lou Gray.

17                  I believe a strength of John de la Howe  
18                  would be, again, removing the children from the current  
19                  setting they're being unsuccessful in, and I believe  
20                  that their stays are longer. I think Wil Lou Gray, I  
21                  believe, it's a three-month setting, where John de la  
22                  Howe can actually prolong their stay for residential a  
23                  little bit lengthier as needed, I think, per student  
24                  case.

25                  But I'm not very familiar with their agency

1 as far as their employees or how that works. Both  
2 schools seem to do well serving the youth of South  
3 Carolina, but I don't know anything other than that.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: There may be an  
5 age difference there. Maybe they --

6 MR. COLLAR: And I do believe that they  
7 start a little bit younger.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Yes.

9 MR. COLLAR: So that -- almost like, I  
10 think, Epworth also -- the children's home, also takes  
11 students that are younger in age. So I believe that  
12 would be a difference.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I should know  
14 this because I was on the education committee for many  
15 years, but what does Wil Lou Gray offer? I know they  
16 offer a settling away from where the student, you know,  
17 was at home, but do they offer the same type of classes  
18 that you would see in a regular --

19 MR. COLLAR: Not necessarily. From my  
20 understanding right now, they still offer GED Track  
21 programs. They give the students the opportunity to  
22 take GED classes, so they teach more or less towards the  
23 GED test. They also, for children who do pass the GED  
24 the first time, they have a GAP program, I believe with  
25 Midlands Tech, where they can start to take classes

1 through Midlands Tech en route to a four-year college  
2 degree.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That's great.

4 MR. COLLAR: So...

5 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other  
7 Questions or comments?

8 What's the desire of the Committee?

9 SENATOR HAYES: Favorable.

10 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is  
11 favorable.

12 A second.

13 All in favor say aye.

14 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

15 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no; and  
16 the ayes have it.

17 Thank you for your willingness to serve.

18 MR. COLLAR: Thank you.

19 The next members, we'll go to the Coastal  
20 Carolina University. All of these candidates are all  
21 incumbent. No one is contested today, I don't think.

22 So first, we'll have George Mullen from  
23 Hilton Head Island, 1st Congressional --

24 MS. CASTO: Mr. Mullen has not arrived. We  
25 are running probably 30 minutes ahead of schedule.

1 Mr. Lyles is here.

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

3 MS. CASTO: And I'll tell y'all before they  
4 start, the university sent us these booklets that are in  
5 front of us that are quick facts about Coastal. So I  
6 think they want y'all to quiz their board members to see  
7 if you can find --

8 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: That must be why  
9 Mr. Mullins is not here.

10 SENATOR ALEXANDER: He's studying.

11 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes, he's  
12 studying.

13 All right. So we'll skip over the 1st  
14 Congressional Seat 1 and go to the 3rd Congressional  
15 Seat 3.

16 William L. Lyles, Jr., from Anderson.

17 Mr. Lyles, if you would, raise your right  
18 hand.

19 MR. LYLES: (Complying.)

20 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to  
21 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
22 truth, so help you God?

23 MR. LYLES: I do.

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to  
25 make a brief statement on why you'd like to continue

1 serving on the Coastal Carolina University Board of  
2 Trustees?

3 MR. LYLES: Stand, or do you want me to  
4 sit?

5 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Sit and speak  
6 into the microphone.

7 MR. LYLES: As I stated in my very brief  
8 statement, that I'd like to continue the financials  
9 order of the university, offer what business experience  
10 I have at 40-something years in the wholesale beer  
11 business in Anderson, South Carolina. And basically,  
12 that's the nuts and bolts of it, giving my time and my  
13 work experience and facilitate matters and move on and  
14 try to take the university to growth.

15 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions or  
16 comments of Mr. Lyles?

17 SENATOR ALEXANDER: A couple of comments.  
18 One comment and one question.

19 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Absolutely,  
20 Senator Alexander.

21 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. Good  
22 afternoon. Good to see you.

23 MR. LYLES: Good to see you, Senator.

24 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Certainly I want to  
25 first and foremost appreciate your work and what you

1 mean to our communities there in the Upstate. Being  
2 from Oconee County, the work that y'all do and the good  
3 corporate citizens --

4 MR. LYLES: Thank you.

5 SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- from that  
6 standpoint.

7 What do you see there at Coastal right now?  
8 Do you feel things are in pretty good order there?

9 MR. LYLES: I think things are better now  
10 than they've ever been. I've been a member of the board  
11 since '93, and I was a parent prior to that. And I've  
12 seen the growth go from 4,000-something to almost  
13 10,000, or maybe 10,000 now.

14 Leadership, I couldn't say enough good  
15 things about our leadership. We have a strong board.  
16 We have good management on our board. We have lively  
17 discussions, and we watch. As I said in one of my  
18 statements, surveillance, constant surveillance.

19 And I think we're very transparent, and  
20 it's just a matter of how many buildings we want to  
21 build and how big we want to be. And --

22 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, it's a beautiful  
23 campus.

24 MR. LYLES: It is.

25 SENATOR ALEXANDER: And y'all are doing a

1 lot of work, and I thank you for your willingness to  
2 continue to contribute to a very wonderful institution  
3 in our state.

4 MR. LYLES: Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott has  
6 a question.

7 SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Lyles, how are you  
8 doing today?

9 MR. LYLES: I'm doing fine.

10 SENATOR SCOTT: I notice that Coastal is  
11 about 60 percent in-state and 40 percent out-of-state  
12 students.

13 MR. LYLES: It's a little bit less than  
14 that now. I think it's 50 to 48 with this new in state  
15 against out of state.

16 SENATOR SCOTT: Fifty-eight in state?

17 MR. LYLES: I believe that's what it is,  
18 yeah. It's in this package.

19 SENATOR SCOTT: It sounds like you took the  
20 old book there probably as you were coming in.

21 MR. LYLES: No. I encourage all of y'all  
22 to read that thing and make this thing go a little  
23 faster, but...

24 SENATOR SCOTT: Given the agreements  
25 occurring both in North Carolina and Georgia, Georgia



1 has already adopted the agreement with those students  
2 that live in border states. They are going to begin to  
3 allow certain schools in Georgia and, I think, North  
4 Carolina had a bill of two, we're told, to allow those  
5 border-state students now to come to South Carolina,  
6 students to come into a very specific college at the  
7 same fair or fee to go to colleges as if a regular  
8 residential student.

9           What affect do you think that it's going to  
10 have on Coastal?

11           MR. LYLES: If they've qualified, I think  
12 it's a good idea, but here again, you know, Coastal was  
13 started in 1954 to serve a need to Horry-Georgetown  
14 County. That's first and foremost, and you just have to  
15 measure things. I think they call it in government  
16 "feasibility study." I think. It hasn't been done that  
17 I know of, but --

18           SENATOR SCOTT: Well, have you --

19           MR. LYLES: I think anything to make the  
20 university grow within our boundaries and our  
21 capabilities, I think it's good, but we have to make  
22 sure it's -- we can do it first.

