

**College and University Trustee
Screening Commission
Report to the General Assembly**

The College and University Trustee Screening Commission found the following individuals qualified and nominated for the Trustee seats to which they applied. A complete transcript of the hearings for these candidates will be printed in Senate and House Journals on May 12, 2020.

THE CITADEL

Two (2) At-large seats

- *terms expire June 30, 2026*

- Stanley L. Myers - West Columbia
- Fred L. Price - Columbia

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

Three (3) At-large seats

-- *terms expire June 30, 2024*

- Ronald D. Lee - Aiken
- Louis B. Lynn - Columbia
- Robert L. Peeler - Lexington
- John W. Pettigrew, Jr. - Aiken

COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

5th Cong. District - seat 5

-- *term expires June 30, 2023*

- Lisa Mabry Davis - Gaffney

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

1st Cong. District - seat 2

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- Andrew A. Gianoukos - Charleston

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON - continued

2nd Cong. District - seat 4

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Brian J. Stern - Columbia

3rd Cong. District - seat 6

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Craig C. Thornton - Anderson

4th Cong. District - seat 8

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Renee B. Romberger - Greenville

5th Cong. District - seat 10

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- R. McLaurin Burch, III - Camden

6th Cong. District - seat 12

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Randy E. Adkins, Jr. - N. Charleston

-- Ricci Land Welch - Manning

7th Cong. District - seat 14

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Penny S. Rosner - Myrtle Beach

At-Large - seat 16

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- David M. Hay - Charleston

FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY

2nd Cong. District - seat 2

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Benjamin I. Duncan, II - Columbia

3rd Cong. District - seat 3

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- R. Tracy Freeman - North Augusta

FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY - continued

4th Cong. District - seat 4

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Benny J. "Jody" Bryson - Greenville

7th Cong. District - seat 7

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- George C. McIntyre - Bennettsville

At-large - seat 9

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Karen A. Leatherman - Florence

At-large - seat 11

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- H. Randall Dozier - Murrells Inlet

At-Large - seat 13

-- *term expires June 30, 2022*

-- Patricia C. Hartung - Greenwood

At-large - seat 15

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- William W. Coleman - Florence

LANDER UNIVERSITY

1st Cong. District

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Cary C. Corbitt - Hilton Head Island

2nd Cong. District

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Angela G. Strickland - Chapin

3rd Cong. District

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Linda L. Dolny - Clinton

LANDER UNIVERSITY - continued

4th Cong. District

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- Terry O. Pruitt - Spartanburg
- James C. Shubert - Simpsonville

5th Cong. District

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- S. Anne Walker - Sumter

6th Cong. District

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- Robert F. Sabalis - Orangeburg

7th Cong. District

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- Catherine K. Lee - Florence

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

1st Cong District, nonmedical seat

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- Michael E. Stavrinakis - Charleston

2nd Cong. District, nonmedical seat

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- William H. Bingham, Sr. - Cayce

3rd Cong. District, nonmedical seat

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- Charles W. Schulze - Greenwood

4th Cong. District, medical seat

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- H. Frederick Butehorn, III - Spartanburg

5th Cong. District, medical seat

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

- G. Murrell Smith, Sr. - Sumter

**MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA -
continued**

6th Cong. District, nonmedical seat

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Barbara Johnson-Williams - Orangeburg

7th Congressional District, medical seat

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Paul T. Davis - Darlington

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

2nd Cong. District - seat 2

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Douglas D. Gantt - North Augusta

-- Macie P. Smith - Columbia

4th Cong. District - seat 4

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Jameel Allen, Sr. - Greer

6th Cong. District - seat 6

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Wilbur B. Shuler - Orangeburg

At-large - seat 8

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Louvetta Roseboro Dicks - Rock Hill

-- Doward Keith Harvin - Florence

At-large - seat 12

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Ronald D. Friday - Blythewood

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

2nd Judicial Circuit

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Miles Loadholt - Barnwell

4th Judicial Circuit

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Eugene P. Warr, Jr. - Lamar

-- James C. Williamson - Cheraw

6th Judicial Circuit

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Hubert F. "Hugh" Mobley - Lancaster

-- Spiro G. Poulos - Chester

8th Judicial Circuit

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Brian C. Harlan - Laurens

10th Judicial Circuit

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Donald L. "Chuck" Allen - Anderson

-- Emma W. Morris - Walhalla

-- Blair L. Stoudemire - Seneca

14th Judicial Circuit

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Rose B. Newton - Bluffton

15th Judicial Circuit

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- J. Egerton Burroughs - Conway

-- Jasper N. Ramsey, Jr. - Myrtle Beach

16th Judicial Circuit

-- *term expires June 30, 2024*

-- Leah B. Moody - Rock Hill

WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

2nd Cong. District - seat 2

-- *term expires June 30, 2026*

-- John E. Brazell - Columbia

6th Cong. District - seat 6

-- *term expires June 30, 2026*

-- Ashlye V. Wilkerson - Columbia

At-Large - seat 9

-- *term expires June 30, 2026*

-- J. Randall Imler - Tega Cay

WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

Three (3) At-large seats

-- *terms expire June 30, 2024*

-- Doris M. Adams - Columbia

-- Bryan B. England - Georgetown

-- Kimberly L. Suber - Chapin

-- Reginald J. Thomas - Spartanburg

**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TRUSTEE
SCREENING COMMISSION**

SCREENINGS held on the following dates:

Monday, February 10, 2020

Tuesday, February 11, 2020

Monday, February 24, 2020

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Monday, March 2, 2020

Tuesday, March 3, 2020

Committee Members:

Chairman Senator Harvey S. Peeler, Jr.
Representative Gary E. Clary
Representative Sylleste H. Davis
Representative Richard C. King
Representative William R. Whitmire
Senator Thomas C. Alexander
Senator John L. Scott
Senator Daniel B. Verdin, III

Martha Casto, Staff
Julie Price, Staff

THE CITADEL

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'd like to call the meeting to order of the College and University Trustee Screening Commission. May God continue to bless us all.

I will entertain a motion to go in executive session.
(Motion made and seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Executive session. I ask the folks, the people, to step outside, please.

(Committee in Executive Session.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'd like to call the meeting back to order. First up is the Citadel trustee at-large. Under Tab A, Fred L. Price from Columbia.

Mr. Price, if you would, come forward.

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Get comfortable in your seat, and make sure your mic is on green so we'll know the microphone is working.

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

MR. PRICE: My name is Fred Lewis Price, Jr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. I'll swear you in. Raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. PRICE: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement on why you'd like to continue serving on the Citadel board?

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir, I would, if you don't mind.

I have really appreciated the opportunity to serve The Citadel. I was class of -- I graduated in 1975. I was first elected to the board of visitors by members of The Citadel alumni, and that was in 2007. And I was reelected to the board by y'all, the members of the General Assembly, and have been most appreciative of that, of being able to serve.

Prior to that, I was president of the Columbia area Citadel Club. I was a board member on the Association of Citadel Men since 1983. I was district director of The Citadel Alumni Association for 25 years. I was president of the Brigadier Foundation, which is our athletic fund-raising arm of The Citadel, in 1997. I served on that board for 16 years. And I was president of The Citadel Alumni Association in 2003.

In 2013, I was elected chair of the board, and this past April, I was one of the few board members -- or one of the few chairs to be reelected for another term.

So since -- since 1983, with the exception of one year, I've had a volunteer position on some sort of Citadel board, mostly the money-raising aspects of the college. So I've been around the college for years now and know the staff and know the inner workings, and I just enjoy my volunteer position of being on the board.

Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Staff, any information to share with us?

MS. CASTO: No, sir. Mr. Price's personal data questionnaire is behind Tab A in your notebook. The summary recap I've done is to the left-hand side, and everything is up-to-date. All of his paperwork is in order.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions or comments from any members of the committee?

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. President?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Price, could you describe for us your role in the development and implementation of the cadet management scheme commonly referred to as the sophomore shuffle?

MR. PRICE: We hired General Glenn M. Walters, who was the APMC of the Marine Corps, who was the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps. He was directly responsible for the education, training, and welfare of, I think, over 175,000 Marines.

It was his recommendation to the board to implement this plan called the sophomore shuffle, or also known as corps realignment, to help -- have -- members of the fourth class, when they move into their third class year, they start on a level playing field. They start in a new company.

I had several classmates of mine, several guys who were knobs with me in N Company back in 1971, that just kind of got a bad rap as freshmen. When they came back sophomore year, everybody in the -- all the upperclassmen in the company still gave them a hard time. Those guys never graduated. You know, they left after sophomore year. They just never recovered from that.

But more importantly than that, that's -- you know, that was recommendation of the general and the recommendation of the president of The Citadel. So since he's been in charge of training Marine Corps enlisted and officers, we listened to his plan, and the board voted 100 percent to support him. He's the man we hired to run the college. We hired the -- we found the best man we could find to run the college, and we're letting him run the college.

SENATOR VERDIN: So this policy, which was presented by the president, endorsed by the board unanimously, had this scheme ever been discussed and to your knowledge, since your time of service or prior to your service, had this tool, scheme, policy ever been contemplated by the -- a previous administration --

MR. PRICE: It --

SENATOR VERDIN: -- or through a previous administration of a different board?

MR. PRICE: It was considered when General Rosa was the president. I know that because we talked about it several times when John Rosa was president of The Citadel.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, in light of the fact that you view the policy favorably, why are we just now seeing this implementation if it were -- has there been some change of circumstance where --

MR. PRICE: It's been talked -- it's been talked about for well over a year to a year and a half. It was put out --

SENATOR VERDIN: I'm talking about dating back to the Rosa administration.

MR. PRICE: That was not --

SENATOR VERDIN: Why not implement it during the Rosa administration?

MR. PRICE: I think because John was getting ready to retire and he didn't want to do it. That's the only thing I can think of.

SENATOR VERDIN: Was it unanimously supported during the Rosa administration as it is now in the current administration?

MR. PRICE: It was only talked about during the Rosa administration. It was never brought up for implementation.

SENATOR VERDIN: So how many years was the -- and I understand now that the implementation is going to be in this current cadet year, current knobs, freshmen, will be subject to this, or that this will be implemented -- the shuffling of the barracks or the companies will take place next year, in the third year.

MR. PRICE: Right. Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: What do you call it, a third-year system, or...

MR. PRICE: They had an option -- they were given an option when they came in the first year, if they were a legacy, they could spend their first year, if they were a legacy, if their father or mother was a member of the Corps, they could spend their freshman year in the legacy company and then go to a different company. Or they could spend their freshman year in any company that would be assigned, then spend the last three years in the legacy company.

Now, this only affects them sophomore year. Once they move -- once they transfer as a sophomore, they're going to be in that company for three years. They're not going to move around anymore. Once they move into the company this next year, they will be there for three years.

General Watts, who was president of The Citadel back before, I guess, General Grinalds, when he was a cadet, he was in three different companies. This is not something that's gone on since 1842. This is something that started in -- I think with the class of '46, '47 -- or with the knobs who entered in '46 or '47. Prior to that, there was shuffling going on all the time. So this is not --

SENATOR VERDIN: The Citadel as we know it -- I wouldn't classify The Citadel as we know it today to be the pre-1947 Citadel. So this nearly 75-year policy is of considerable duration.

MR. PRICE: Yeah, but it's about --

SENATOR VERDIN: Considering the transient and fast-moving culture we live in, that's quite a bit of time.

MR. PRICE: Right. It's about a 70-year policy. That's correct.

SENATOR VERDIN: So what -- what is special about a legacy student in that -- what consideration -- what prompted the consideration of a

legacy student being able to spend his final three years in the legacy company?

MR. PRICE: Well, here again, every sophomore, when they transfer, they're going to spend three years in the same company. It's just if you are a legacy, you could be in the company that your parent would have been in.

But they're not going to move every year. I mean, from now on -- once they move after that initial -- after their initial freshman year, going to their sophomore year, once they make that move --

SENATOR VERDIN: Is the policy not predicated on the fact that there's something that transpires prior to that legacy student's first year at the school that he can go back and attach to?

Is there not -- that would be the only reason for allowing a legacy student to start out in some other company and then moving back to the legacy company for his final three years? That denotes that there was some special relationship -- it acknowledges the relationship of the parent.

MR. PRICE: Exactly. So they can spend their last three years in the company that their parent was in.

SENATOR VERDIN: So something took place over time, relationships, that translate from the parent's time there over to the offspring's time there, something that, by policy, has been acknowledged as a value and merit that should be honored.

MR. PRICE: We've had -- we've had several studies that have suggested the -- the sophomore shuffle going on back for 10 or 15 years.

SENATOR VERDIN: How was the policy --

MR. PRICE: Some of the companies have gotten to where there are -- and I don't want to term -- I just -- you know, they're more -- they have got certain things that go on in certain companies that don't go on in every company, and they're trying to break up that stigma that certain companies have. They're trying to -- they're trying to change the culture of the companies.

SENATOR VERDIN: So there's something that is explicitly negative in nature in what has transpired over the last 70 years? What -- I'm curious. We -- I need to know what you would classify as stigmatization or some negative practice. What are we talking about?

MR. PRICE: Some companies have taken on a different name like Mike Reich, which is the Third Reich, Mike Reich, Mike Company. Hotel Hell, which has been famous for hazing. Echo Company has always been a big company that was big on hazing. There's just a culture that they're trying to change the culture.

And here again, we sought out and hired the best possible man we could find to run the job. We hired him to run the school, and we're letting him -- we're letting him do that. We're letting him run the school

He's a 1979 Citadel graduate. He's not there trying to -- trying to kill the culture or kill the Corps. He's the gentleman -- he's the man that's directly responsible for the welfare and well-being of every man and woman in the South Carolina Corps of Cadets. And I feel like we've got to let him do his job.

SENATOR VERDIN: Do you feel the sense of backing from -- I know you're an interface between the -- the family -- the culture extends beyond those four years there. There's -- everyone acknowledges the unique and peculiar comradeship, camaraderie, brotherhood, esprit that is engendered in this military culture, the good, the bad, and the ugly, I guess. You mentioned some ugly there just a minute ago.

MR. PRICE: Oh, yeah. Well --

SENATOR VERDIN: What about the -- what about the other alumni, other than the current administration? What's the sense that you have -- you don't have to put it in percentage terms. I would feel that you maybe could quantify it, though.

MR. PRICE: I've heard from a lot -- I've heard from -- well, I'll just say it. I mean, I've heard from a lot of people. There's three or four Facebook pages out there.

