

SENATOR HUGH K. LEATHERMAN, SR.
PRESIDENT *PRO TEMPORE*



P.O. BOX 142
412 GRESSETTE BUILDING
COLUMBIA, SC 29202
(803) 212-6640

THE SENATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

MEMORANDUM

October 16, 2015

TO: Senator Harvey Peeler, Senate Majority Leader
Senator Nikki Setzler, Senate Minority Leader
Senator Darrell Jackson
Senator Larry Grooms
Senator Ronnie Cromer
Senator Thomas McElveen
Senator Katrina Shealy
Senator Ronnie Sabb

FROM: Senator Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr., President Pro Tempore

SUBJECT: Special Senate Committee Regarding Flood Relief Efforts in South Carolina

I have asked you to serve on a special Senate committee along with me with the purpose of determining what the Senate must do to provide financial and other resources to help our people after the historic flood. I went beyond the Finance Committee to include other senators from some of the hardest hit areas. I appreciate your willingness to serve on this extremely important Committee of the Senate at such a crucial time in our State for our people.

While the sun is shining in South Carolina now, it is of little comfort to the many thousands of citizens who have lost everything. And, in a period of weeks, a time will arrive when the legislative branch of government will appropriate whatever amount of money is needed to help our people recover as quickly as we can. In the meantime, it will be of little help to the people for the Senate to meet until we know everything that is being done, what else needs to be done and how much money is needed to do it. I am convinced every member of the Senate is dedicated to providing the resources as determined by the Senate once we get an understanding of what is needed. That is why we, as a Special Committee, must work with a sense of urgency and report to the full Senate as soon as possible.

There are many to whom we owe gratitude, beginning with Governor Haley. Working under the leadership of Governor Haley, Adjutant General Livingston, DPS Director Smith, local Sheriff's Offices and multiple other public safety agencies, our state and local first responders, performed their jobs with great bravery and saved countless lives. Of course, we are saddened with the fatalities our State has suffered. Nevertheless, the actions of those brave men and women who risked their own lives to save our citizens stranded by rising flood water should be recognized and honored.

Special Senate Committee

Page Two

Additionally, we all have been inspired by the countless acts of kindness as everyday South Carolinians practice the admonition to "love your neighbor as yourself." I know many of you and our other colleagues have been on the ground helping people.

Governor Haley and the team of selfless public servants have transitioned from a rescue phase to a recovery phase. There are many South Carolinians in temporary shelters. Thousands are gutting homes and removing material ravaged by flood waters. The Federal Emergency Management is on the ground in South Carolina assisting our citizens as the process of rebuilding begins.

Therefore, as this recovery phase begins, the first task of the Senate Special Committee is to receive information from appropriate agencies and conduct legislative oversight for the various flood relief efforts from state agencies. The list of agencies would include, but not be limited to:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Adjutant General
- Commissioner of Agriculture
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Health and Environmental Control
- Department of Public Safety
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Insurance

After hearing from these agencies, a second phase of hearings by the Special Committee would be to receive testimony from executive branch agencies responsible for assessing the financial costs of the disaster. Likely appearing before the committee would be Marcia Adams, Director of the Department of Administration and Brenda Hart, Director of the Executive Budget Office, and perhaps others.

This flooding disaster will have a major impact on the entire 2016 legislative session. In addition to the obvious financial implications, this crisis challenges policy areas like water, wastewater and transportation infrastructure, dam structure, public health, agriculture, wildlife game management, and beach erosion. There is much to do.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.