23           SENATOR SCOTT: Well, the reason why I ask  
24 that -- and it may not work as well for Coastal --  
25 Coastal out-of-state students pay \$23,300. In-state

1 students pay \$9,960. The damage it could actually do  
2 with, you know, out-of-state students who live on the  
3 border -- because you're right there at North Carolina,  
4 or straight up the coast, with beautiful beaches and  
5 facilities that I traveled not too long ago. And I  
6 don't know how many students you have that are really  
7 border students who would qualify for that.

8 I would invite you to go back and  
9 immediately take a look at that.

10 MR. LYLES: Okay.

11 SENATOR SCOTT: It could really bring your  
12 numbers down, especially if you're in the middle of  
13 this.

14 MR. LYLES: I'm sure someone that you will  
15 talk to today might have a little better insight of all  
16 that.

17 SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Thank you so much.

18 MR. LYLES: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other  
20 questions or comments for Mr. Lyles?

21 Senator Alexander.

22 SENATOR ALEXANDER: I think it's the  
23 appropriate time to move for favorable.

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Whitmire has  
25 a quick question for him.

1                   Mr. Whitmire.

2                   REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I'm into the  
3 student growth. 615 percent sounds great, but do you  
4 get to a point where you're just too saturated with  
5 growth and that's more of your goal in trying to, you  
6 know, kind of rein it in? What's your feelings on that?

7                   MR. LYLES: When my son started there in  
8 1990, it was 4,000-something. We're now at 10,000.  
9 That is a good question.

10                  But we're growing. We're building  
11 buildings thanks to lots of things. That's something  
12 that needs some serious discussion in years to come.  
13 Right now we don't seem to -- we haven't seen any  
14 problems that we can't handle with our management right  
15 now, but, you know, it concerns me to a certain degree.  
16 You know, you don't want to get too big for  
17 your britches.

18                  REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You don't want to  
19 water down your --

20                  MR. LYLES: No, I don't think that's going  
21 to happen. I think that's where our leadership comes in  
22 and then -- first and foremost, we watch tenure of  
23 professors. We want to make sure our professors are  
24 doing what they're supposed to be doing, and we're  
25 constantly monitoring students as well. And I haven't

1 seen any instances where that would make me say, "No,  
2 you know, we've got to cut it off here."

3 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Actually, you've  
4 got a really good product in a great location.

5 MR. LYLES: A wonderful location.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You've got 48 --  
7 over 48 percent of your students willing to pay \$23,000  
8 to come to the school. I mean, obviously, it's a real  
9 enticement.

10 MR. LYLES: Yes. It's a bargain. You  
11 know, we have a lot of people. And Senator Alexander  
12 can tell you, in Oconee County --

13 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Yes, sir.

14 MR. LYLES: -- we have a ton of folks go  
15 around Lake Keowee and think they've died and gone to  
16 heaven because of prices and the beauty. And, you know,  
17 we offer the same thing at Coastal with the ocean and  
18 the -- we have a lot of pluses. The state has a lot of  
19 pluses.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I'm glad you  
21 weren't open when I was in school, because I would have  
22 gone there, and I probably would have flunked out after  
23 one year.

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If there are no  
25 other question or comments, Senator Alexander, we'll

1 move this motion as a favorable report.

2 Is there a second?

3 A second is heard.

4 All in favor say aye.

5 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no; and  
7 the ayes have it.

8 Thank you, sir.

9 MR. LYLES: Thank you.

10 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Good to see you again.

11 MR. LYLES: Good to see you too.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Mullen is  
13 here, Mr. George Mullen. I'd like to call him up.  
14 1st Congressional Seat 1.

15 Good afternoon, sir.

16 MR. MULLEN: Good afternoon.

17 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to  
18 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
19 truth, so help you God?

20 MR. MULLEN: I do.

21 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record,  
22 if you would state your full name.

23 MR. MULLEN: George Edward Mullen from  
24 Hilton Head.

25 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Very good.

1                   Would you like to make a brief statement on  
2 why you'd like to continue to serve on the board?

3                   MR. MULLEN: Yes, sir. I've had the  
4 pleasure of being on Coastal's Board for the past two  
5 years. I became extremely interested in the school when  
6 my son started in a special program three years ago. I  
7 have had the opportunity these past two years to be,  
8 obviously, much more involved.

9                   The atmosphere at the university is just an  
10 exciting time to be at Coastal. It's a place of  
11 tremendous growth. You can see the excitement, not only  
12 in the administration, but in the students that I've  
13 gotten to know a number of.

14                   I believe I've got certain abilities that I  
15 can add to it, particularly the fact that we're going  
16 through a growth time right now, a substantial amount of  
17 new construction on the campus. I have -- and my  
18 background is in construction litigation. That's all  
19 I've done for like the past 35 years. So I have a good  
20 feel for that aspect of the strategic planning from a  
21 construction standpoint, the construction that's going  
22 on, and I've been able to add to the board and my  
23 knowledge on those areas.

24                   As I said, these times you find right now  
25 in higher education, you can't pick up the paper today

1 without reading about issues, whether they be Sweet  
2 Briar College in Virginia closing up in two weeks or  
3 even closer to home, issues that we have with some of  
4 our schools. We have been fortunate at Coastal that we  
5 have not seen those issues. We have a steady growth in  
6 students wanting to come to our school.

7           It's critical that we remain relevant to  
8 what those kids need. It's critical that we do all this  
9 within a balanced-budget format. Our administration is  
10 committed to that. I know that our board that I've  
11 worked with is committed to supporting the  
12 administration in that.

13           I would certainly like the opportunity to  
14 be able to continue.

15           CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Questions  
16 or comments for Mr. Mullen?

17           Senator Hayes.

18           SENATOR HAYES: You've been on the board a  
19 couple of years. Do you see any areas that Coastal  
20 needs to work on?

21           MR. MULLEN: Well, the two areas that I  
22 addressed to this same group two years ago, that has  
23 improved, but it still needs more improvement. The  
24 first is the retention of freshmen students. When I  
25 came on board two years ago, our retention rate was 60

1 percent. Today it is 67 percent. Although it's better,  
2 it's still not good enough.

3 Our administration has a short-term goal of  
4 reaching 72 percent, which I find to be still  
5 inadequate. If you look at other typical schools of our  
6 peers, the College of Charleston, Winthrop, they're in  
7 the 80-percent retention rate, and we need to get our  
8 freshmen retention rate up to there.