Particularly one guy in Summerville told everybody to write letters that I wasn't fit to serve as chairman of the board or serve on the board at The Citadel, class of '07. He has a couple of Facebook pages where he's got my face and a cartoon drawing and kicking me -- kicking me around the clock.

I don't stoop to that level. I'm not going to wallow in the mud with him like that. I'm -- you know, I'm better than that. I mean, I'm an honorable person. Like I said, I may not -- you know, I told the general when he first proposed it, I said, Look, I don't necessarily agree with you, but you're the guy we hired. You're the one that the buck ultimately stops with you, so I've got to support you.

And I've caught -- you know, I've caught -- I've caught my ration, I promise you.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, my first question for you was the role you've played in the development of the policy and its implementation, and now I'm thinking that you're indicating that you would not -- you would not have been a --

MR. PRICE: I mean, I didn't play a role --

SENATOR VERDIN: -- you wouldn't have been a supporter in the initiation -- the initiation -- the initiation of the process.

MR. PRICE: I did not play a role in --

SENATOR VERDIN: I don't necessarily agree with you.

MR. PRICE: Yeah. And I told the general, I said, I don't necessarily agree with you, but I've got to support you. If this is what you want to do, you're the man we hired to run the college, and I'm going to support you.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure there are others that have questions. I don't want to dominate the time. I do have another question at another time. It'll be on another subject matter.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Sure.

Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, Mr. Price --

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- Chairman Price, I want to thank you for your service to The Citadel and to the state of South Carolina.

I have a question for you that is -- that I may be a little confused on as to your answer to the senator. But who runs the school?

MR. PRICE: The board of visitors sets strategic vision and governance.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Because I heard you say that you hired someone and that -- that you felt that they ran the school, and I was just a little taken aback by that answer because we're here today to appoint board members -- or not to appoint but to pass them out to the General Assembly to appoint.

MR. PRICE: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And we send you all there to make policies that then the administration carries out on your behalf. Am I correct?

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: All right. I just didn't want to leave here today with you saying that someone else ran the school and not the board.

MR. PRICE: Well, maybe I misspoke. I just said, you know, that he was responsible.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

MR. PRICE: Thank you, sir. Sorry.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Price. Thank you for your service.

MR. PRICE: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: I heard a word that came out that really gave me some heartburn: hazing.

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: And if that is suggesting or implying -- but if that's an issue on the campus, that's an issue we need to resolve immediately.

I think we just had a major issue up at Clemson. I think, if they have not finished that lawsuit, there's a major lawsuit.

I think The Citadel, unlike other universities and colleges and fraternities who get involved in hazing, if there's a hazing -- I anticipate that it is -- it's dangerous. And it has been unlawful for a very long period of time, and schools are beginning to crack down on organizations and groups who are doing that.

And so if that's the direction this policy is trying to move and trying to correct, then I don't have a problem with that. Some kids have really gotten seriously injured for life, and some have even lost their lives --

MR. PRICE: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- because of hazing.

And I know you're not here to air all the laundry of the school. All schools have laundry, some of it not so clean. If that's the direction, then I don't have a problem with that. We need to get hazing out of the schools. We've had enough deaths across this country with kids being hazed.

Do you want to comment on the hazing or kind of hazing y'all are having? I'm pretty sure it's not just drinking a bad punch or something of that nature, especially when you mention the names. The names are more gang-like behavior --

MR. PRICE: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- rather than young people going to be involved in a military organization. If you care to comment, I'd be happy to hear about it.

MR. PRICE: Well, it's, you know -- I was there in the early '70s, and it was kind of commonplace then. Now if a cadet does anything to an underclassman, they are met with very strictly. I mean, they're -- we've expelled several cadets for hazing. They've been suspended. They've got to spend the semester away from campus.

Captain Paluso, the commandant of cadets, has a very strict policy that hazing is not tolerated, and it's just like our drug policy. We have several cadets that -- every semester, 10, 15, 18, 20 of them might get tapped. You know, they've got to go -- got to go to the bathroom over there. Every now and then, one will pop -- one will pop positive for a drug.

We have a zero tolerance for drugs, and we have zero tolerance for hazing. So we're trying to cut out that kind of culture.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Several people have questions and comments.

Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have a few questions, Chairman Price.

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: First of all, tell me what kind of training a board member receives when he or she is elected to the board of visitors at The Citadel.

MR. PRICE: We have about a three-day orientation training where we meet with all the vice presidents at the college, and it's just an orientation to take you through all the departments, through the financial department, through human resources.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: There's no outside training. There's not a group that comes in from an outside association of colleges and universities that gives you any type of training.

MR. PRICE: We have the association of governing bodies that we send new board members to for a course every year. New board members get to attend the AGB conferences.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay.

MR. PRICE: I think that helps.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And I'll -- you know, you said that, in response to Senator Verdin's question about this -- for a better word, I'll use the sophomore shuffle, and you said that the board unanimously endorsed this process.

Is that a common occurrence with the board of visitors at The Citadel that you are unanimous in the decisions that you make?

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And --

MR. PRICE: I can only think of one other time that we were not unanimous in a decision when the chairman brought up something for a decision for the board to make.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: When the chairman -- you said that you were following the lead of the president. So now you're telling me that the chairman --

MR. PRICE: No, no.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- is the one making the --

MR. PRICE: No, I was -- no, that was something else that -- this was several years ago.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So just to make sure that I'm getting this right, is -- would I be correct then in assuming that the board of visitors at The Citadel is merely a rubber stamp and that individuals cannot have a point of view that they express and even vote against an issue that the chairman would bring up?

MR. PRICE: No, we -- we -- no, we're not a rubber stamp, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, it --

MR. PRICE: I promise you, we're not a rubber stamp.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, if everything's unanimous, that -- that's -- I mean, I speak out a lot around here, and, you know, there's this idea that the chairman speaks for the board, and I think that's -- that's a bunch of bunk.

MR. PRICE: Uh-huh.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Because when I elect someone to a board, I expect them to represent the citizens of South Carolina. And if you're telling me that you are unanimous in the decisions that you're making, then we need to look at this even more carefully.

MR. PRICE: We have our dissensions, and everybody gets to vote on something, but when we come out of -- I mean, we've -- we have our...

Everybody has the right to speak, and everybody has the right to vote, and they vote the way they will. But at the end of the day, we're all on one page. So it's not like we're a rubber stamp, and we've not had that many issues to come up.

The only time -- the last -- the last issue that came before, when the president wanted to take the Confederate flag out of the chapel, which is protected by the Heritage Act, we had board members -- some vote for it, and some -- and some vote against it, and it's on public record. And I was one of the ones that voted against it because I know it's protected by the Heritage Act. So that's a public record.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, let me ask you this. When we talk about the -- this idea of moving freshmen to different companies in their sophomore year, and you alluded to the fact that this -- one of the reasons was to address hazing. What other steps are being taken to address hazing in addition to this sophomore shuffle?

Because that's something that I'm very concerned about. We can go back to the Tucker Hipps Transparency Act. I have a bill pending over in House Judiciary to increase the penalties for hazing in this state. Tell me what other steps are being taken by The Citadel.

MR. PRICE: Well, like I said earlier, the commandant of cadets has a very strict policy against hazing. If a cadet gets --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: What's the board of visitors doing in setting policy? Because when I -- my understanding of the way that a board of visitors or trustees -- their purpose, one of them, is to set policies that are going to be carried out by the administration there at The Citadel or any other school.

MR. PRICE: Well, we have -- we have no tolerance for hazing. Like I said, we have no tolerance for hazing. We have no tolerance for drug use.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Price, thank you for your service on the board since 2007 and your service on other boards associated with The Citadel. I do have a few questions.

Was there a vote taken by the board of trustees in regard to this particular reassignment policy issue?

MR. PRICE: Yes, ma'am.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay. So typically the board does get involved in policy or operational issues; is that correct?

MR. PRICE: Yes, ma'am.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: What sort of criteria do you use -- because I know you don't get involved in everything, but what sort of criteria do you use as a -- as the chair of the board in determining what policy decisions and operational decisions the board is going to be involved in and take a vote on and which ones you will not be involved in?

MR. PRICE: Anything that directly affects the corps of cadets or would affect the direction of The Citadel.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: So how often does that come up then? How often are there changes in policy that rise to that level?

MR. PRICE: Maybe once or twice a year.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay. Okay. Thank you.

Also, you do have representation on the board of trustees from the alumni association, correct?

MR. PRICE: Yes, ma'am, we do.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: So a number of us have received phone calls, e-mails from alumni concerned about that particular policy.

But I'm wondering is there a formal means for those alumni to report to the board or to provide their input to the board when these particular policy issues come before the board, or are -- is the alumni representation on the board their avenue for expressing their concerns or giving their comments?

MR. PRICE: Well, we have three alumni elected representatives, so they can bring those issues to the board, and all of our e-mails are on the board website. Anybody can reach out to us at any time.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you.

That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. President.

And good to see you this afternoon and thank you, again, for your service as well.

As I listened to this discussion, I want to see how I can understand -- you said earlier that on this particular subject, the shuffle policy -- one, is it affecting all the cadets or just the legacy cadets?

MR. PRICE: It affects every freshman cadet.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Regardless of their status of how they got into The Citadel?

MR. PRICE: Regardless of their status. What it does, it affects every freshman cadet.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So if I heard you correctly, it says that it was the recommendation of the general.

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And I think I further heard you say that y'all hired him to do the job and you're letting him do the job.

MR. PRICE: That's correct.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So again --

MR. PRICE: That was his recommendation, and --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So I guess it gets back to Representative Clary's discussion. I mean, so once you hire -- have you treated other generals the same way? Once you've hired them, then y'all will pretty well let them go on automatic pilot and they can do -- if his recommendation had been to reduce the size of The Citadel enrollment, y'all would have let him carry forward with that because he'd been hired to do the job?

MR. PRICE: No, of course not.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So, well, how do you --

MR. PRICE: No, we don't do that.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, you just said you hired him to do the job and you're letting him do the job. I don't know how you distinguish from one policy to the other policy which ones you're going to let him do and which ones you're not going to let him do.

MR. PRICE: He brought the recommendation to the board, discussed it with the board, and the board voted to accept it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So did the board -- had the policy already been implemented before y'all voted? Was your vote before or after the policy was put in place?

MR. PRICE: We voted last year, and it was just implemented this year.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

And I think I heard you say -- or did I hear you say you may have opposed it, but being you've hired him to do the job, you're letting him do the job? What -- did I hear or mishear you?

MR. PRICE: Well, I probably said that, and I might have misspoke. But like I told him, I didn't necessarily agree with it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: But you didn't vote against it.

MR. PRICE: But I didn't vote against it because I wanted to support the general.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So I guess that's my point from earlier.

MR. PRICE: Right.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And I get that, of wanting to support. I heard you want to support.

MR. PRICE: Support him.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: But at the same time --

MR. PRICE: Well, I expressed my concerns to him with it. I expressed my concerns with it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: But I guess my point or my question is, in supporting the general, is there -- every -- I mean, are there some policies that he would have brought forward that you would have not been supportive of that you would have voted against?

MR. PRICE: If he brought a policy before the board -- and we're all alumni -- and people would have problems with it, I and my other fellow board members, I know, would vote against it. We're all alumni. We're not trying to destroy The Citadel.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I'm glad to hear that. Thank you, sir.

I'd like to change questions for just a few minutes here. It says that you, on your questionnaire, your business -- and I'm sure you've got a successful business. You do business with USC, The Citadel, the State House, other agencies, I think, as I read here.

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So those are competitive bids?

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So are there other agencies in the Charleston area other than The Citadel that you do business with that your -- your business, is it -- you've got multiple locations in the state?

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir. We've done work -- we've done work for the municipal government. We've done fire stations. We've done schools. We've put glass in schools in Charleston. We've done a couple of fire stations in Charleston.

But it's all through a competitive bid process. We were the -- we were a subcontractor to a general contractor who was building the building for whichever agency might have got it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And I would assume you do other -- in other parts of the state too. It's not just in the Charleston area that you are a subcontractor.

MR. PRICE: Yeah, we do -- we do work all over the state, yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay.

MR. PRICE: We do work all over the state.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I just wanted to clarify that from that standpoint.

MR. PRICE: Yeah. But we're always -- I mean, you know, we're always a subcontractor to a general contractor who has the contract with whoever.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And here it says that attracting students -- it's seen record enrollments in the last several years.

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And -- but then it says that you're unable to grow the corps to some extent.

MR. PRICE: Well, we're limited in bed size. We have five --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Because of your location.

MR. PRICE: We have five barracks. Right now the barracks are full. We have about 2,342 beds, and those 2,342 beds are full.

Our oldest barracks was built in 1942. That was the barracks that I lived in. And we've put as much lipstick on the pig as we can. It's -- you know, we've fixed it up and fixed it up.

And so -- but that's what limits the size of the corps, because everybody has to live on campus, has to live in the barracks, has to eat in the mess hall, and has to attend classes, has to -- have to attend formation. But that's why we're limited in growing the corps.

We -- but we have had record enrollments. We've had cadets -- we've had prospective freshmen on the waiting list. We started a policy several years ago where we've got study abroad, and we encourage upperclassmen to study abroad first semester and try to send 40 to 50 upper-class cadets away that first semester.

So we're able to bring in another 40 to 50 freshman because we have such a large attrition rate so that by the time second semester gets here, when those 40 or 50 come back, we try to right-size the corps.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Vice Chairman Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. President.

Welcome, Mr. Price.

MR. PRICE: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I don't know how much you're enjoying this, but...

MR. PRICE: Just another day in --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You're a Citadel man; you can handle it.

MR. PRICE: Another day in paradise.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Considering the firestorm this has seemed to have caused --

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I've gotten the e-mails. I've gotten phone calls, et cetera, et cetera. I don't remember ever getting that from Citadel -- from Citadel trustees before.

MR. PRICE: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: If you could have a do-over -- in other words, if you -- the president -- I mean, the general came to you and suggested this policy, say, for next year, knowing what you know now, would you still support him on this?

MR. PRICE: There are several things in life that I'd love to have a do-over on, and I can honestly say this is definitely one of them.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: It seems to me like the alumni feel like they're not being heard on this issue.

MR. PRICE: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That's the sense that I get.

MR. PRICE: No, that's a fair statement, because I, you know -- but I've heard -- I've heard from a lot of them.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Is there any possibility that the board might reconsider this policy, considering what's --

MR. PRICE: Well, I have -- I have ten other board members, and I have to talk to them to see if they want to reconsider.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: It seems to me, that might be the best way out of this whole mess --

MR. PRICE: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- is to just go back to your regular policy.

MR. PRICE: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That's just the way I see it. All right. Thank you.

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would suggest, based on testimony given by you as the chairman, that the trust that was put in someone to come in and remake the place with a discipline code and a cadet management code that's been practiced in other places and you had such faith in it, I wouldn't be backing up one iota if asked a question about whether or not I'm going to jump at a chance for a redo.

MR. PRICE: Yeah.

SENATOR VERDIN: I'd have the conviction to stand by it, but I'll tell you this. Based on this alumni feedback I've had, I believe they're being placated and pacified by board members with the hope and the suggestion that there will be an undoing of this policy somewhere in the future. Can you confirm that?

MR. PRICE: If the metrics don't weigh out to get the results we need, it will go back the other way.

SENATOR VERDIN: And I'm sure you've turned over every stone possible to try to identify ways to root out rot, and R-O-T is the word I'm using for hazing.

MR. PRICE: Hazing, right.

SENATOR VERDIN: Which seems to be endemic in certain companies. I could use any kind of analogies from woodworking to disinfectant about how to get at a particular problem. Let me go back to painting and the broad brush and drawing everybody in -- the inconsistency for me -- and I'll go back and try to put just a final touch on that as it relates to those legacy students.

If there's something so inherently valuable about the relationships that translate from one generation to another through a legacy barracks placement, what you're acknowledging is that those relationships are peculiarly blessed continuity-wise and from generation to generation.

And for there to be a broad-based approach where every company -- because we already identified those companies that have the problems. So I would bet you that there's a multitude of examples that could be offered, and I know there are, for the companies that are doing an outstanding job, an exemplary job, that offer just the opposite.

But the penalization -- and, you know, the whispers around are about micromanagement. Every year I've been here, it's always been acknowledged that there is something peculiar about our military service academies. And we're blessed and fortunate to have one here with a legacy from 1842.

MR. PRICE: Right.

SENATOR VERDIN: And one of those facets and the reason we hear from so many alumni is because they feel as if they're part of that fabric that reaches all the way back to 1842, the good, the bad, and the ugly.

So to root out the bad and the ugly means that, as it relates to hazing, if you want to use a big, broad approach, a broad-brush approach, you've got to do away with anything relating to a discipline structure that can be abused or adulterated. If you're going to go broad brush, you've got to do away with your entire culture down there. Otherwise, you can't hone in on who the troublemakers are and deal with the problems in an acute way.

I'm supposed to be asking questions, though, that I can generate information here, but I will tell you, Mr. Price, I am -- I feel compelled to speak for the inordinate number of alumni I've heard from. And for the record -- I just want to be absolutely clear -- at 11:47 I had a conversation with the person that introduced us, my research director, a Citadel man through and through, 1985 F Troop, and I waited till 11:47 to have the conversation with him. I said, Gene, I appreciate you, and I admire you, and I know you have a great relationship with Mr. Price. I wanted -- I wanted you to hear it from me.

And I was met with nothing but silence on the other end of the phone. So I wanted that in the record because, just as the Senator from Richland said, you come to me historically with a tremendous record and background and pedigreed credentials to serve your alma mater, and this is a matter that -- I'm outside my comfort zone because I'm not a micromanager.

But I genuinely respond to stakeholders that are intensely passionate on a matter, and I felt obliged to develop this subject today on their behalf. Where it goes from here, I don't know. I'm not a Citadel man. I'm not in the family.

But I think you've got a lot to wrestle with, and it might just be indicative of really the oar in the water down there. We're counting on those colonels. We're counting on you colonels. This is one -- when it comes to state dollars and state representation, this is one time where I believe the colonels do command the general, and I'm just not sure that it's effectively transpiring.

I have other questions. I'll save -- I'll forgo the other question. It was a totally different subject. I'll forgo it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let's take our time.

Mr. Price, how long have you been chairman of the board of visitors?

MR. PRICE: I've been chairman for five and a half years.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: How were you chosen? How is the chairman chosen?

MR. PRICE: I'm sorry. I've been chairman for a year and a half. I'm sorry. I've finished up my five and a half years, the term of service on the board, elected by the General Assembly. But I was elected by members of the board of visitors, and my term will be up in June.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Are you term-limited? Can you run again or...

MR. PRICE: Well, I was -- I was elected to run again and be chair and was voted to be chair for another term. But I can't serve the other term unless I'm elected by the General Assembly to go back and serve a second term at this point.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Now, if you were a board member...

MR. PRICE: My term is up with The Citadel, through the General Assembly, this --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'm talking about just within the board, not the General Assembly. How is the chairman of the board of visitors chosen?

MR. PRICE: How are they elected?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes.

MR. PRICE: They're elected by members of the board.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And you were elected by the members.

MR. PRICE: And I was elected by all members of the board.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Unanimous?

MR. PRICE: Unanimously.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Is there some type of vice chairman that becomes chairman or you can stay chairman as long as you receive the votes, the majority vote of the board of visitors?

MR. PRICE: Myron Harrington and I were elected chair and vice chair almost two years ago. And we were nominated to run as vice chair and chair again, which my term will start this summer.

But I can't succeed myself after that. You can only run one -- you know, one -- you can only serve one term and then serve another term.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. That's what I'm getting at.

And when you were elected this past -- the chairman, was it unanimous?

MR. PRICE: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Did you have an opponent?

MR. PRICE: There was no opponents.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Has there been any -- have you attended, been active, any negative comments from other board members about how you're acting as board chairman?

MR. PRICE: No, I've never -- I've never had a comment from any board member as to my service or my actions or anything that I've done on the board. I've never missed a board meeting.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well, our charge or our mission as this commission is to find out whether you're qualified to be a member of the board of visitors of The Citadel.

MR. PRICE: Right.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: It's not to micromanage, as others said. But The Citadel is a unique place. I don't have to tell you that.

MR. PRICE: Right.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And the alumni association is a unique group. I don't have to tell you that.

But we've received comments, questions, concerns about the decision that was made about the sophomore shuffle. I don't think it's our job, you know, to comment or -- that's your job. And it's been touched on as a concern, as a board that -- where does the buck stop?

And the buck doesn't stop with the general. The buck stops with the board of visitors. So if you could take some suggestions, I'd suggest you take that as -- merely as a suggestion.

But to rise to the level of saying you're unqualified to be a member of the board of visitors because of this one issue and cause to be concerned -- and we have another candidate that will come in behind you. Are we going to measure him by the same stick, or are you -- why are you so lucky, because they shoot the officers first? Is that why? Why is this -- why is this microscope on you? Can you -- I'm quite sure you've thought about it. Why -- why me, Lord?

MR. PRICE: Yeah, I know.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Why is this on you? Can you tell us?

MR. PRICE: It's because I'm chairman of the board. I guess, you know, it's all answerable to me.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And all this conversation -- I won't say controversy -- did this happen before you filed for reelection to the board or after you filed? In other words, if it was such a concern to the association, why don't you have an opponent? Can you answer that?

MR. PRICE: I don't know. I don't know why I didn't have an opponent. Anybody -- any board member could have filed to run against me or asked to run against me. It's just -- it's more of a --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: As chairman?

MR. PRICE: It's more of -- you have to send a letter to the secretary of the board notifying them of your intent to run for either chair or vice chair.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'm talking about for your position, the one you're being screened for. It would seem to me like if the association was so concerned --

MR. PRICE: It would have put some other --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes.

MR. PRICE: -- candidates up? I think there was maybe one other candidate that initially filed and then didn't -- didn't follow through. I mean, I have no idea.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I understand.

MR. PRICE: I have no idea. There could have been -- you know, other than it takes -- you know, you know how much time it takes to be a -- not to be a board member. And I mean, it takes a lot of time to be a board member, but it takes a lot of time to go through the process of getting elected.

But I have no idea why nobody else would -- had filed to run against us because they could have easily filed and run against Stanley and myself. There's two seats available.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions or comments?

Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Price, approximately how many alumni are part of The Citadel?

MR. PRICE: We have --

SENATOR SCOTT: Just approximately.

MR. PRICE: We have 30 thou -- 33,000 alumni, but there's only so many that -- you know, I don't know exactly how many are in the state.

SENATOR SCOTT: The ones in the state, what do you suggest, 10,000?

MR. PRICE: Probably 10,000.

SENATOR SCOTT: And of the 10,000, how many folk are pushing this cause, driving this cause? Is it a handful of folk? Is it a lot of folk? Or...

MR. PRICE: Probably more than a handful.

SENATOR SCOTT: Would you call it more --

MR. PRICE: There's some Facebook pages, and I've seen, you know, 10, 20, 100 followers, stuff like that. So I don't know.

SENATOR SCOTT: A couple thousand people?

MR. PRICE: Probably a couple thousand people. Or more. I mean, I'm not going to, you know -- it could be 3- or 4,000.

SENATOR SCOTT: And if this policy doesn't work, then what?

MR. PRICE: If the policy doesn't work, we'll go back to the same system.

SENATOR SCOTT: And in the meantime, if -- in the meantime, The Citadel is trying to bring in more students because, the last time I checked, tuition drives growth; growth drives getting the college to expansion on programs. Then what? What's the second plan if this plan doesn't work?

Because it would appear that a couple thousand folk who have a better idea about what needs to be done and probably have some suggestions, I'm pretty sure, outside of just the negative stuff you saw out there and made some suggestions to another way to solve this problem.

I know it's not just we don't want this. I'm pretty sure they've had some -- some aggressive ideas or some aggressive way -- if it's a larger

fund-raiser or something else to subsidize this cause. What else have you seen?

MR. PRICE: Well, we just -- I mean, we just had -- the foundation just had the largest fund-raising campaign that we've ever had, and we raised 200 and -- I think it was \$252 million like two years ago.

So I mean, we've had a record number of campaigns. We've had -- you know, a lot of alumni still -- we've just finished -- this past year, our alumni -- our Citadel Foundation brought in well over \$40 million just this past year.

SENATOR SCOTT: And that's after the change in the policy.

MR. PRICE: That's after the -- you know, so everybody said it's going to affect foundation giving, but according to the foundation director --

SENATOR SCOTT: It went up.

MR. PRICE: -- it hasn't so far.

SENATOR SCOTT: It went up. The giving went up.

MR. PRICE: It's gone up a little, yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: You know, I don't like micromanaging either, like the Chairman has indicated.

If someone has something to suggest and doesn't find you qualified, we're the ones to put it out there. If not, I'm ready to move forward with this this morning, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Other questions or comments? What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR SCOTT: Move favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is a favorable. Is there a second?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I'll second it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Discussion? No discussion? We'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. All opposed to the motion of favorable, raise your right hand.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. President?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: I'd like to be recorded as abstaining from the vote.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: So noted.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. President, the same thing.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Vice Chairman Verdin abstains. Chairman -- Senator Verdin abstains, and Vice Chairman Whitmire abstains.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. President?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I'm going to abstain because I do feel that, after this, that the -- personally, I'd like to see us maybe carry this over,

but I didn't make that motion. But I do -- I would like to abstain at this point.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would y'all feel more comfortable carrying it over or...

MS. CASTO: Well, you didn't -- if we have three abstentions, you need to do the no's.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Four in favor.

MS. CASTO: Four in favor, three abstentions.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Four in favor, three abstentions. Any no votes?

MS. CASTO: You didn't ask for the no votes. You need to ask for the no votes.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: All right. All no, raise your right hand?

MS. CASTO: Okay. Four to zero.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Four to zero.

MS. CASTO: And three abstentions.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Four for, three go against -- well, three abstentions.

MS. CASTO: Correct.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For a total of seven. That math doesn't work out.

MS. CASTO: Number one didn't vote.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Who didn't vote for it? Let's vote again. All in favor of the motion, raise your right hand and hold your right hand up.

MS. CASTO: Five -- five to zero.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: All opposed, raise your right hand. Three abstentions.

MS. CASTO: Correct.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

MR. PRICE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next we have, under Tab B, Stanley L. Myers of West Columbia.

MR. MYERS: Good afternoon.

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

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir. Stanley Lamont Myers, Sr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir.

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

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir. I have been on the board now for five and a half years. I've truly enjoyed it. I got to The Citadel by a different route. I was awarded a football scholarship. I played quarterback there for four years. And I have truly enjoyed serving my alma mater. I've enjoyed getting to know the cadets and interacting with the cadets.

One of the most valuable things that a board member can do, in my opinion, in addition to setting a strategy for the school, is that we are afforded the opportunity to award Daniel Fund scholarships, and that scholarship is for individuals who would not otherwise be able to afford the school.

So in my time, I have awarded a number of Daniel Fund scholarships to allow the less fortunate to attend, and I'm proud about that and proud about interacting with and serving the alma mater.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir. I appreciate your service.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Myers, there are two things on your personal data questionnaire I need for you to complete. What Congressional District do you live in?

MR. MYERS: I'm in the 2nd Congressional District. I'm sorry.

MS. CASTO: And then you said that you have a law degree, but where is your law degree from, and what year did you graduate?

MR. MYERS: Yes, ma'am. I have a law degree from the David A. Clarke School of Law, which is in Washington, D.C., and I graduated in 2003.

MS. CASTO: 2003. Thank you.

Everything else is in order.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments from members of the committee?

Representative Scott -- I mean, King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman, I'm a lot better looking than Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, please don't confuse me.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We won't take that to a vote.

Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

Mr. Myers?

MR. MYERS: Myers, yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: What's the Daniel scholarship?

MR. MYERS: So it's -- two brothers back in the 1920s, they got to the institution because they -- by other means. They didn't have the financial

means. So they graduated, made tons of money, and they set up an endowment for the Daniel Fund Scholarship for individuals that cannot actually afford the school. So they -- we're able to award Daniel Fund money for those individuals who are less fortunate financially.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I guess you heard the earlier testimony in reference to the Citadel board.

MR. MYERS: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And we heard earlier from one of my colleagues and one of his questions about how you all vote on the board, and would you consider and explain to us how you feel that the board votes, and is it considered a rubber-stamp board? And if not, explain your take on that board.

MR. MYERS: Sure. It's a democratic process. You know, we try and be unanimous. We're not always there. I think that it is fair. I will say this, and I will say this with conviction: there has never been a rubber stamp of any sort, a policy, since I've been on the board.

I consider -- I consider all boards -- I'm in the military, so I think of things in the terms of strategic -- strategy and tactics. The board is there to set a strategic vision for the college. The president and the administration is there to implement on a tactical level. But there has never been a rubber stamp.