9 Equally important, though, is our  
10 graduation rate. For some reason, our Government  
11 decides to judge graduation rates on a six-year basis,  
12 although my own son says he wishes to be on the  
13 five-year program himself. There's fairly a lot of  
14 people like that, but on a six-year graduation rate, our  
15 graduation rate is something like 46 and a half percent,  
16 which I find to be woefully inadequate.

17 I mean, we're bringing kids to the school  
18 to teach them and to put them out into the real world to  
19 where they can become employed in meaningful jobs. To  
20 do this, we need to complete the task of not only  
21 getting them to the school, but getting them to  
22 graduate.

23 The administration has been actively  
24 addressing both of these issues. We have an initiative,  
25 which is basically a consumer-oriented -- it's called



1 "Feel the Teal Initiative," where we're trying to become  
2 responsive to our clients. The students and their  
3 family are the clients of the university and made a  
4 significant effort to address that.

5 We've addressed new issues of -- on perhaps  
6 marginal admitees of a summer programs to bring these  
7 kids in to where if they're able to pass a couple of  
8 courses through the summer, they get a full admittance  
9 and then they get resources to support them through the  
10 remainder on their time at school. Academic resources  
11 is an area that we're improving, which is to help with  
12 the retention and with the ultimate graduation rates.

13 And if we increase the retention, the  
14 percentage of graduates just naturally follows.

15 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator  
16 Alexander.

17 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you,  
18 Mr. Chairman.

19 On your time on the board -- and I  
20 appreciate your service -- how would you classify your  
21 attendance at your meetings and responsibilities?

22 MR. MULLEN: I missed one meeting. Last  
23 May the 9th meeting, my dad passed away two days  
24 earlier.

25 SENATOR ALEXANDER: I'm sorry about that.

1 We certainly understand.

2 MR. MULLEN: That's the only time that  
3 I've --

4 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Sure.

5 MR. MULLEN: In fairness, to answer that  
6 question, we have a board meeting on the 7th and 8th,  
7 and my daughter graduates from Vanderbilt Law School on  
8 the morning of the 8th, and I'll be missing that  
9 meeting.

10 SENATOR ALEXANDER: And you better be  
11 there. Congratulations to her as well.

12 MR. MULLEN: Thank you.

13 SENATOR ALEXANDER: And we understand how  
14 things of that nature and family obligations do impact  
15 you.

16 MR. MULLEN: I do spend a great deal of  
17 time at the school, though. I was there Saturday for  
18 their win over Radford. I do enjoy going to the local  
19 events because my son is in, you know, special program.  
20 It's called the LIFE Program there.

21 I tend to go up most weekends. The LIFE  
22 Program is for kids -- my son has Down syndrome. So  
23 it's when kids are not in the ultimate degree-granting  
24 situation, but it gives them an opportunity to have the  
25 college experience and to learn job skills that, you

1 know, will help them in life.

2 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other  
5 questions or comments?

6 What's the desire of the Committee?

7 SENATOR HAYES: Favorable.

8 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is  
9 favorable, and a second is heard.

10 All in favor say aye.

11 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no; and  
13 the ayes have it.

14 Thank you, sir.

15 MR. MULLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Congratulations  
17 to your daughter.

18 MR. MULLEN: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You're keeping in  
20 the family it looks like.

21 MR. MULLEN: I couldn't talk her out of it.  
22 I tried.

23 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, we have  
24 Charles Lewis from Gaffney, 5th Congressional District.

25 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole

1 truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

2 MR. LEWIS: I do.

3 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record,  
4 would you state your full name.

5 MR. LEWIS: My name is Charles Edward Lewis  
6 from Gaffney, South Carolina, and I would just like to  
7 thank each of you for having us here today so that we  
8 can tell you a little bit about our university.

9 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: All right. Well,  
10 give us a quick statement, and then we'll ask you some  
11 questions.

12 MR. LEWIS: Well, first of all, I found out  
13 about Coastal Carolina back in the late '80s. My  
14 daughter received a basketball scholarship to go there,  
15 and thank goodness she played basketball, tennis, and  
16 graduated in four years. She went to law school and is  
17 an attorney now. But we have been watching Coastal  
18 Carolina, my wife and I and family, all of the years and  
19 especially how it has grown and what it was like when  
20 she went there and what it is like today.

21 If you haven't been to Coastal Carolina  
22 University, you need to go and take a look at a  
23 beautiful campus with beautiful buildings, and not only  
24 that, beautiful students. I've been to a lot of college  
25 campuses, and I must say, they're the most polite and

1 helpful students that you will find anywhere. And if  
2 you ask them a question, they don't say, "It's down  
3 there." They take you to it.

4 It's a wonderful atmosphere with wonderful  
5 leadership, and I encourage all of you to visit there.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good.

7 I understand in your report here, you said,  
8 "The strength of the school is a web-based outreach."

9 Share with us. What's the success of that  
10 and just what is that?

11 MR. LEWIS: Senator Peeler, the web base is  
12 a course. Most college campuses now have any type of  
13 electronics that you want, but web based means that  
14 we're sending out information about the school across  
15 the United States and also other countries. We have  
16 students, of course in South Carolina, which represent  
17 about 50 percent and out of state about 48.

18 But the web-based thing reaches out to  
19 students, and that's a lot of the way that they learn  
20 about Coastal Carolina and what curriculums they offer,  
21 and they also learn about the great price of going to  
22 Coastal Carolina and not so bad being in Conway and very  
23 close to Myrtle Beach.

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And very  
25 successful in your opinion?

1 MR. LEWIS: Very successful.

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Any other  
3 questions or comments for Mr. Lewis?

4 Senator Hayes.

5 SENATOR HAYES: Have you been on the board  
6 before?

7 MR. LEWIS: I've been on there since June  
8 the 5th, 2013.

9 SENATOR HAYES: And in your time on the  
10 board, does anything need to be improved there?

11 MR. LEWIS: I really think Mr. Mullens  
12 pretty much covered some of the things that we're really  
13 trying to improve; and that is, retention and graduation  
14 rate. I will say we have great leadership at the  
15 university, not only through the president and the  
16 administration, but I also feel like we have great  
17 leadership on our board and a very active board.

18 I know, Senator Scott, you asked about  
19 coming from another state. I will say Coastal Carolina  
20 turns down no South Carolina student that meets its  
21 requirements. Right now our freshmen class, their SATs  
22 are a little over 1,000, and their GPAs in high school  
23 are coming in about 3.7 percent. But Coastal Carolina  
24 does not turn down any South Carolina students that meet  
25 requirements.

1                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: That's good to  
2 know.

3                   Senator Scott.

4                   SENATOR SCOTT: I just wonder if you just  
5 want to expand a little bit on that.

6                   MR. LEWIS: Okay.

7                   SENATOR SCOTT: It's really not the South  
8 Carolina students I'm really worried about. I'm worried  
9 about the schools adjacent to you in North Carolina. If  
10 they start taking your students, which with any nearby  
11 coastal kind of university, you most likely will be in  
12 competition with some because they change cost and  
13 allowing now South Carolina students to go into North  
14 Carolina. That's where my concern is.

15                   I want to make sure we stay competitive and  
16 that you continue to have the kind of success that  
17 you're now familiar with and have had for so long.

18                   MR. LEWIS: I think Coastal Carolina will  
19 definitely stay competitive, and Coastal Carolina,  
20 actually a couple of years ago, we went two years  
21 without even raising tuition. And we have a housing  
22 program now where we will not have to raise our housing  
23 costs for probably at least the next 10 to 15 years or  
24 longer.

25                   SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

1 MR. LEWIS: Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Whitmire.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Just one quick  
4 question.

5 MR. LEWIS: Yes, sir.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What's the name  
7 of your baseball coach; do you know?

8 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Is it in the  
9 thing here?

10 MR. LEWIS: I just talked to him last week.  
11 I should. You caught me off guard. I don't know.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Is he happy at  
13 Coastal?

14 MR. LEWIS: He's is very happy. He's a  
15 Coastal graduate.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That's  
17 unfortunate.

18 MR. LEWIS: He is. He is.

19 I've been on the board for two years, and I  
20 did have the opportunity to meet him the other week when  
21 we were -- when we had a dedication for the baseball and  
22 softball fields. And he is very happy at Coastal  
23 Carolina, and please do not try to steal him.

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator  
25 Alexander.



1                   SENATOR ALEXANDER: Following up on that,  
2 with your football program, so are you getting a new  
3 stadium or just a new field?

4                   MR. LEWIS: Just going from grass to an  
5 artificial turf.

6                   SENATOR ALEXANDER: What color turf is that  
7 going to be?

8                   MR. LEWIS: It's going to be teal, sir.  
9 I've got a picture of it if you'd like to see it.

10                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: That's all right. Now,  
11 that's a color.

12                  MR. LEWIS: That's -- yeah.

13                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

14                  MR. LEWIS: It has the Chanticleer logo  
15 right in the middle, and it's teal, but it looks very  
16 nice.

17                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: And one final -- and  
18 then who's paying for that for you, please, sir? It's  
19 TD -- is it? Or is it the TD Bank Center? Did they pay  
20 for the new facility -- the fake grass --

21                  MR. LEWIS: Well, they --

22                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- or are they  
23 contributing towards it?

24                  MR. LEWIS: They are contributing towards  
25 that, yes, sir.



1 the ayes have it. Thank you, Chuck. Good to --

2 MR. LEWIS: Thank you very much. I  
3 appreciate it.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I  
5 was going to ask him if he spoke Gaffnese.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: He does speak  
7 Gaffnese.

8 Now we'll have Gene Spivey, Myrtle Beach,  
9 At-Large Seat 9.

10 How do you do, sir?

11 MR. SPIVEY: Good.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to  
13 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
14 truth, so help you God?

15 MR. SPIVEY: I do.

16 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to  
17 make a brief statement on why you'd like to continue to  
18 serve on the board?

19 MR. SPIVEY: Brief.

20 As a Coastal graduate, I'd just like to --  
21 I've been on the board for ten, twelve years now. I'll  
22 just keep doing -- keep on doing what we're doing.

23 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If it ain't  
24 broke, don't fix it, right?

25 MR. SPIVEY: Yes, sir.

1                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions or  
2                   comments?

3                   Senator Alexander.

4                   SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, and good  
5                   afternoon. Good to see you. Thank you for your  
6                   service.

7                   Could you characterize for me your  
8                   attendance and your involvement as a board member,  
9                   please, sir.

10                  MR. SPIVEY: When you asked the question to  
11                  the previous candidate, I'm trying to think when the  
12                  last time I missed a meeting was. I don't miss many, if  
13                  I've missed any at all. A couple, if I'm -- just like  
14                  Mr. Mullens said a little while ago, I'm on campus  
15                  probably at least every other week or so, if nothing  
16                  else. The last week or so when I -- and my office is in  
17                  Conway, and I go back and forth. I live at the beach.

18                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: You're right there at  
19                  the back door, aren't you?

20                  MR. SPIVEY: I cut through campus just to  
21                  go -- lately I'm just going and cutting through to look  
22                  at our new teal football field, just to watch the  
23                  installation process, and I just ride through campus and  
24                  head on back to the beach. So I'm on campus fairly  
25                  regular.

1                   SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir.

2                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other  
3 questions or comments for Mr. Spivey?

4                   Motion is a favorable report.

5                   A second.

6                   All in favor say aye.

7                   ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

8                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no; and  
9 the ayes have it.

10                  There's an advantage of coming towards the  
11 end.

12                  MR. SPIVEY: I had all those other  
13 questions ready to go too.

14                  Next, we'll have William E. Turner from  
15 Simpsonville, At-Large Seat 11.

16                  MR. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to  
18 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
19 truth, so help you God?

20                  MR. TURNER: I do. Thank you.

21                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to  
22 make a brief statement on why you'd like to continue to  
23 serve on the Coastal Carolina Board?

24                  MR. TURNER: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

25                  I actually prepared a statement, but you've

1 already heard most of what I have written. So it's my  
2 pleasure to sit before you today.

3 Four years ago when I sat before this  
4 committee with a love for my alma mater, I didn't  
5 realize that that love could grow at all. However, over  
6 the last four years I can say that I love that  
7 university and the folks that make up this institution  
8 more today than I ever have before. And with your  
9 approval, I would like to continue the service and ride  
10 this wave of momentum that I feel Coastal is seeing  
11 today.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

13 Any questions?

14 Senator Hayes.

15 SENATOR HAYES: Having been on the board  
16 for one term, what do you see with the areas that need  
17 improvement?

18 MR. TURNER: Growing up in Conway, Senator,  
19 I've watched this institution grow from a very small  
20 parcel of land with just a few buildings to what we see  
21 today. Education to the public surrounding the campus,  
22 as well as the public through South Carolina, has been a  
23 challenge for us. For many, many, many years, we've  
24 been seen as the small community college in the small  
25 town of Conway, but Coastal Carolina is no longer that

1 small community college. We're, what I'd like to call  
2 it, the hidden gem within the state of South Carolina.

3 So making the public understand that fact  
4 has been a challenge and will be a challenge for some  
5 time to come.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Henderson.

7 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you,  
8 Mr. Turner. I have the privilege of representing  
9 Mr. Turner in Greenville County, and I know that he does  
10 love this university, and I'm always glad to see alumni  
11 that want to come back. I know that it's not a short  
12 drive from up in our neck of the woods. It's a good  
13 five-hour drive, but I do appreciate your service.

14 And so I wanted to ask you, since you're  
15 chairman of the retention committee, a little bit about,  
16 you know, why it's been so low and what y'all are doing  
17 to get it up to where you think it should be.