This entire sophomore shuffle ordeal, I have my thoughts for it.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: What are yours?

MR. MYERS: I'm in favor of it, but it's not because I rubber-stamp what the president has said.

I have constituents. My constituents happen to be -- and just as you all do. I don't mean to offend you when I say that. My constituents happen to be former athletes and current athletes and also minorities. Blacks, females, Hispanics, it doesn't matter.

Here's how we see it. When I first reported to the school, I was part of Charlie Company. And I was fortunate to stay all four years in Charlie Company. But what was most important for me is that because I had teammates, we collected each other in our -- in our field houses, and as a result, all of my classmates were from different parts of the corps of cadets.

So I got a perspective of going around through the corps of cadets and meeting a lot of my classmates. That helped me socially. So my former teammates and current and former teammates that I didn't play with, they're all in favor of the shuffle because it creates socialization among the corps of cadets.

The minorities, well, we always think that change is good. On Friday, we are recognizing the first black graduate of the institution, Charles

Foster. Charles Foster is no longer with us. He passed away. But, you know, there was a time, I'm hearing from his family, that they thought that, hey, the school was going to fail because they let the first black cadet in. It didn't fail. The school is stronger than -- stronger now than it was before.

So when we start talking about the sophomore shuffle, it was designed because there was a study into hazing. Our commandant of cadets said, you know, look, if you get a sophomore, by the time they go through knob year, they get comfortable with the people that are there, so they are less prone to tell on each other. And all of a sudden, the push-ups that aren't supposed to take place, the things that happen at 11:00 or 11 p.m. after evening study period that aren't supposed to happen, they tend to get comfortable.

But if you shuffle them to different companies where they get uncomfortable a little bit and they don't necessarily know who they're around, that kind of curbs hazing. And so that's the original intent behind the sophomore shuffle.

We haven't -- it hasn't been in place long enough to know whether or not it works, but I've got to imagine that when you shuffle these kids, when you get them into a different environment, you're teaching them socialization skills, and you're teaching them that they can't get comfortable where they are so that you can kind of curb things.

It is possible, Representative King, where an individual goes to The Citadel, goes to Charlie Company in the old time that they wouldn't have a diverse culture among them. They probably would not be around a black or female. They might not be around a Hispanic.

The shuffle is designed to get those kids out of their comfort zones, to shuffle them. That's what happens in real life. As a military officer, I'm only in my job on the National Guard for two years, and I got a shuffle out. I would much rather those cadets enjoy that at the age of 18 to 20 rather than trying to learn that lesson when they're 40 or 50 years old.

So we're trying to create an academic back -- or an academic environment. We're trying to teach these kids about life and how it works. And I think that the sophomore shuffle is a good thing. But it's not because I'm just trying to rubber-stamp what the president has done. I think that the goals and the strategy behind it are good ones.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So -- I appreciate your explanation on that, and with all due respect to Mr. Price, I did not get that, or an understanding of what the shuffle was.

MR. MYERS: And I still ain't trying to step on --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: No, no, no, no. And I'm not saying that as disrespectful. I've gotten the e-mails, I haven't gotten any phone calls,

in reference to what's going on at The Citadel, and so I'm glad for your explanation.

What I would also say is if you're voted out favorable, you're going to get those questions --

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- and hopefully you all can answer those from my other colleagues as you are asking for their vote.

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Because that -- we're all receiving the same e-mails.

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

And I will say this, Mr. King. When you talk about the alums, who all are for it, the ones that I hear from are for it and support it. So, yeah, you're going to get the squeaky wheel.

Social media -- I'm not on social media, and thank God I'm not. You get somebody on social media, and he makes you think that the entire school or everybody is in support of one particular thing. There is not -- not every alum agrees that the sophomore shuffle is a bad thing. So --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And I'll let someone else comment. My last question for you is what is the most notable accomplishment in your term as a board member that you will say has happened in reference to diversity on campus?

MR. MYERS: We now have -- we have hired the second female provost at the institution. My first year, we had -- we had Connie, who is now at Elon as the president. And now we've recently hired Dr. Sally Selden, who came to us from a smaller college, but she graduated from the University of Virginia. And so that's two female provost marshals that we've had.

Also, I saw last year the first female cadet become the regimental commander and graduate. That was something that wasn't done when I was there, and it certainly wasn't done in 1842. So to have that happen on my watch while as a board member was very notable and important.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Myers...

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: Your explanation of the rationale from your perspective was not only certainly more compelling, but in -- and comforting as well.

But I want to drill down a little deeper as it relates to the consistency of the policy as it relates to allowing an exception for the legacy students.

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: So just to use your term -- it was a generalization -- socialization of the student body, what overrides that very compelling policy for these legacy students other than possibly assuaging a very vocal, determined, and dedicated segment of the population of the school, the family, or even tamping down their resistance?

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir. I wasn't a legacy, so I will say this. I understand why a father would want to have their son or their daughter in the same company. I think you travel a dangerous road when you do that. Anytime you start saying, hey, I'm going to treat this cadet differently just by virtue of their name, it hurts the individuals who got there without that name.

So I think that before we go back and talk about the legacy -- the general has been asked to look into that and do the studies -- I'm not prepared to talk to you very much about the legacy study because we studied the ones on hazing and the one about the legacy has just come forward.

I will tell you that, you know, I've got a little son who's got his provisional acceptance. I don't care if he attends the school or not. I just want him to have the best education for himself and not stand on my name, but stand on his own work.

So I think that those are things that we're just going to have to look at, and I apologize for not having a clear answer for you on the legacy, but I just think that it sets -- it's something that we're going to have to study. I've got no problem with, hey, I feel so good, I want my son to do this and to do that. I've got that. But I think that we just need to do some more studies on how it's going to impact those kids that didn't get there by virtue of legacy.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And to that last point, did you know it sounds like y'all are operating as a board? It's my understanding y'all directed the general to go back and evaluate that. Is that kind of what I heard as far as the legacy aspect?

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir. It's -- well, several alum or several grads, they voiced their concern.

And, you know, the good thing about the president, he's a grad as well, so he's accessible. He has classmates, and trust me, if you graduate from that institution, you wear your ring, and it tells everybody what year you are; your classmates can reach out to you if they want to.

We're not one of those -- so to answer your question, sir, you know, I think that it's -- the general is willing to look at it. He's told those

individuals that he's willing to look at it. And as a board, we've set the vision out and said, hey, look at it; come back with the studies; tell us if it's something that's feasible or not.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. So the other -- the other question I had for you, under -- it says under the biggest weaknesses -- it kind of gets back to right what you were talking about, to ensure that past graduates are fully aware of the changes implemented by the administration, and communication is a challenge.

How do you -- I mean, given the circumstances around this, what -- if that's a weakness, how do you as a board member work to address that?

MR. MYERS: You know, now with social media, there's always an opportunity to reach out, but the grads have got -- we have -- we have to do a better job. And one of the reasons I wanted to be on the board is that I wanted to give back. I didn't want to just be that individual that never visited the institution, only read about things in the paper, and never did my part.

So, you know, you talk about guys who are in state who support or oppose this. That's one thing. But then you also might have some guy over in Texas or on the West Coast never even come back to the institution that's voicing his concern or her concern.

So communication in my -- it's a two-way street. We're trying to roll out the information. I agree that the roll-out may have been -- could have been a little better as far as, hey, this is what we decided; this is what's going to happen.

But, you know, again, we don't -- we try to invite the alumni back during homecoming, during certain other events. We encourage them to stay part of the alumni association, to just give back, to stay in the know. If they're not willing to stay in the know and they hear these little blurbs that come up, that's when you get this -- this -- this animosity at times.

I wouldn't even call it animosity. It's just internal strife that we're going through.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

Can I do one other question?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Certainly.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I just want to make sure I understand that, in your discussion and response to other questions, your support of that change in policy was based on what you thought was best for the cadets that were going to be benefited by being students and going forward --

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- versus just because it was recommended by the general and you felt a sense of duty just because he was the general to support the position. Is that --

MR. MYERS: If it came out that I'm supporting him just because he's the general --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: No, no. I was clarifying that that's not -- that was not --

MR. MYERS: Oh, absolutely. No, sir. It's --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I was doing that as a contrast.

MR. MYERS: Yes. Yes, sir. Yes.

And truth be told, the commandant of cadets, Geno -- Captain Geno Paluso, who's a 20-year Navy Seal, he's the one who did the studies regarding the hazing incidents and all of that. And then he took it to the general, and that's how it was all formulated and how -- and that's how it all got to where it is now.

So Captain Paluso did a very thorough job of trying to do the research as to why the shuffle would have been a good thing. He then took it to the general because -- you've got to remember, our general did not officially take the position until -- until April of last year. He was transitioning. He had to get permission from the Secretary of Defense to come to the institution.

So during that time when General Rosa left, we had an interim president, and then you had the commandant of cadets. So we relied very heavily on the commandant of cadets and his studies behind why he thought the shuffle would be a good thing.

He briefed the general, and the general brought it to us. We thought it was a good idea, and it wasn't any sort of rubber stamp. We talked about it, and as I stated myself, I personally thought it was a good idea.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. I appreciate your being responsive to the questions.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Myers, for your service to the state of South Carolina as a board member and as a member of the South Carolina National Guard.

MR. MYERS: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: We appreciate that service.

There is a perception that the board is a rubber-stamp committee. There's a perception that alumni do not have an adequate voice for major policy decisions.

As a member of the board, how -- how do you or how would you ensure that the board is not a rubber-stamp committee and that the alumni have perfect -- you know, they're -- not perfect necessarily, but have the capability of providing their input on those policy decisions?

MR. MYERS: Yes, ma'am. Ms. Davis, I struggle -- I'm sorry, Representative.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: That's okay.

MR. MYERS: I struggle with how much more we can do when you have social media. I mean, for God's sakes, the moment we become board members, our contact information is posted on websites. They've got cell phones. They've got office phones. They've got addresses. If they want to reach us, they can.

And I have encouraged my -- the folks that reach out to me to always keep that open line of communication. I try and be present. I try and get to as many events that I can as far as Citadel Club networks to make sure that, hey, look, if you've got a question of me, ask me directly.

The problem with social media is that everybody chimes in, and when you see them at the Citadel Club, they don't want to say what they'll say on social media, to be completely honest with you. I've been everywhere, and I've tried to voice my opinion on everything, and it kind of upsets me to come here and to have to answer these questions of you because you guys are getting phone calls and I'm out there to these Citadel Clubs and no one's saying anything to me. If they've got a problem, let me know, and we'll be happy to address it.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay.

I just want to have a follow-up.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: So in follow-up to that, is there a formal means of providing that input, or is that formal means through the alumni representatives on the board?

I guess, you know, when you're at an alumni event and there's casual conversation or Facebook or whatever, that's not really a formal means of providing input, and so I guess my question is, is there a formal means of providing that input?

MR. MYERS: We do have various committees at the institution. We have newsletters that go out periodically. But as far as some type of form, I guess, they could -- like a little complaint form, I don't know of any. I haven't seen any. But I've never had a problem with folks understanding -- or not understanding how to reach out to us if they've got questions.

And our administration has always had an open-door policy. Even if they can't get to a board member, the commandant's door is always open. The president's door is always open. I've never seen it where our commandant or our president has said, hey, you need an appointment to come in to see me. If you see -- if you have a question, because you're visiting from Texas or from California, you drop in and see me, and

they'll take time to talk. Because, again, The Citadel is a unique place, and it's one of those places that, hey, if you wear the ring, you come in, and you talk.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you very much, Mr. Myers, for clearing up some issues for us. But, you know, I want to go back -- and we've talked about it, and I have very hurriedly gone back through the minutes of The Citadel board meetings, and I am amazed at the number of unanimous votes that you do have there.

And I guess my question -- and I realize when minutes are taken that every word is not verbatim, every word that is said, but it concerns me that -- that there is this idea that everything is unanimous because when I am elected by my constituents, I have people who have different views than maybe Senator Verdin or Representative King and others, and I think that it's very important for us to represent the constituencies that send us to this place to ask these hard questions of individuals like you who want to be engaged in public service.

You know, when we are elected, all of our information is out there, and I think when you raise your hand and say you want to serve the public, then that goes with the territory.

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And tell me about this idea of -- of the way that the board is conducted. Is it -- is it one that the chairman speaks for all and when he makes a decision and that consensus is reached that no one's going to vote against it and no one's going to go outside and speak against it?

MR. MYERS: No, sir. You know, I think the fact that you have a lot of unanimous votes means that our presidents or our administrations have done a good job of running the school, that we haven't had to go into a lot of contentious issues.

You know, we had -- you know, General Rosa was there for -- it seems like a lifetime. He implemented a great strategic plan that was followed, and if you -- and because we followed that strategic plan, things worked out. This current general, he has his own strategic plan, and for the most part, it's working out.

But it's -- I don't think that -- unless we know the actual issues, I think that it's kind of unfair to cast a, hey, you've got a lot of unanimous votes and it's because we're rubber-stamping things. There were -- there was one contentious issue, and that's when Chairman Price talked about the Confederate flag. If you look at that vote and you see how we voted --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: That was pretty contentious.

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir, very contentious. And if it comes back up, it's going to be more contentious.

But, you know, again, I think that it's a little unfair to characterize that every vote we've had, just being unanimous, as, hey, it's unanimous because the board is just rubber-stamping. That's not the case.

Fortunately, because we don't put our nose where it's been -- you know, as a military officer -- I'm about to pin on full bird colonel here - - my job is to give my soldiers their vision. I'm not there to micromanage them. If they've got an issue, they come back to me.

But you go out, you get -- you conduct my vision, and you promote my vision. And that's all I can ask for, and that's what we as a board have done. We've put the vision out for the president, for General Rosa and for General Walters, and they've implemented it, which is why we've not had very many contentious votes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Let me ask you this. What is the strategic plan, other than this so-called sophomore shuffle, to address the issues of hazing that we have discussed here?

Because, listen, I understand the -- the unique nature of The Citadel. I'm a graduate of a school that has a very strong military heritage that changed in 1956, but a number of the traditions and so forth still are followed at Clemson. And what I want to know, I guess, is what is the board of visitors doing to ensure that this problem is being addressed in a really serious way because that is something that troubles all of us around the state.

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir. So several things. I'm currently the chair for the education leadership development committee, so I work closely with the commandant as well as the provost marshal.