18 MR. TURNER: That is an excellent question.

19 To speak to why it got to 59 percent a few  
20 years ago, I really don't have a solid answer for that;  
21 however, the initiatives that we've taken over the last  
22 three years to increase that rate from 59 percent to --  
23 I believe it's 68 percent today, have been campus wide.  
24 We certainly had to educate all members of the faculty  
25 and staff as to the importance of our retention rate and

1 make everyone understand that they all play a role in  
2 that.

3 Some of the initiatives that have taken  
4 place over the last few years are future learning  
5 outside of the classroom. We have initiatives that take  
6 place in student housing. We recognized a need to  
7 better our advisement of students.

8 We feel, as a board and as the  
9 administration at Coastal, that every student that  
10 succeeds at Coastal has to make connections somewhere.  
11 Whether that connection is with an administrator or a  
12 professor or a coach, the connection has to be made. So  
13 now that everyone understands the importance of the  
14 retention, keeping the students from going back to  
15 another state after their freshmen year is of the utmost  
16 importance. And as we will see, with the increase of  
17 our retention rate, our graduation rate will also  
18 increase over time as well.

19 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Favorable at the  
21 appropriate time.

22 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We have a  
23 question from Representative Whitmire.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you,  
25 Mr. Turner --



1 MR. TURNER: Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- and your  
3 willingness to serve. I'm looking at a couple of  
4 questions.

5 First, on question four about do you think  
6 the current enrollment is on track? Please state why.

7 You say you feel like growth should be  
8 between 1 and 3 percent.

9 MR. TURNER: Yes, sir.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And you've got  
11 the infrastructure and workforce to support 12,500  
12 students right now. Do you anticipate a projection long  
13 term, ten years or twenty years from now, of how many  
14 students you may have at Coastal?

15 MR. TURNER: We have a goal of 12,500  
16 students by the year 2020. For that reason, we've been  
17 growing our infrastructure both with brick and mortar,  
18 as well as the electronic facets that go into that.  
19 Students have a greater demand for bandwidth today than  
20 they have ever had before. So we've invested  
21 considerable funds in making sure that they have the  
22 tools necessary to support that growth.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. And my  
24 other question is on the next page as part of question  
25 five we're talking about the percentages --

1 MR. TURNER: Yes.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- of out of  
3 state versus in state. And obviously, out of state is  
4 going to bring you a lot more money in, and I understand  
5 the economic factor, but that is a question that's come  
6 up time and time again in these hearings, not just your  
7 school but schools across the state. Are we severing  
8 the needs of the young people of this state first versus  
9 going out of state?

10 MR. TURNER: Yes, sir.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And would you  
12 care to comment on that?

13 MR. TURNER: I would.

14 Like has been stated before by Mr. Lewis  
15 and potentially others before I walked in the door, we  
16 will not deny admission to any in-state student that  
17 meets the minimum requirements. With that, we certainly  
18 want the in-state students to come to Coastal Carolina.

19 We recognize we have a unique challenge in  
20 this state with some very longstanding traditional  
21 institutions in Clemson and South Carolina, Furman and  
22 Wofford and others. We certainly want to compete with  
23 those institutions, so we make it a point to, obviously,  
24 set minimum requirements, but also to admit every  
25 student that meets those minimum requirements.

1                   REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What are the  
2                   minimum requirements?

3                   MR. TURNER: Our minimum SAT score is, I  
4                   want to say, 910; however, SAT scores and ACT scores are  
5                   not the only factors we take into account when looking  
6                   at a student's application. We certainly look at their  
7                   class ranking. We look at their extracurricular  
8                   activities. We look at their overall GPA as a student.

9                   I have a daughter who's a phenomenal  
10                  student, but she's not well into -- she doesn't do well  
11                  on standardized tests. So fortunately, we do have other  
12                  factors that we look at other than just the minimum  
13                  testing scores.

14                 REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. Thank you.

15                 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

16                 SENATOR SCOTT: One question.

17                 MR. TURNER: Yes, sir.

18                 SENATOR SCOTT: You're \$9,960 and in some  
19                 places \$10,000 a year -- 10,040. The 9,960, that's just  
20                 tuition. What about for room and board and other costs?  
21                 At the end of the day, what is an in-state student  
22                 paying for all the costs associated with going, and  
23                 also, what's an out-of-state student paying for the  
24                 total package, if you have that?

25                 MR. TURNER: Sure.

1           The room and board is going to average  
2   between -- I want to say it's about \$8,800 to roughly  
3   \$10,700 depending on the options they choose. And if  
4   I'm not mistaken, that figure is the same for in state  
5   and out of state.

6           SENATOR SCOTT: And the meal ticket is  
7   included in that?

8           MR. TURNER: Yes, sir.

9           SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Thank you so much.

10          MR. TURNER: And as has been stated once  
11   before as well, with some initiatives that we're taking  
12   by the board and the administration, we should not see  
13   an increase in those housing rates for the next  
14   foreseeable future.

15          SENATOR SCOTT: Roughly 20,500.

16          MR. TURNER: Roughly \$20,000 a year for an  
17   in-state student, yes, sir.

18          SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you so much.

19          CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions or  
20   comments?

21          Ms. Henderson already indicated a favorable  
22   report for her constituent.

23          A second is heard.

24          All in favor say aye.

25          ALL MEMBERS: Aye.



1 past ten years on the board at Coastal Carolina. The  
2 last half of year I've been the vice chair of the board,  
3 but more important to me is the last four years I've  
4 watched my daughter as a student, grow as a person, to  
5 see her mature, and to see her enjoy her college life.  
6 This May I'll be the proud dad sitting up there and  
7 watching her walk across the stage.

8 She was just inducted into the National  
9 Honor Society. She is very involved in her sorority.  
10 And the only thing that really concerned me is when  
11 Coach Ellis talked her into being the manager on the  
12 men's basketball team and she started traveling with  
13 them. But she's enjoyed that experience also, even  
14 though I've lost a few hairs over it.

15 But it's -- I've seen the quality of  
16 education that's given at Coastal. I would like to say  
17 she was going to work, but she's decided to stay for her  
18 master's. And then she's informed me, after that, she  
19 wants to go to law school. And I'm like, "I'd like you  
20 to get a job one day."

21 But the quality of our professors, the  
22 quality of the administration we have, and I think the  
23 leadership of this board has made it where I can say  
24 that I'm proud my daughter is a Coastal Carolina alumni,  
25 and I want to continue that service. I want to see all

1 the universities in this state perform.

2 As a business owner, I have about 2,000  
3 employees in Maryland, South Carolina, and Alabama, and  
4 I look for quality leadership. In fact, I will be  
5 interviewing one of the gentlemen who will be graduating  
6 with a master's from Coastal to put in an  
7 administrator-in-training program with us. I want to be  
8 able to offer those opportunities to our bright young  
9 men and women who graduate from out universities. So  
10 I'd like to see that continue.