One thing that the commandant of cadets does for every knob entering is that he has several of his former Navy Seals, Army Rangers, they come back, and they give classes to these knobs. And it teaches them how you can lead without having to touch a soldier, having to scream or yell at a soldier.

Then they've implemented on the provost side a four-year curriculum regarding leadership and ethics that we only had it two years when I was there. So now these cadets are getting a full dose of four years of leadership and ethics.

So it teaches them that, hey, take what we're giving you in the classroom; go to the barracks; truth against power; if you see something wrong, speak up. Because the worst thing is to try and criticize your peer, but if we can teach these kids the leadership and ethics qualities in the classroom, then they'll be more prone to do those things. And then

when you can further enhance that socialization, you get one good cadet graduating in four years.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, and, you know -- but please don't think that the people sitting behind you are going to be immune to a lot of questioning by us simply because of the people that have reached out to us regarding The Citadel because I think that, in electing members to the boards of trustees, we have a very serious responsibility here, and we need to be asking a lot more questions.

MR. MYERS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any more questions or comments?
Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.
(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion?
Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm somewhat chagrined not to be able to discern through any of the background information, as we have it through the forms, your rank and your service and uniform, and I'm going to apologize on all our parts for not being able to learn that sooner or to be more familiar with your service. And I thank you for your service and --

MR. MYERS: Well, I thank you for the report.

SENATOR VERDIN: Did you say you're a full colonel?

MR. MYERS: I'm a lieutenant colonel about to become promotable. I've got my -- I'm coming up on 20 years. My body gets old. The PT test hurts.

SENATOR VERDIN: I appreciate the degree of candor, transparency, and the way you handled the salient question of the day as relates to your alma mater.

If I could repeat it again to your chairman, I would say that my abstentions here are not predicated on your past service or my hopes for your continued service in the future --

MR. MYERS: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: -- based on the will of the General Assembly. I'm just going to again asked to be recorded as abstaining from the vote on a consistent application of the entire slate.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Does anyone else want to be recorded as abstaining? All right. We'll take it to a vote. All in favor of the motion, raise your right hand.

Is Ms. Davis coming back? I think she stepped out.

MS. CASTO: Yes.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: All opposed? It's six to one.

MS. CASTO: Six to zero and one abstention.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Six in favor. And Ms. Davis is coming back.

Thank you, sir.

MR. MYERS: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I appreciate your willingness to continue to serve.

MR. MYERS: Thank you, sir.

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good morning. I'd like to call the meeting to order. This is the meeting of the College and University Trustee Screening Commission. Welcome, everyone, and I pray to God He continues to bless us all.

We'll get started on the Clemson University board of trustees, three seats. Under Tab A first is Ronald D. Lee, Aiken.

Dr. Lee, if you will come forward.

For the record, Dr. Lee, if you would, give us your full name.

DR. LEE: Ronald D. Lee, Aiken, South Carolina.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

DR. LEE: Okay.

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

DR. LEE: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Have a seat and get comfortable. Make sure your green light -- did you get it?

DR. LEE: I think Julie got me going.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to give a brief statement on why you'd like to be on the Clemson board of trustees?

DR. LEE: Sure. Just let me say this would be my -- I'm beginning my tenth year of service on the board. Admittedly, I'm probably not the sharpest tool in the shed, so it took a couple of years to figure out that big enterprise and that big machine, but I'm proud of what Clemson has to offer our state.

We're not perfect. We just had a meeting last Thursday or Friday and talked about ways we thought we could improve our efficiency and the goal of Thomas Green Clemson to educate South Carolina residents.

But it's a labor of love. I enjoy serving. We have a great board, a great president, a great alumni base. Being successful in football helps

enrollment and the applications, but our focus is on academics as Thomas Green Clemson didn't talk about football.

But I'm proud of what we have. I think we've got a good, efficiently run university with a good return on investment. And I think yesterday the Princeton Review came out again that we're highly ranked in our return on investment for what it costs to go to school and the value of the degree when a student graduates.

So the focus of the board is to continue to use our dollars wisely, your dollars, and we're appreciative of the -- of the money. You support higher education across the state. We certainly couldn't do it without the generosity of the state funds. But we have a lot of discussions about maintaining affordability and accessibility. So it's a good time to be a Tiger.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments from members of the committee?

Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So one of my colleagues admonished me that I would have to be kinder and gentler today than yesterday. That's the reason I was trying to give you a heads-up on the matter that I'm interested in this morning. Dr. Lynn heard the conversation. Governor Peeler and Mr. Pettigrew, you didn't hear, but I'm going to solicit some feedback from all of you.

So my colleague, Senator Grooms, has been in communication with not just the Clemson administration, but generally all the administrations of publicly supported four-year institutions in South Carolina on the issue of compliance with Code Section 59-29-120, which requires a class on the U.S. Constitution -- actually enumerates the Constitution, Federalist Papers, Declaration of Independence.

And I know it's a tough academic question when over decades there's been a retreat from this particular curriculum. But the pendulum swings, and from my point, and I'm certainly advocating for Senator Grooms as well, I think that there's no riper time for a greater awareness and education on what we're calling America's founding documents.

So -- and one of the things yesterday with other boards was that administrations are very active sometimes in policy when boards are not as active in finding out about the matter, and I hate to use terms like rubber stamp because it's cliché and I'm not suggesting that at all about Clemson's board of trustees. But as we discussed earlier, there is an awareness on the part of the administration that there's a legislative interest in a more robust compliance with the statutes. I know that there have been some conversation with members of the administration, with members of the board.

My questioning to you is, and my request -- I'll put it in the form of a request, and you can give me any feedback you'd like. Can I hope that you as board members -- you specifically, Dr. Lee -- will initiate and prompt further study and development of curriculum?

Right now you've got a one-hour video with a 20 -- yeah, you've got a very minimal response. There's eight or nine other states that have the same statute or something similar and have very developed curriculum, three credit hours. I think Senator Grooms has even got legislation now that would ask for two or three credit hours. And I'm not necessarily asking for your position on that legislation. I'm just looking for some feedback of where you as board members would direct the university as it relates to something as foundational as this line of study.

And I know historically, you know, when these statutes came on board, the curriculums were not nearly as developed. Students were not nearly as hard-pressed. I know it's a difficult issue. I had one -- not a board -- actually I had an administrator, not -- I had an administrator, in the presence of a board member, not at your institution, tell me that it would be a lot easier for the General Assembly to change the law than it would be for them to coordinate and incorporate this curriculum. Of course I vigorously disagreed because it's hard to change any law up here, and I'm not suggesting we should.

But anyway, that's a long, rambling introduction of a subject that I'm -- I think is going to be -- going to have increased interest on the part of the General Assembly.

DR. LEE: Let me first say, when I was at Clemson, I didn't take such a course. I'm not sure if the statute was in place or how far back it goes. To be honest, I'm not aware of any of my children taking such a course.

But when I heard that -- you know, I leave my office computer on. If I'm between patients, I'll kind of be listening to the Senate usually and the House, you know, depending on who's in session, and I heard Senator Grooms and others talking about having a -- I call it --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Have we had a mental evaluation done on this candidate if he's listening to the House and the Senate in his spare time?

DR. LEE: Well --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'd rather perform a root canal.

SENATOR VERDIN: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Or have one performed on me.

DR. LEE: You know, the -- the next person to get anesthesia takes the brunt of my frustration. Maybe not quite as gentle as I should be.

But at any rate, when I heard that being discussed, I called our provost and governmental affairs people and said, you know, I never did this.

Can we do this? And they then informed me that we have a minimal attempt, which is a video, and I think you take a test, and they check the box.

But what I would do going forward, if it's the strong will of the General Assembly -- I promise you there are, you know, several of us on the board who listen to you, and I would call on Bob Peeler, who chairs the educational policy committee, to get it done.

So I think it has merit. If it's statute and the will of the legislature, we should do it, and I think that the administration will listen to us if we insisted on them doing it. I'm not -- I haven't thought through it enough to know how it falls in, you know, two hours, three hours, does it cost more, does it make somebody graduate a semester late. You know, they -- you know, there'll probably be all kind of excuses, but I think it's doable if you know about it going in on the front end.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I don't as much have a question more than to say -- and this is to all the board members that are with us today -- out of all the institutions, colleges, and universities here in South Carolina that we, the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus, met with, you all were the only responsive to our concerns, and I appreciate that. You all made sure that the president was there. Not only did we have access to you all, but we now have access to the president. And so I just say thank you.

DR. LEE: Thank you for that.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: You all listened to our concerns. I'm not sure that we have, you know, gotten everything done, and we're still working on that, but I do appreciate what you all are doing and wanted to thank you personally.

DR. LEE: Well, thank you for those comments. I think certainly that's our goal, is to be available to everybody.

And, as you know, today we have our Call Me MISTER program here, which is celebrating 20 years. We had lunch with them Thursday or Friday. What a -- what a -- what a great group of young men. You know, the Emerging Scholars, which I'm proud to say every single trustee, active trustee, personally supported the tuition for a student to participate in that program. So -- of course, our Call Me MISTER program is coming up, and President Clements will be back here in March. So, you know, we appreciate you guys also.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Judge Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Lee, thank you for being here. And as Senator Verdin alluded to, yesterday we had questions that came up, and I'm going to continue along that line, even though, you know, I feel like I know a great deal about Clemson University, but I want to clear up a few matters.

But when we look at -- at teaching the Constitution, the founding documents, the Federalist Papers, et cetera, I'm not so sure that that's the role of our universities. I believe that's the role of our K-12. And if they haven't learned it by the time they get to the university, we're in a lot of trouble.

So that -- Representative Whitmire, when -- when you start funding all these programs for K-12, maybe you can look at that.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Tell me about what kind of training you receive when you become a trustee, and is it training that is ongoing? What kind of orientation and then further training do you have?

DR. LEE: So our executive secretary, who -- you know, you all know Angie. When -- when I -- ten years ago, for me, Angie was our executive secretary, so she made sure that I had time to spend with every sitting dean of every college, to be able to meet them, ask them questions, hear from them about their questions. We have a -- a well-written trustee manual that is always being tweaked and revised. I mean, it is, as we speak now.

So a lot of that training and learning the history of Clemson -- and I think it's dependent on the trustee, you know. If you -- to become a better student of the university, to read about it. And as you can imagine, just as in -- well, not to equate it to the time you spend on your job, but if you're going to do it well, it takes a lot of time in the evenings to read up and study and become familiar with it.

And as I alluded to earlier, I think I'm a better trustee now than I was in year two just because I know more about the university. I mean, it's a big machine. So I think that there is an effort to educate new trustees on the makeup of the university. Hopefully, they know a little bit about the organization before they pursue being elected as a trustee. But I think it's a fair statement to say those who do their homework are more knowledgeable.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Is there any effort to have any outside agency to train you in -- in the role of what a trustee should be, the things that you -- you know, we all have these ideas of what trustees should be, but when you look at the definition of what a trustee of a board should be, is there any type of an outside group that comes in and gives you any type of education in that regard?

DR. LEE: I can't remember anything. We do get a magazine monthly on trusteeship. But, again, if you don't read it, you're not learning anything, so...

I mean, we're supplied some -- a periodical, but I don't recall that we go to -- we have an outside speaker come in and tell us how to be a better trustee.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And, of course, Clemson has a unique situation under the Clemson will, the fact that we have seven life trustees and six elected trustees. Tell me about the relationship between the life trustees, the elected trustees, the way that committees are configured, those types of things.

DR. LEE: I -- I think if a third party was watching the board meetings, sitting around a table, you could not discern who was a life trustee and who was an elected trustee. When there were some votes taken, you might be able to make a delineation because, you know --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, I --

DR. LEE: -- most votes aren't unanimous.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yeah. I've looked at the minutes of a number of boards yesterday during the meeting and then overnight, and I must say that there is quite a bit of -- of interest in the Clemson board in various issues that come before them. To borrow my colleague Senator Verdin's word, I don't see too much rubber-stamped in that regard because there are a lot of votes that are divided.

And when we look at the life trustees and the elected trustees, do elected trustees have the opportunity to serve as chairmen at Clemson?

DR. LEE: In my -- you know, going back, I think maybe one time -- one -- usually no, not in my tenure. You know, there's a seven-to-six split.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: It goes back to -- yeah, you know, I was not a math major at Clemson, by a long shot, as Senator Peeler knows, but --

DR. LEE: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- I always know that seven is more than six.

DR. LEE: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I understand that part.

DR. LEE: I would -- I would like to think that that won't forever be the case.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And insofar as your committee structure is handled, do members -- elected members of the board of trustees, do they chair a certain number of committees vis-à-vis the life trustees?

DR. LEE: So the chairman every year makes committee assignments, and I think it's fair to say that there's an equal number of committee chairs who are elected versus life.

Currently, I know I'm the chair of student affairs, Bob's chair of the educational policy committee, and I think Louis is a vice chair. I think there's a pretty good -- I don't think there's a bias there.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And I just have a couple more questions. When you -- when you talk about --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary, could I -- wait just a minute. I've got a 9:30 meeting that I must attend, so I may bow to the vice chairman of the committee and hand over the gavel and also give you my proxy.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And I'll be back.

Sorry for the interruption.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: No problem. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

You talk about the biggest weakness at Clemson being accessibility. Listen, I think everyone in this room understands that Clemson is a really difficult place to gain admission to, and the criteria is very high that's considered. Can you tell me what -- what you see can be done that is going to help those South Carolina students that are denied admission?

DR. LEE: I think one -- one thing is that, you know, we're trying to -- right now, there's 20,000 students. We're trying to manage growth by increasing it two percent a year to cap out at about 22,000 or 22,500. Throw in the Bridge Program --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You're talking about undergrad students, right?

DR. LEE: I'm talking about -- that's correct.

So having more students, as we prove we can handle the extra students, it is one way that -- there's one statistic that, you know, 88 percent of South Carolina students who apply to Clemson can get into Clemson either through regular admission or through the Bridge. So -- now, that does exclude 12 percent who -- who are denied admission. But, you know, the president preaches, if you want to go to Clemson, there's a way. You might have to transfer in. You might have to go to the Bridge Program.

But it's -- it's a good problem to have. We have a lot of applications. I think -- I'm not -- you know, in the neighborhood of 26,000, and we're taking about 35-, 3,600 students. And so you have to have some objective measure. You know, you tend to take the -- those who score

the highest. But I think as we grow in numbers that we'll be able to increase accessibility.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well -- and in my final question representing that area, the relationship between the university and the city of Clemson and surrounding areas is one that's been well-chronicled over the last few years. And what steps is the university taking, what steps is the board of trustees taking in regard to working on that relationship? Because, quite frankly, it's not a very good one right now.

DR. LEE: Well, I think in regards to the town-gown relationships that - - some of us on the board just sat down with President Clements and said, you know, you need to make time to meet with the mayor and other city leaders on a regular basis, not on an emergency basis. And he has promised us that he would do that.

So I think -- and we have members of student affairs who sit in on some committees with the city, just trying to make sure -- the big thing is communication and, you know, control, you know, just explaining growth. It's an inconvenience when there's cranes on campus. So I think it's mainly just to talk about it and try to be good neighbors. But President Clements has heard concerns from individual trustees.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, President Clements has heard concerns from a lot of people, and I think that one thing that the board certainly needs to consider, moving forward, is the impact on the downtown business community, as well as the residents there, in planning.

I understand that Clemson's going -- Clemson University is going to continue to grow. But I think that -- and being inclusive in those decisions and deliberations will be a much better path to take.

DR. LEE: Well, I know we had some problems in the last year or so with road closures and problems, and hopefully we've learned from those mistakes and can do better going forward.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I might say, if the city of Clemson is having problems with the university, Oconee County will gladly take you back. So just let us know when you're ready to come.

Okay. Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you again for, Mr. Lee, serving. Tell me a little bit about your diversity program. I know you've been doing a lot of work and hired a diversity officer, and I know that you've had a tremendous outreach with students.

But tell me how well that's going with students, staff, and faculty. I know you showcased it a couple of times before in one of the subcommittees I served on.

DR. LEE: Yes. So there was a concerted effort as part of our ClemsonFORWARD plan to increase the number of minority faculty people. And in the last five years, you know, there are -- excuse me for looking here -- a 59-percent increase in the number of African-American and Hispanic faculty members on campus. So the number's actually from 80 to 127. And on the staff side, there's been a 22-percent increase. This is 2019 data.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

DR. LEE: Student enrollment is at an 18-percent increase in the number of students on campus.

SENATOR SCOTT: So what is it -- what's the 18 percent mean, 18 percent of your total student body?

DR. LEE: No, no. I'm sorry. Not to mislead you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah.

DR. LEE: There's also been an increase in the number of nonminority students, so that ratio is still about 6 percent.

But in -- but the -- part of the problem, when I talk about affordability and accessibility -- this is actual numbers. Last year, 1,896 African-American students applied to Clemson, 810 were accepted, but only 225 enrolled. So it's probably a monetary issue where we need to increase private giving and scholarships to make it more affordable for them to come so that -- you know, that yield rate is not very good.

SENATOR SCOTT: Have you asked them to track it to see whether it is money or late acceptance or --

DR. LEE: I don't think it's --

SENATOR SCOTT: -- everyone that's applied is going somewhere else?

DR. LEE: I think it's -- I think it's mainly following the dollars. The one thing the board of visitors has done to address this -- and I happen to be the trustee liaison to the board of visitors. Y'all are familiar with that group. We used to have spring receptions. It was kind of just like a celebration for students who had been accepted.

And when President Clements came on board and he and I talked about it, I told him, you know, that's -- people who've been accepted to Clemson are probably coming; we don't need to have a party for them; we need to utilize the time, talents, and resources of the board of visitors to do something to recruit minorities.

So instead of calling them Tigertown Bound Receptions, they're now called Orange Carpet Receptions, where, through guidance counselors, minorities are targeted invitees to these regional Orange Carpet Receptions, and those who attend have been accepted to Clemson, and they are presented scholarship dollars when they come to the reception.

So that word is getting out, and that's helped. That's helped a good bit, but on the other hand, there are other schools doing the same thing whose tuition might be less expensive and they might be giving them more money, so it's...

SENATOR SCOTT: You also mentioned a 22-percent increase in staff and a 59-percent in faculty. What does that relate to, the actual ratio of students -- I mean, faculty to faculty and staff to staff?

DR. LEE: Let's see. I can -- I used to know that number, but I'm -- I don't want to misquote you -- I don't want to misquote myself, I mean.

I'm not sure. I've got it -- I've got it somewhere in here. It has grown. Faculty -- percentage of minority faculty has increased more than student enrollment percentage has increased.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'd be interested in knowing -- knowing what those numbers are.

DR. LEE: Yeah, I can --

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

DR. LEE: Give me five minutes. I'll find it.

SENATOR SCOTT: All right. Thank you, Mr. Lee.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I don't know if you can give five minutes to me -- just kidding -- but hopefully, it won't take five minutes to respond to my questions. And good morning and thank you for your service --

DR. LEE: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- and listening to the different comments.

I have two or three different directions I want to go, but go in a timely manner here, and I think that Representative Clary's mentioned as far as the board, and obviously not just at Clemson, but other ones.

So you take your -- the board is -- to set policy, how do y'all -- how are y'all engaged in making decisions for Clemson? Does the president bring a, a -- something to you? And this is -- this is something across all the boards, so this is not -- do they bring something to you and then y'all respond to it and either you adopt it or don't adopt it? Just because he brings it to you and you think it's a good idea, does that make you vote for it, or do y'all have discussion on it and make a decision based on what you think is best for Clemson University?

DR. LEE: And I think really it's the latter. This -- it's not a -- it's not a rubber-stamp board by any means. A lot of things -- so there is an agenda that's brought.

For example, in my student affairs committee, you know, they'll -- most of those are informational. Educational policy might have more

action items as you're tending to add or delete programs or change the name of programs, which takes a vote.

But there's a lot of discussion in significant matters, and I think the president and the administration has learned that they can't, you know, just expect to get the answer they want because a lot of times things are shot down. So we really do have some lively discussion.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Good. That's good.

DR. LEE: Yeah.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. I just -- for the record.

So the Clemson experience, you say the biggest strength is the sense of family. You mentioned family, the students, and things. I don't disagree with that. How do we keep -- well, before I go there, the growth at Clemson right now, what -- how many students do you have at Clemson?

DR. LEE: Around 20 -- 20,000 or -- you know.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And it used to be 10- or 12-?

DR. LEE: Right. When I was there, it was -- and when you were there, it was probably 10- or 12-.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Which hasn't been that many years ago.

DR. LEE: Oh, right. Just right --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So --

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Ten years ago.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yeah.

So what is the right -- I mean, what's the projected growth at Clemson now? What is -- where are y'all looking to go?

DR. LEE: To cap it at 22, 22.5, at a rate of two percent.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So another ten years to get basically -- the rule of thumb --

DR. LEE: Right. Adding another -- yeah. But -- and -- so part of our discussions, too, are things like, in an effort to be efficient -- and, you know, in the summertime you've got to heat and cool those buildings and there's not a lot of people in them, so making summer school more affordable, even looking at things such as having afternoon and evening classes for people who want to commute.

Now, I'm preaching to the choir. You live there. We're not an urban school, so we don't have a whole lot of commuters. But we had a pretty detailed research into the usability, if that's a word, of classroom spaces and which ones are occupied and which ones are empty and what hours were they empty and what could you put in those empty classes because -- you know, as just a way to keep the classrooms full to -- you know, well, to be honest, to generate tuition dollars to help revenue.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I understand.

So back to, briefly for just a minute or two here, the sense of the family, of the students, and I hear, and having graduated from Clemson, the Clemson experience -- how do we maintain that Clemson -- if that is a core value of being a Clemson alum or going to Clemson -- how many, for example, graduates do we -- of Clemson do we have that are involved in the day-to-day operation of the university? How many are on the executive team? How many are deans or things from that standpoint that have experienced it themselves?

DR. LEE: Well, I know there are -- I mean, you -- I know where you're headed. That's --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Oh, you do? 'Cause I don't.

DR. LEE: Kind of -- well, I mean, to define -- you know, Sherman said that there's something in these hills.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Right, yes.

DR. LEE: You know, to define what's in those hills is -- is --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Right. The alma mater, right.

DR. LEE: I heard Colonel Skardon say Friday night at his Medallion award service, you know, that's hard to identify. But it's real, and we think it's unique to Clemson.

I know on the president's leadership team, you know, there are three graduates. So as trustees, we hired the president. He's not a Clemson alumnus, but we're pretty happy with his service.

I think to maintain that -- so much of what happens on a college campus happens outside the classroom, so when you have memories of your college experience, it's not necessarily sitting in a physics class, but it might be what you did on the intramural field or what you did at a pep rally or going to a football game.

Trying to keep students engaged and active and -- because I serve on the student affairs, we just heard of some programs where there's an -- a conscious attempt to engage students in -- to participate in a club, a sport, a service organization, you know, to get them out of their dorm room or get them out of the library and become involved and meet others who have similar interests, and I think that's a bigger part of that Clemson experience than sitting in a calculus class.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And for the record, I mean, I think the president is doing a great job. This is no reflection from that standpoint.

I just -- is the board -- I'm just concerned that the board is not putting a focus on making sure that the Clemson experience continues to be there for those coming after, as far as -- as far as having -- if that's been one of the greatest draws that we've had, is the way that we're engaging folks with that experience in -- in the process of making sure it's there going forward.

DR. LEE: I understand your point.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. And I'm going to forgo questions about, for the sake of time, on the town-gown relationship. I think that's been covered by Representative Clary. Thank you.

DR. LEE: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Dr. Lee...

DR. LEE: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: One question, what's the percentage of in-state versus out-of-state students at Clemson now?

DR. LEE: If you talk about -- it's like 67-point-something percent in-state students on campus.

Now, the freshman class that's admitted is about 60-40 because in the sophomore year you get 950 Bridge students who takes that 60-40 to 67-33. So there's a -- there's -- I think it's fair to say two thirds, and that's a conscious effort to make -- keep that balance of two thirds in-state.

And that stat I mentioned earlier, that 88 percent of the people who apply can get there somehow -- they can -- you know, they might -- they might be -- when they graduate, there's no asterisk by their name. But if they are willing to approach Clemson through the Bridge Program, they can get there.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Right.

The reason I'm asking, there's a prominent builder in our area whose son just is dying to go to Clemson, and he's National Honors. He's Beta Club. He's, you know, the captain of the football team. He's done all kind of, you know, church-related activities in his community. And they just felt like Clemson wasn't giving him a fair shake at that time. Now, I've written a letter of recommendation. I don't know if that's going to help or not.

But that's a concern of mine that, you know, people in this state feel like Clemson's kind of passing them by. And that -- that may not be fair or not, but that's their perception.

DR. LEE: It -- so enrollment, you know, in the last few years, we actually have an enrollment person in charge of enrollment management. It's -- it's a tough problem because if -- and, you know, there's not room for everybody, and you somewhat have to be objective so that if -- you know, if your son made 1200 on the SAT and my son made 1000 on the SAT and my son got in, then you'd have a legitimate gripe because, you know, somehow there was -- you know, what happened?

I think that growing numbers is going to help, and the metrics of the U.S. News and World Report rankings has -- you know, Clemson has done real well, the top 22-3 universities, public universities. And pursuing those metrics for that ranking has served Clemson well.

But they're kind of changing the rules on it, so I think you're going to see Clemson's ranking possibly slide a little bit because -- for example, they penalize you if you're efficient. So you get bonus points -- for the more dollars you spend per student, you get bonus points. Well, that's kind of dumb. We try to be efficient, so we're spending as few dollars as we can per student to save them, but we get penalized.

They also give -- just last year, a new ranking, the number of students on student loans, you get -- or Pell Grants, you get bonus points. Well, that tends to favor urban schools, not Clemson, South Carolina.

So I think you'll see probably -- and I don't know this -- from our enrollment management people, but I think you'll probably see the average SAT score start to go down a little bit because we're going to start taking in more students.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, I'm not sure an SAT score always --

DR. LEE: It's not.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- translates into an excellent student.

DR. LEE: It's not. It's not. You know, I always -- my three children fortunately take after their mother. They're successful. But I always tell them hard work is a whole lot more important than a test score, so you give me --

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That's hard to measure. You're right.

DR. LEE: You give me somebody who's of average intelligence, but who has a drive, and I'll take them anytime over somebody who's lazy and smart.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Agreed.

Any other questions? Do I have a motion?

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: (Raises hand.)

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Second.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Move for favorable. All those in favor, signify by raising your right hand. One, two, three, four, five, and we have two proxies. Chairman Peeler and Representative King also vote favorable. All right.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And Mr. Chairman, if I could for the record, too, I would like to comment that as far as efficiency of using those dollars, I'd rather you be efficient in using those dollars too.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, thank you, Dr. Lee.

DR. LEE: Thank you very much.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Yeah. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: The next person up was Dr. Clayton Lowder. Yesterday afternoon, Dr. Lowder has withdrawn.

So we'll go to Tab C. I believe that's correct. Up now is Dr. Louis Lynn.

DR. LYNN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Welcome, sir.

DR. LYNN: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: If you would, raise your right hand, and I'll swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. LYNN: I do.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Welcome, sir. I'll let you make a brief statement.

DR. LYNN: My name is Louis Lynn, and I've served on the Clemson board for 32 years. I'm a Clemson graduate. Representative Clary and I are going to be Golden Tigers this year. This will represent the 50th year of graduation at Clemson.

I -- as Dr. Lee said, Clemson is a labor of love for me, so I'm dedicated to what goes on at Clemson. My children -- I live here in Columbia, but my children -- one went -- one is a pharmacist, and she didn't go to Clemson, but my daughter went to Clemson.

I tend to try to represent -- I'm an aggie from Lamar, South Carolina. My Ph.D. is in horticulture, so I represent plant ag, and Mr. Peeler represents animal ag a lot. I'm the only Ph.D. on my board, so I consider myself the faculty member. And diversity -- I am so proud that, even though I am the only minority, the only African American, diversity doesn't belong to me. All my peers are very involved in issues of diversity.

And in all my years on the board, 32 years, I think I got a check one time. It's all -- it's all volunteer service. That's my comment, sir.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. Questions?

Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Lynn, thank you for being here with us this morning and wanting to continue to serve your school and the state of South Carolina.

I do have a question. I'm interested in your response to why you would like to continue to serve, and you stated that you wanted to support the ag extension outreach, including rural medicine. So explain to me the connection between those two because I am very interested in rural medicine as well, and so I'd kind of like to understand your take on that.

DR. LYNN: Clemson is partnering with the Medical University of South Carolina, and we're doing more rural -- since we have the footprint, we have a county agent in every county, and the Medical University has the expertise. So we've started partnering with them on rural medicine, and it gets easier because of telemedicine, but we have the buses too.