11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

13 Questions or comments?

14 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman.

15 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator  
16 Alexander.

17 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you,  
18 Mr. Chairman.

19 And certainly, first and foremost, I want  
20 to thank you for your service on Coastal's Board. But  
21 what you mean to our communities in the Upstate, you're  
22 a tremendous corporate citizen. I appreciate those  
23 efforts.

24 In those ten years you've been on the  
25 board, what is the biggest change that you've seen from

1 that standpoint?

2 MR. BIGGS: Well, in ten years, it's been  
3 the growth that we've faced. And as we look at growth  
4 in the future, you know, yes, we're preparing for that  
5 growth with the new buildings, but a building is not  
6 worth anything without quality professors, without the  
7 people that make the difference, very much like in our  
8 nursing homes. It's the people, not the building, that  
9 gives the quality of care. Well, it's the professors,  
10 and we need to make sure we're recruiting top-notch  
11 professors, and we're not -- and with that, I think  
12 we'll see that retention rate grow.

13 You know, some of our retention, you know,  
14 in honesty, some kids can't get into -- let's use  
15 Clemson as an example. They'll come to Coastal and then  
16 transfer to Clemson the next year. That's not a bad  
17 thing, but we want to see them come to Coastal and say,  
18 "I would rather stay here."

19 SENATOR ALEXANDER: So it gets to that  
20 point -- if I could, Mr. Chairman.

21 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Sure.

22 SENATOR ALEXANDER: What you're saying, a  
23 lot of times with your rates, it's not that they're  
24 withdrawing from getting out of higher education.  
25 They're just going back to other institutions.



1                   MR. BIGGS: To another university that they  
2 may not have qualified -- but --

3                   SENATOR ALEXANDER: In state or out of  
4 state.

5                   MR. BIGGS: In state or out. It Might have  
6 been a little higher than we were, but -- and then also,  
7 I think we need to see our alumni to continue to grow  
8 and get more involved. If you look at -- and using  
9 three universities in our state, Clemson, South  
10 Carolina, and Citadel -- huge alumni basis.

11                   Those alumni bring in a lot of money to the  
12 university. Their children follow up. Our alumni  
13 basis -- our alumni program is working to keep that in  
14 our state, but we do not see our alumni taking the  
15 leadership roles back into universities that you do in  
16 those. But I think that's starting to happen, because  
17 now we're getting out and meeting our alumni in  
18 different places.

19                   In fact, our president just came back from  
20 Iceland from meeting with -- it was unbelievable -- over  
21 50 alumni there, and they invited him to come out and  
22 speak. And they're taking more interest in our  
23 university from another country.

24                   SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman, if I  
25 could, one final question.

1                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Certainly. Yes,  
2                   certainly.

3                   SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you,  
4                   Mr. Chairman.

5                   And in your service since the last  
6                   screening, your participation percentagewise, meetings  
7                   and things have been --

8                   MR. BIGGS: I have missed one board meeting  
9                   in that time. Again, a death in the family. My  
10                  father-in-law passed away.

11                  And I've missed one committee meeting  
12                  through the need to be here for a meeting.

13                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: Sure. Well, I  
14                  understand that. So thank you.

15                  It's good to see you today too.

16                  MR. BIGGS: You too, sir.

17                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

18                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other  
19                  questions or comments for Mr. Biggs?

20                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: I'd move for favorable  
21                  if this time is appropriate.

22                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: At the  
23                  appropriate time I'll -- you say you've managed VA  
24                  Nursing Homes.

25                  MR. BIGGS: Yes, sir.

1                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Define the  
2 "manage" part.

3                   MR. BIGGS: In South Carolina, we have the  
4 two, two of the Veterans Nursing Homes, Richard Campbell  
5 in Anderson -- and I've been involved with that home  
6 since it really opened -- and the Veterans Victory House  
7 in Walterboro. The state of South Carolina puts out an  
8 RSD for the management of those homes. We put in for  
9 that over 15 years ago and was granted the privilege of  
10 caring for those veterans.

11                   I am a veteran myself. My dad was a World  
12 War II veteran. So to me, it's a privilege and an honor  
13 to get to care for those men and women who gave so much  
14 to this country.

15                   But we also manage the Maryland Veterans  
16 Home in Charlotte Hall, and we manage the four veterans  
17 homes for the state of Alabama.

18                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: So that means  
19 that they just hand you the keys and you take care  
20 of everything from --

21                   MR. BIGGS: We take over and do  
22 everything --

23                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- janitorial --

24                   MR. BIGGS: Hiring, cleaning, cooking.

25                   Yes, sir.

1                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good.

2                   You've been on this board for nine years,  
3 and I personally feel like it helps the university, but  
4 are you tracking the success -- I know we kind of had  
5 some humor about the baseball coach and all the  
6 basketball and football. The success of the  
7 Chanticleers on the athletic --

8                   MR. BIGGS: Yes, sir, I do. I was -- you  
9 know, like many of us, I think about -- I look back.  
10 I'm a whole lot better athlete today than I was when I  
11 played. But I love college athletics.

12                   Whether -- you know, at Coastal, with my  
13 daughter on the team, I've traveled to most of their  
14 basketball games. I was in Omaha for the NCAA  
15 Tournament.

16                   Gary Gilmore has done a great job. We're  
17 glad that Auburn didn't get him and Tennessee didn't get  
18 him. They both tried. But the success that we've had  
19 there, we've been ranked as high as 19th in the country  
20 this year.

21                   Football -- you know, when you really look  
22 at Coastal's football, 12 years in and seven Big South  
23 Championships. I think if you ask any university, in  
24 starting a program, if they could have that success,  
25 would they take it, and they would sign up all day long.

1 But, you know, athletics is part of the college life.  
2 For the students, it brings them back in.

3 But what this has done by our baseball team  
4 making the Super Regionals, our basketball going to the  
5 NCAA two years in a row, our football team making it to  
6 the final eight, soccer making it into the tournament  
7 every year, women's golf just won the Big South, those  
8 type things are what -- you know, so many people look at  
9 a university because the only place they'll see them is  
10 on TV, and it gives us the recognition throughout the  
11 country that helps us grow and makes students  
12 interested. They see Myrtle Beach.

13 We hosted the Big South Basketball  
14 Tournament. Myrtle Beach has been all over ESPN for  
15 three years. And yes, they're showing our facilities,  
16 but when they go to commercials, they're showing Myrtle  
17 Beach. They're showing what we have to offer to  
18 everyone on this coast that come here to vacation, and  
19 it also draws students to us.

20 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Kind of like it's  
21 paying off --

22 MR. BIGGS: Yes, sir.

23 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Motion is  
24 a favorable report.