And for me, the rural -- I'm -- as I said, I'm from Lamar. And to have access to medicine for underserved communities -- and underserved is not black and white. Underserved is green. So I -- that's a big -- I've always supported the ag community, and this says a lot, that we can bring -- if you can't go to the doctor, you can go to the county agent's office.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: So are you putting telemedicine in the extension offices?

DR. LYNN: It's going to take some time. We're -- we're doing the --

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: That's the plan?

DR. LYNN: That's the plan, yes. Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay. Wonderful. Thank you. Thank you for your efforts in that regard.

DR. LYNN: Right, right.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me just follow up on that as well, and thank you, Mr. Lynn, for your -- for your service.

Would you not agree, as far as the extension agents and the extension service and the PSA, that to further expand on that -- it used to be that you had a lot of services that were utilized for like homemaking, nutrition, a lot of different health-related that you've kind of gotten away from that, under your -- the rural medicine and the health extension that y'all are working on, is to kind of help bring those components back into the importance there, as well as nutrition and healthy eating and healthy living from that standpoint?

DR. LYNN: Correct. When I first was on the board at -- with PAC, I was a Roundup guy. I worked for Monsanto, and I was a -- and for me, Clemson Extension was cows and plows. But then I'd look at my cousins from a small town who were in 4-H, I'd look at the homemade folks, and I truly believe that we're -- you know, the items you mentioned are part of our service calling.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So I want to go back to the Clemson experience, and, again, y'all are doing a great job. I just want to make sure how -- how are we going to ensure that those that are there now and in the future, if that's been one of our strong points, is that Clemson

experience, that we are making sure that it's being protected for those that are going to come?

DR. LYNN: Athletics has a program called Journey, and we've -- making sure the athletes have a good experience, and the university has taken that model, and at the last board meeting, we discussed taking that university experience from just athletics, that we have counselors involved with getting kids involved with leadership, and we pay particular attention to first-generation students, college students.

And, now, as an individual trustee, I've kind of backed off on it some, but I'm the guy who would be in board meetings who would say, Everyone who stayed at Clemson ring on somebody who didn't Clemson dirt on their boots. We do have some extension -- some outreach programs, but we make sure that the majority -- because we have our Greenville -- our Greenville graduate campus, and we're making sure that our students do have opportunities for outreach.

And at the last board meeting, we got a report that when we -- when that P.A.W. Journey kind of outreach, other than the playing field, other than classrooms, that that's working with student leaders now.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: That's a great program and a great idea to carry that -- are you -- are you making sure that you have enough individuals that have -- that are graduates of Clemson that are helping make decisions and policy outside the board that will embrace that experience as well?

DR. LYNN: Yes, sir. Dr. Lee said -- yes, sir, we do, and, also, we involve undergraduates -- or we involve graduate students in those programs, so a graduate student is obviously that.

But from a staff -- particularly with the staff of housing, student affairs, many of them are graduates. But I'm a strong believer that we do need to have some -- some integration of other areas for experience.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I'm not opposed to that. I just don't want it to be all outside with nobody that has had the inside experience.

DR. LYNN: That falls into my Clemson dirt on their boots and -- yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I'm going to be following that.

DR. LYNN: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Dr. Lynn, thank you. Thank you for being here. And I wanted to follow up with you being the -- I guess the longest serving elected member of the Clemson board of trustees.

You know, for a long time, we had a very effective town-gown relationship between the university and -- and the city of Clemson. And -- but over the last five to ten years, it has eroded.

What kind of steps are you as an individual board member and collectively as the Clemson board, being a member of that, what are you doing to try to improve that, particularly when we look at the ability of businesses in the downtown area, restaurants and so forth, to be able to integrate into the campus by providing catering and that type of thing, because there are business down there that have closed, that are suffering as a result of construction and relocation of the visitors center and those types of things?

What's the university going to do? Because I know you have contracts that you have with -- with a provider for food services, but there's got to be some way to carve out something for these local businesses. If not, you're going to have nothing but bars and T-shirt stores downtown.

DR. LYNN: Well, you mentioned that to me personally as a trustee right before we won the championship in '18. You mentioned that as an issue, and I got in my car, and I drove downtown and stopped and realized that many times I was coming to town and I was only doing Clemson stuff.

So as an individual trustee, I make sure that -- to shop in town when I'm in town. If I'm on a weekend, I go to church in Clemson instead of going back home.

So I see the town and gown as a very important issue for us, and as a small business man myself, it bothers me when I see a small business suffering. And so now when we -- many times as a board, as a group, when we have a dinner -- sometimes it's just us. In fact, almost every board meeting, just the trustees without the president, without his staff, we get together, and we share our concerns.

For me, town and gown was good. The mayor -- when I first met the mayor of Clemson -- Abernathy was my classmate. So I see -- I've seen it erode some, but town and gown, because so many of faculty and staff live, are elected officials, are on committees in the city, I see a -- mainly -- and I ought to give you credit. You've raised it enough that we -- it's on our -- it's on our radar, for elected and life trustees.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, I -- you know, I certainly want something not just to be talked about, but I want something to be done about it because, you know, Dr. Lee alluded to the fact -- the way the student body is growing. I saw some numbers this past fall that the student body is around 26,000 students total, and that is only going to continue to grow, and I keep hearing this number, 30- to 32,000. And the university's not building any more housing.

DR. LYNN: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I think you're tapped out. Without the Hills -- you may be able to squeeze another small dorm or two out of -- out of the coffers down here. But you're having to depend on people building apartments, and that is something that has caused a lot of angst, a lot of stress on the infrastructure for the locals --

DR. LYNN: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- not the university.

So those are things that, as members of the board of trustees, you need to be doing, and I would encourage you to encourage the life members to not just drive downtown. They need to walk down there because I believe that I could take and put the headshots of the life trustees on a sheet and put it on the desk of every senator and House member and they would struggle to name one of them. So the fact that they are detached, you and your colleagues that are on the board are very important to the General Assembly because you have to take the message for the people of the state of South Carolina there.

DR. LYNN: And the live trustees have done -- they've elevated a few - - Bill Smith, who was elected before, got elevated, so there's -- there's some --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yeah, but they forget that they used to - - that they were elected, Dr. Lynn, in all due respect. Once they achieve that life status, they forget what it was to come down here and actually be involved.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

Thank you, Dr. Lynn.

I want to go back to the diversity question, and I think from Mr. Lee, he indicated students was at about six percent.

DR. LYNN: Correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: I think you have 1,896 minority students, and I think -- I don't know how much of that 1,896 is actually African-American.

DR. LYNN: 6.43.

SENATOR SCOTT: That's 6.43 of the 26,000?

DR. LYNN: Are African Americans, and just so --

SENATOR SCOTT: So the numbers -- and numbers, what is -- what is that?

DR. LYNN: 1,200.

SENATOR SCOTT: 1,200?

DR. LYNN: Ish.

SENATOR SCOTT: And how many of those 1,200 are actually athletes at the school?

DR. LYNN: I don't know, sir. I don't know.

SENATOR SCOTT: Is it --

DR. LYNN: I'll have to dig that number out.

SENATOR SCOTT: At least --

DR. LYNN: Maybe one of my peers knows, but I don't.

SENATOR SCOTT: At least a couple hundred of them?

DR. LYNN: I doubt if it's that high.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. I'm just really -- I'm really worried about that, and I know you guys have put an aggressive initiative on the diversity officer. But I really don't see your numbers actually moving, and I keep getting this thing, it's tuition, tuition, tuition.

But if you had -- I'm sorry. Let me correct my numbers. If you had 810 out of 1,800 who applied and you only got 225 in your freshman class, then it says a lot about your intake system, either not responding back fast enough, or, front end, they're not responding to funding for the kids to actually come to school, or -- and I understood y'all were building a network of scholarships for the children. That's what y'all reported a couple of years ago.

But something is not working. It sounds like you're headed back down that same --

DR. LYNN: Sir --

SENATOR SCOTT: -- path, and not a whole lot other than what you talked about two years ago has been achieved, and we're right back on that same track of getting kids to come to Clemson.

DR. LYNN: Senator, a lot of times, it's follow the money, and most colleges are seeking scholarly African-American students, and, you know, we have the type -- but in my church here, I've seen folks walk in and -- from Hampton University and say, you know, we're going to give scholarships of X dollars. So all -- particularly -- so folks are kind of -- will hang the students, and they follow the money.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah, I understand that. But Hampton University, you're talking about -- I know that going to Hampton University is going to be twice as much as going to Clemson for in-state students. I've seen 1392, 14 -- 14 -- 14,000 a year, all kinds of numbers.

So you can't be that far off in terms of costs to go to school as relates to other South Carolina schools, are you? I've asked for --

DR. LYNN: No, no. As far as in-state students coming here, no.

SENATOR SCOTT: In-state students, yes.

DR. LYNN: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'm asking for the numbers as it relates to Carolina. Is it that big a margin between what it costs to go to Clemson and what it costs to go to Carolina?

DR. LYNN: Not that big. They're a little more expensive.

SENATOR SCOTT: Carolina's a little more expensive? Or are y'all a little bit more expensive?

DR. LYNN: Let me -- I don't know. Let me correct that.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, I'm going to have some numbers in a minute because I've heard this conversation now -- about expense now for the last five or six years, and still I'm not watching enrollment --

DR. LYNN: And families tend to follow the money.

SENATOR SCOTT: I understand that, but listen. What I'm driving at, we can't continue to bring in major corporations into the state, and in bringing these major corporations into the state, we -- these kids are going elsewhere because they don't come back. And so it's a big issue.

I'm looking at USC Columbia, required tuition and fees, resident, 6,344. Nonresident, 16. So y'all are --

DR. LYNN: It's a little more.

SENATOR SCOTT: Y'all are charging as much as nonresident, out-of-state students compared --

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: No, that's -- Carolina's is probably by semester.

SENATOR SCOTT: By semester?

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: So it's about the same then, if they're by semester.

DR. LYNN: I think it's about 14-something.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah.

DR. LYNN: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: So that particular discussion is not sitting well. It can't be that much tuition if the -- I know their numbers are not that great either, and we'll have that conversation when those board members get here.

What I'm simply saying is out-of-state students are going -- they're not staying here, and our job is to try to figure out how we educate the best and brightest of our students and try to keep them home. We can't continue to bring in these companies and no folk to work at these companies. I was looking at some data last night with the poverty index, especially in some of these rural counties. In South Carolina because our folk are not staying here, the wealth is not staying here, the poverty index has continued to grow.

I want to move on and talk to you a little bit about some stuff that your other board member didn't know a whole lot about. The staff -- he said

the staff increased 22 percent. What does that represent, 22 percent of -
- 22 percent of what?

We'll get you -- we'll get you. It's his turn now. We'll come back to
you. It's his turn now.

DR. LYNN: Okay. So we're -- so we're looking at the total number of
faculty --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

DR. LYNN: -- and the number of African-American faculty members.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

DR. LYNN: So that's where we basically --

SENATOR SCOTT: So what's your total number of faculty and --

DR. LYNN: I don't know the exact number, Senator. I'm sorry.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

DR. LYNN: I don't know the head count.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. What about with -- with staff? You've got
two categories. You've got your faculty increased 59 percent. Is it 59
percent of 50 or 59 percent of 200?

DR. LYNN: The diversity of the faculty and staff has increased about
58 -- almost 59 percent, and that's a 23-percent increase, so since -- and
I'm going back to 2013.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right, right.

DR. LYNN: So from 2013 to now, that's 90 -- and this is African-
American -- that's 96 new staff members.

SENATOR SCOTT: Ninety-six.

DR. LYNN: Yes.

SENATOR SCOTT: Ninety-six new staff, but you don't know what
your total -- you don't know what your numbers were before you
increased? I think your colleague behind you is trying to help you.

DR. LYNN: Okay. All right.

Please, please.

SENATOR SCOTT: He's trying to help you a little bit.

DR. LEE: All right. Senator Scott, they -- the -- the answer is 20 percent.
So there's 500 and -- 5,564 faculty and staff and 1,107 are African-
American.

SENATOR SCOTT: 11...

DR. LEE: 1,107.

SENATOR SCOTT: 1,107. Okay.

DR. LEE: That's about 19.9 percent.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. And that's with faculty?

DR. LEE: And staff.

SENATOR SCOTT: So you've combined them both for me, because you gave me a break out of faculty at a 20-percent increase -- you've got a break out of faculty at 59 percent.

DR. LEE: So 697 of that number, of that 1,107 is staff; 400 is faculty.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Thank you.

DR. LYNN: And just as with students, there's just a lot of competition for competent faculty.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, you have the largest engineering program in the country, don't you?

DR. LYNN: Not the largest. We have --

SENATOR SCOTT: One of the --

DR. LYNN: -- one of the largest and one of the most prestigious.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, if you've got the most prestigious, it should be the largest, not in terms of numbers but in terms of how well it's performing up in ICAR, especially working with BMW in engineering, so yes.

DR. LYNN: So we're turning out -- now, we do -- we do brag the point that we generate more African-American engineers than any other school in the state, and nationally we are ranked amongst -- I don't know where we're ranked, but nationally we're amongst the -- one of the higher producers of African-American engineers.

SENATOR SCOTT: What does that mean, higher producers?

DR. LYNN: The number --

SENATOR SCOTT: Are you the top? Are you midway?

DR. LYNN: In the state, we -- in the state, we're amongst the highest. I'm not -- USC is a little larger than us. I'm not sure who has actual more numbers.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

DR. LYNN: But from the number that we enter, that we get in, we --

SENATOR SCOTT: Graduate them?

DR. LYNN: We graduate them. We get them in; we get them out.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Lynn, I'm continuing the conversation with you and the remaining candidates about the code compliance on the curriculum. Do you anticipate the board discussing the matter internally and then -- and also engaging the administration about the possibility of a more robust approach?

DR. LYNN: As electorees, we -- we're placed by you and your peers, so of course we will carry that message back.

Personally, I do believe that we ought to have more knowledge of the past, including our style of government, and one thing I do -- Ronnie serves on a -- on the -- I serve on Clemson's capitalism institute board and -- because I believe we -- our -- that if -- when we -- we're there to educate our students. And my motto and the reason I agree with what you're saying is that if we teach a person everything they need to know without adding a moral -- a moral piece to it, we've created a clever devil.

So I agree that we ought to -- they ought to know the background of our country. They ought to understand capitalism. They ought to understand how governments -- we'll -- we'll teach them how to make a good living and how to live good.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Any other questions? Do I have a motion?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Second.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All those in favor of favorable, signify by raising your right hand. That's six. Senator Peeler and Representative King also vote favorable, so that is unanimous.