25 All in favor say aye.

1 ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no; and  
3 the ayes have it.

4 MR. BIGGS: Thank you very much. Senator,  
5 it's good to see you.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Great job.

7 Natasha Hanna from Conway, 7th  
8 Congressional Seat.

9 Good afternoon.

10 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole  
11 truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

12 MS. HANNA: Yes, sir, I do.

13 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record,  
14 would you give us your full name.

15 MS. HANNA: Yes. Natasha Hanna.

16 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Would you  
17 like to make a brief statement?

18 MS. HANNA: I'd love to.

19 My name is Natasha Hanna, and I have been  
20 on the board of trustees at Coastal for five years now.  
21 I've started since 2009.

22 I'm a graduate. My husband's a graduate.  
23 We live near the university. We're very involved in the  
24 university.

25 I have two kids, and we can also be seen at

1 sporting events or cultural events or just riding our  
2 bikes around campus. And I'm very involved in the  
3 university. I love to talk about my school.

4 And I was thinking as I was coming up here,  
5 the bad thing about going last is my friends behind me  
6 have already taken all the brilliant answers. So I  
7 hopefully will have something to ask of and want to  
8 answer any questions or talk about my school.

9 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well, the  
10 pressure is on this side to come up with a brilliant  
11 question.

12 And for the brilliant question, who wants  
13 to ask it?

14 SENATOR ALEXANDER: You're doing good,  
15 Mr. Chairman.

16 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you want to  
17 tell us the pink sweater story again? I remember that  
18 the last time you were here.

19 MS. HANNA: Every time I come up here, I  
20 have to talk about the pink sweater. Senator Knotts,  
21 he's given me a good hard time about that.

22 When I was 17 and my best friend and I got  
23 in an argument after --

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I was just  
25 teasing. You really don't have to.

1 MS. HANNA: It wouldn't be traditional  
2 unless I had --

3 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Share it  
4 with us. Sorry I interrupted you.

5 MS. HANNA: No, no, no. It really doesn't  
6 get much better than that. We had a good dispute, and I  
7 get to talk about it 20 years later.

8 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You're with the  
9 university -- or State Committee on the Higher Education  
10 Commission. Do you still serve on that?

11 MS. HANNA: I actually got replaced just  
12 last month. I served as a commissioner on CHE for four  
13 years and loved every minute of it, despite some of the  
14 negative things I've been reading lately in the news. I  
15 loved it.

16 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well, that leads  
17 into my question. There was a suggestion to eliminate  
18 the CHE. What do you think about that?

19 MS. HANNA: I think one of two things needs  
20 to happen. It either needs to be eliminated, or it  
21 needs to be empowered with more authority.

22 I loved CHE, and CHE does a wonderful  
23 thing. I kind of thought of ourselves as the policeman  
24 that sits on the side of the road, and you're late to  
25 work, but you know that policeman is sitting there, so



1 you slow down and make sure you do the speed limit.

2 That's what CHE is. That's how they serve.

3 We oversee institutions, but I don't think  
4 they have a lot of authority and power. CHE doesn't  
5 have the ability to go tell a university that they're  
6 beyond their budget or they're financially weak. So I  
7 think it either -- I really don't think it needs to be  
8 disbanded. I think there's other things that can be  
9 done.

10 Virginia -- I had the opportunity to go  
11 with our president and our lobbyist and another board  
12 member to study the schools in Virginia, and they have a  
13 wonderful relationship with their legislature. And I  
14 think we ought to look at Virginia and see how our  
15 sister states do it and follow what they do to get at  
16 new life in the CHE.

17 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or  
18 comments?

19 Senator Scott.

20 SENATOR SCOTT: Given the present  
21 environment of what's going on with schools across the  
22 country, especially in South Carolina, do you foresee  
23 CHE being that clearinghouse with budget, as well as for  
24 other formal requests for school construction or  
25 additional curriculum for the survival of these schools?

1 Because most of these schools come with different  
2 missions and satisfy a lot of different things in the  
3 state.

4 What's kind of your vision?

5 MS. HANNA: I think what you're talking  
6 about is more of a Board of Regents, and I'm not a fan  
7 of the Board of Regents, because I think that the  
8 control needs to say at the institutional level. I  
9 mean, my trustees, they -- we all do a great job, and we  
10 take our job very seriously. I shouldn't say "my  
11 trustees." My colleagues here.

12 We take our job really seriously. We  
13 focus. We ask questions. We know what's going on in  
14 our institution, where I think as a Board of Regents, it  
15 takes that control to a much higher level, and I think  
16 there's too much of a disconnect between the Board of  
17 Regents and the local institutions.

18 One thing I've seen that I really like in  
19 the last four years is the collaboration between the  
20 institutions. I think in South Carolina we need to stop  
21 being so competitive. Clemson has a role and USC has a  
22 role, Coastal has a role. We need to stop being so  
23 competitive, and we need more collaboration with our  
24 technical colleges.

25 And that's the one thing I've seen in four

1 years that has just soared, the collaboration between  
2 the institutions and the technical colleges.

3 So to answer your question, I don't like a  
4 Board of Regents. I think the control needs to stay at  
5 a local level.

6 SENATOR SCOTT: I'll have to agree with you  
7 on that. We have taken a look at it, and part of the  
8 study shows that even the Board of Regents, in terms of  
9 financing these institutions per student cost, I think  
10 North Carolina -- University of North Carolina at Chapel  
11 Hill, they receive \$15,700 a student. A&T receives  
12 8,700. So there's still some real issues when it comes  
13 down to funding these colleges and universities.

14 Thank you for your answer.

15 MS. HANNA: Thank you.

16 And that's something else that we talked  
17 about at our board meetings, and we would love for the  
18 legislature -- I mean, we're blessed at Coastal. We  
19 know that we don't have the same negative things that  
20 other schools in our state have to worry about. Being  
21 on CHE, I can see the problems that Lander may have or  
22 Francis Marion may have as far as getting students  
23 there, but we still need State funding.

24 And we would love to see the day where we  
25 can look at a student and say, "If you come to our

1 school, you're worth just as much as if you go to  
2 Clemson or you go to Francis Marion."

3 We would love it if the State would treat  
4 every incoming student, regardless of school they go to,  
5 as an equal.

6 SENATOR SCOTT: So in essence, you're  
7 talking about really changing the formula.

8 MS. HANNA: Yes, sir.

9 SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

10 MS. HANNA: Thank you, sir.

11 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other  
12 questions or comments?

13 Senator Alexander.

14 SENATOR ALEXANDER: And good afternoon. I  
15 see and appreciate the answers.

16 And obviously where you live there, I'm  
17 sure you're heavily engaged in the board, but just for  
18 the record of being consistent as far as your  
19 involvement and attendance at board meetings and  
20 different things, could you characterize that for me,  
21 please.

22 MS. HANNA: Yes, sir, I'd be glad to.

23 I actually looked that up. There was a  
24 discussion several months ago. I'm glad you asked me  
25 that.

1                   Over the five years, I think we have been  
2                   called to approximately 55 formal meetings, and of those  
3                   55, I missed four-and-a-half days. And some of those  
4                   four-and-a-half days, one, I had surgery done at USC.  
5                   Another one, I was across campus at another  
6                   architectural committee meeting. And I don't remember  
7                   the other couple of meetings.

8                   SENATOR ALEXANDER: I see. That's a good  
9                   record.

10                  MS. HANNA: Thank you.

11                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

12                  MS. HANNA: Thank you.

13                  SENATOR ALEXANDER: Good.

14                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Henderson.

15                  REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you.

16                  Thank you for your service.

17                  I want to follow-up on your comment you  
18                  just made and make sure I understood that right.

19                  So you were talking about the State's  
20                  commitment financially to different institutions of  
21                  higher education, and I might have heard it wrong, so  
22                  you tell me if I heard it wrong. But you basically said  
23                  that your hope and wish is that the State would treat  
24                  all of the institutions the same so that when a student  
25                  came, they could offer them the same thing. So I'm

1 trying to understood what you meant by that.

2 MS. HANNA: Yes, ma'am.

3 What I mean by that is clearly -- and I  
4 hate to use specific schools, but one school may get  
5 20 percent and Coastal may get 8 percent of their  
6 budget. What I would like to see one day is something  
7 more closer to say, okay, if you are a student in South  
8 Carolina, \$8,000 is going to be devoted to you. So if  
9 you took \$100,000 -- I'm having a hard time explaining  
10 it.

11 If -- every student should be worth the  
12 same amount. Whatever the State gives should be given  
13 to each institution.

14 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Costs that we  
15 have in secondary education.

16 MS. HANNA: Yes.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: I thought you  
18 were trying to say that the scholarship monies were  
19 different --

20 MS. HANNA: Oh, no, no, no, no, no.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: -- and the  
22 funding is the same.

23 MS. HANNA: No, I'm talking about the State  
24 money. Yes, ma'am, the State money that's given to each  
25 school --

1 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Right.

2 MS. HANNA: -- that if we have 100 students  
3 and you give us the same amount as you would any other  
4 institution. And I realize there's no perfect formula.  
5 That truly wouldn't work in essence if it's -- it might  
6 cost more to do renovations at the Citadel than it would  
7 at Coastal.

8 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Yes.

9 MS. HANNA: So I understand that that  
10 formula may not work perfectly, but it sure would be  
11 nice to have a little extra cap.

12 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: One other, if  
13 you don't mind.

14 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Sure.

15 REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: One other CHE  
16 question I want to ask you.

17 So have you -- when you were on CHE, did  
18 y'all ever discuss the issue of for-profit universities?  
19 And I'm curious because it's kind of a national  
20 conversation that's happening in a lot of states, and  
21 I'm just curious what your view is.

22 MS. HANNA: I wish we had an hour to talk  
23 about for-profits. That is --

24 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We don't.

25 MS. HANNA: That is something that is not

1       okay with me. I saw many, many, many for-profit  
2       institutions come through, and it's unfortunate that  
3       they don't have to follow the same criteria that our  
4       in-state institutions do yet they come here. They  
5       market our students. They have these beautiful TV ads.

6                 "Come on in. We'll hug you. We'll give  
7       you a cup of coffee. And for \$27,000, you can get the  
8       same degree that you can get for free at  
9       Horry-Georgetown or our Trident Technical Colleges."

10                So yes, we had many conversations about the  
11       for-profit institutions.

12                REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you.

13                CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

14                REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: I won't ask any  
15       more.

16                CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Oh, no, you can.

17                Other questions or comments?

18                Motion is a favorable report.

19                Is there a second?

20                A second is heard.

21                All in favor say aye.

22                ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

23                CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no; and  
24       the ayes have it.

25                Thank you so very much for your willingness



1 to serve.

2 Thank you for the great job you all are  
3 doing.

4 That concludes our agenda, and I appreciate  
5 your attendance and your participation. We'll stand  
6 adjourned.

7 (The screenings concluded at approximately  
8 2:22 p.m.)

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

I N D E X

PAGE

CANDIDATES FOR LANDER UNIVERSITY

6th Congressional Seat 6 - Expires 2016

ROBERT F. SABALIS

3

CANDIDATES FOR WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

At-Large Seat 10 - Expires 2021

GLENN A. McCALL

11

CANDIDATES FOR OLD EXCHANGE BUILDING COMMISSION

At-Large Seat - Expires 2021

GREG OHANESIAN

19

CANDIDATES FOR WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

At-Large Seat - Expires 2019

EARLE M. BENNETT

29

At-Large Seat - Expires 2019

DEBORAH S. BLALOCK

35

At-Large Seat - Expires 2019

ROBERT N. COLLAR

38

1	INDEX CONTINUED	PAGE
2	CANDIDATES FOR COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY	
3	1st Congressional Seat 1 - Expires 2019	
4	GEORGE MULLEN	53
5	3rd Congressional Seat 3 - Expires 2019	
6	WILLIAM L. LYLES, JR.	45
7	5th Congressional Seat 5 - Expires 2019	
8	CHUCK E. LEWIS	59
9	At-Large Seat 9 - Expires 2019	
10	GENE SPIVEY	67
11	At-Large Seat 11 - Expires 2019	
12	WILLIAM E. TURNER, III	69
13	At-Large Seat 13 - Expires 2019	
14	WILLIAM S. BIGGS	77
15	7th Congressional Seat 7 - Expires 2019	
16	NATASHA HANNA	86
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

## 1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2  
3 I, Nisha Gordon, Court Reporter and Notary  
4 Public for the State of South Carolina at Large, do  
5 hereby certify:

6 That the foregoing screenings were taken before  
7 me on the date and at the time and location stated on  
8 the title page of this transcript; that the candidates  
9 were duly sworn to testify to the truth, the whole truth  
10 and nothing but the truth by the Chairman; that the  
11 testimony of the candidates and all comments made at the  
12 time of the screenings were recorded stenographically by  
13 me and were thereafter transcribed; that the foregoing  
14 screenings as typed is a true, accurate and complete  
15 record of the hearing to the best of my ability.

16 I further certify that I am neither related to  
17 nor counsel for any party to the cause pending or  
18 interested in the events thereof.

19 Witness my hand, I have hereunto affixed my  
20 official seal this 13th day of May, 2014, at  
21 Simpsonville, Greenville County, South Carolina.

22  
23  
24  
25  

---

Nisha Gordon  
Notary Public  
State of South Carolina at Large  
My Commission Expires:  
June 14, 2022