Thank you, Dr. Lynn.

DR. LYNN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Next up we have Robert Peeler.

Come on up and let me swear you in, please, sir. If you'd raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. PEELER: I do.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Welcome, sir.

MR. PEELER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You may make a brief statement.

MR. PEELER: Thank you very much.

First of all, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve on the Clemson board of trustees since May of 2003. It's 17 years this May that I have had the honor of serving my alma mater on the board of trustees.

And I'm not an expert, and I -- my fellow trustees can tell you and those of you that know me, I'm not a detail person. I'm not a numbers person. Things are pretty basic with me. And I graduated from Clemson, my twin brother did, my older brother Harvey did, my younger sister Susan did, and my two adult children did. And I have an 11-year-old adopted son who is a big Clemson fan and hopes to go to Clemson later on.

I sing in the choir at church. I don't read music, but I know it when I hear it. And that's kind of how I -- how I do on the board of trustees. They don't look to me for the detail, but sometimes they look to me for the common sense. And I learned early on, sometimes you -- you don't have to have a majority; you've got to have a voice. And there are things that I have raised that I think, in the end, helps Clemson be a good place.

And to Senator Alexander's point, there is something in these hills. I'm not sure what it is. But, again to not reading music, I know it when I see it. I know it when I feel it. And that's how I try to serve as a member of the board of trustees, and if you will allow me to, I want to continue to serve for four more years and doing it that same way.

Thank you for the opportunity.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Questions for Mr. Peeler?

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: I can't help with -- you reckon I could recruit you into the Laurens County Chorale? You and Dr. Lynn. I know he's a singer as well.

MR. PEELER: Well, now, I've heard you sing, and I know -- I'll be glad to make a joyful noise.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, I'll tell you, the voice I'm most interested in hearing you speak to is -- and I'm going to continue this question of the curriculum compliance, the conversation and the voices to be heard within the board structure and then as it relates back to engaging the administration in conversation about a more robust approach to this matter of curriculum compliance.

MR. PEELER: We do need to continue that and focus more on it, frankly. And to Judge Clary's point, I think K-12 -- I served as chairman of the school board in Cherokee County before I ran for lieutenant governor, and people used to ask me was it tough being lieutenant governor. I said, Some days, but every day was tough being chairman of your local school board.

But to your point, we do need to focus on it -- there have been some conversations about it -- and to look at the codes and the statutes that we're supposed to adhere to, and we need to adhere to them.

SENATOR VERDIN: Yeah. The statute, Mr. Chairman, the statute actually reads high schools and colleges and universities, so I'm certainly in agreement with you and the judge and -- Representative Clary, I mean.

It's -- it's not an easy question because how do you get there? It's really a question on how do you get there, and we have pending legislation. I don't know what's its status is even now. I just -- as it relates to any kind

of code or law, the adjustments -- I believe there is the opportunity for institutions of higher learning and the General Assembly to make some tweaks and adjustments here that will benefit our -- our constituency, citizenry, our students. So I appreciate your attention to it.

MR. PEELER: That's certainly understood.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I think we can get a quartet going, Senator Verdin, you and me, Mr. Peeler, and Dr. Lynn. We may leave out Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I've heard Representative Whitmire sing. You know, that's -- that's -- that's --

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All right. Three of you.

SENATOR VERDIN: I'm not going to challenge that.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All right. Who's next?

Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Trustee Peeler, for your service on the board. And I kind of like what you said. You don't get into the weeds, but you are the one who actually, I guess, deals with that which is going to be progressive for the school. I guess that's the interpretation, if I got the right interpretation.

So with that in mind, what do you think that Clemson needs to be doing so students want to come to Clemson? I know a while back there was a lot of negative publicity, and the student body was in an uproar, especially as relates to some halls and some monuments up there.

Do you think that's created a problem, and is the stigma still there? Or what do you think is positive since it appears that the numbers for recruiting students still are not really going up? Six percent is really not that exciting, and I think you've been probably at six percent for a long time. You've maybe dropped down and come back up, but for some reason, you can't seem to leave six percent.

You hired a diversity officer, created a diversity department. I don't know whether or not y'all are listening to those folk or not. They seemed to me -- when they came to us, they understood or knew what they were doing.

But something -- and my feeling on that portion that you're good at, we're not getting the message to South Carolinians whose children want to go to school, unless you're an engineering major that wants to come up to Clemson or want to be an athlete. But outside of -- you know, winning comes and goes, and at some point we have to have -- be grounded a little bit more in that.

And so what do you think might be the problem why our numbers are really not moving?

MR. PEELER: We need to talk with each other --

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. PEELER: -- and figure out what's working. We've made progress.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. PEELER: But we've got a lot of work to do, and to look at other schools that are in rural settings and those kind of things and figure out why is it working for them.

We don't -- I don't think there's any controversy at Clemson that's keeping us from progressing, but I think that we've got work to do. I know we have work to do.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. PEELER: And we can't become stagnant and rest on our laurels. I mean, we -- we're doing well academically. We're doing well athletically.

I still -- to bring it down to basics for me, I can remember when the mailman brought my acceptance letter to Route 7, Box 55. That was a long time ago. And I can remember standing there, it seemed like, for five minutes looking at that letter. Back then, it had an orange stripe on it.

I probably couldn't get into Clemson today with a visitor's pass. I'm not even sure I'd get a thank-you letter for applying. But I got in, and there are those that could get in, study hard, and graduate and be a pretty productive citizen, and I think I'm one of those people. And I have never forgotten how it feels, and I never will.

But to your point, we've got work to do, and we need to work together to accomplish what we need to do. There's no doubt, we're not there yet.

SENATOR SCOTT: We've been talking about this work for quite some time, and I think you guys are going to be invited back to some of the various caucuses again. I'm hoping that you come back with a plan.

I look adjacent to y'all at Lander College, and I think the president at Lander and the president at Clemson were classmates or had gone to the same school. Their numbers are going up, and y'all are recruiting out of the same region.

And if it's a money deal, then I think a lot of students -- I asked the question yesterday, these kids could -- commuting since they live in the same neighborhood, and the answer was, yes, they're getting regional students.

And so some of that might be in that answer --

MR. PEELER: It certainly could be.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- of maybe solving that problem and help with some of the costs. But I don't see the ground team getting in the students that's right around there, and I don't know whether it's a communication gap or some -- or some --

MR. PEELER: That could -- that could be --

SENATOR SCOTT: -- or are we still living in the old Clemson days and not creating a new Clemson vision that the young people could become attracted to?

I don't know what the answer is, and I don't want to appear that I do know what the answer is. All I can tell you is, 225 freshmen to come in out of 810 who got accepted, that's -- that's pretty tough, especially if you got accepted when you -- the last time was it was grades, and now it's money.

But you've got kids who can get in, so, you know, some begin to ask the question, What is it? And I know need-based and tuition grant funding is out there. I know when they come, based on your SAT scores and the GPAs, they bring the lottery -- and most of them probably bring the Palmetto with them. So that's about \$7,500 right there, so that's half the battle.

So I'm just trying to figure out where the rest is being dropped. I can get the Palmetto, and if I'm that needy of a student, I'm getting need-based too, because you've got to exhaust all those and get the other money. I just don't see that it's being all of the major problem. I see it as front-end -- the front-end -- your front-end intake system might be broken for a lot of these kids to keep getting away.

MR. PEELER: Well, I'm -- and of course it's about producing results.

SENATOR SCOTT: No question.

MR. PEELER: I'm not going to sit here this morning and tell you that I have an answer for it.

But I do know, and I think those -- you know me. I'm a good listener, and I'm pretty good at taking those details and producing a result with it, and I'll continue to do that.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. PEELER: But I -- I promise you that.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, all I'm saying is I'm looking for the results, and we've had -- you and I along with some other of your colleagues have had a sit-down meeting. You did put something in action. So you do -- at least have grounded something. But I'm looking for the -- more of a proactive now that you've got things in place so our numbers can start moving.

MR. PEELER: Well, we have, because I think Jim Clements, our president --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. PEELER: -- he gets it. He's very much of a people person, and he's a results person. He's -- he gets it, and he's -- it's not his way to just rest on anything. We'll keep working, and we'll keep talking.

SENATOR SCOTT: Do all of you -- do all of your colleagues on the board get it? That's the key to it. Will they support the back -- the back end where he wants to go? That's the key to it.

If the board -- if the board is pushing to get there, trust me, you're going to get there. I serve on a college board too, and I can understand a little bit about what's going on after my ten years on that board.

MR. PEELER: Right. I think -- I do think so. Well, I know so. We've just got to spell it out. I know -- to not belabor the point, but I can remember at one -- one of our board of trustee meetings, Dr. Lynn leaned over to me. He said, Bob, you have a very unique way of getting your point across.

And I said, Well, Louis, do you mean that as a compliment?

He said, Well, I'm not sure. He said, It's effective.

I said, Well, at least it's effective. I said, Have you ever heard my brother Harvey get his point across? It's a kind of Peeler family way, I guess.

But that's it from me. I -- I do know that the board of trustees listens to me. Sometimes they -- I might frustrate my fellow board members because I do express kind of a commonsense way of looking at things. And I have never forgotten where I -- where I came from, and I'm proud of where I came from, and I've never forgotten how it felt to get that letter of acceptance at Clemson.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good morning and good to see you.

MR. PEELER: Good morning.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And I think you've pretty well capsuled that in talking about in these hills you see it, you feel it. I just want to make sure we keep it.

MR. PEELER: And so do I. I can remember at one of our board meetings not long after I got on the board, we were told that the university had spent, I think, a half million dollars for a report from consultants. And the basis of that report was that they needed to be more human.

And I can remember making the statement then, We don't need a half-million-dollar report at Clemson to tell us we need to be more human.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Amen.

MR. PEELER: We all know. We don't need to keep taking things away from people and becoming less human. And I -- I remember that.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And y'all are doing a good job. The president is doing a good -- so it's not -- I just want to make sure that we're not, as we go forward -- and that we're not -- and I get comments that were made earlier. You need to bring in folks from outside.

But at the same time, I don't want us to be completely outside and no one be there that relate to the Clemson experience and the experience that's in those hills and that you can see it and you can feel it because, if you've not experienced it, you're not going to know how to keep it.

MR. PEELER: And believe me, I feel the same way.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. So if I could, you mentioned the growth. Do you feel like y'all are -- where you're headed from that standpoint, is that about right for Clemson?

MR. PEELER: I think it is. I think it's enough.

When I was a freshman at Clemson in 1970, we certainly weren't at 20,195 undergraduates. But to figure out that formula of when is enough enough -- and if you ask me, the one thing -- talk about affordability. And I -- if you check the record, my history has been to oppose tuition increases and room and board increases.

It's not like that -- that there haven't been tuition increases and room and board increases, but at some point, it has to stop. And certainly the things that the legislature has done and are doing and all of us working together, I think we're all very mindful of that. At some point, enough's enough.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay.

MR. PEELER: Whether it be in enrollment or tuition.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Absolutely.

Two other things. One is, just for the record, I think I saw in your -- from your work standpoint, y'all have a contract with Clemson University, and I'm sure that was through competitive bid.

MR. PEELER: Right.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And I just wanted to get that on the record, that it was a competitive bid process that you went through and that awarded that.

MR. PEELER: Right. I'm an employee of Waste Management. Waste Management has a --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yeah, so I just wanted that -- so --

MR. PEELER: -- has a contract with Clemson that was awarded.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Right.

So -- and then the other thing is to the town-gown, and I'll yield to my friend, Representative Judge Clary on this, but I do want to at least

mention, you know, the town-gown relationship kind of started at Clemson, and the reason that the national headquarters is at Clemson is because of the great job that was done.

I just look forward -- and do we have the support of the board in making sure we get that? And it's not something that's just happened in the last five years. I think it -- and I agree with the judge. It's been ten years or more in the making. Are we ready to right that ship?

MR. PEELER: I know we are, and I know we need to.

Part of it is -- it seems like we went through a period of time we didn't talk with each other, the university and the town of Clemson, and that's not good. And I don't mean talking with each other when there's a fire to put out. An ongoing basis that's not always at official meetings or any of that kind of thing. But I think we kind of lost sight of that, and we're getting back to it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Good, good.

MR. PEELER: I will assure you that we're getting back to it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Judge Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Governor Peeler, for being here.

If he and I start speaking in a different language in the questioning, you'll realize soon that it's Gaffnese because we're both refugees from Gaffney.

And to follow upon this town-gown relationship, I think you're correct that a lot of it has to do with communications. It also has to do with putting the right people in place that's going to -- to meet with the city on a regular basis in long-range planning, looking at what's going on around the -- in the community because, you know, quite frankly, the local community views the city and the university's relationship over the last ten years as one of a drug addict and a dealer.

You know, the city wants tax dollars. The university needs places to put heads and beds. And as a result, they've developed this relationship where they're providing for each other.

And of course I doubt that I'll live to see it, but the apartments that have been built in Clemson will probably be some sort of housing that we don't want to have because of the way it was built. I watched Douthit Hills being built, and those buildings were built for a long span. But I'm not getting that, and I think that's part of the angst that we have in Clemson.

And then as -- I'll follow up as I did with your other colleagues. This idea of being a good neighbor to the people downtown because for folks

who don't go to Clemson, it's hard to differentiate where the university stops and the town begins and vice versa.

So I think that it's incumbent upon the members of -- the elected members of the board of trustees to convey that message back to the life trustees because, once again, we don't see them. We might see one or two of them if we're bringing in another national championship trophy, but it'll be interesting to see how many of them come here next week for Clemson day.

But with all that being said, what -- what's really going to be the size of the student body at Clemson University, let's say, by -- by 2025 and 2030?

MR. PEELER: It's looking like, again, a growth of two percent a year. And I'm not a numbers person, but it's going to approach 25.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And that's undergrad.

MR. PEELER: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And then you throw the grad on top of it, and, you know, quite frankly, you know, Senator Scott, we talk about all the things that go into making a great university and having diversity and so forth.

We've got a real problem in Clemson, is that professors that are coming to work there, unless they're of the research variety, housing's out of reach for them. Housing is at premium in Clemson, and, you know, I would hope that Clemson, with all the brain power that -- that you -- we have there, is going to come up and try to collaborate with the city to do something to have affordable housing in the area for people like that, and not just student housing.

So tell me this, Governor. What do you view as your role on the Clemson University board of trustees? I know that you bring that commonsense approach and that you're not afraid to speak up, but what is, in the final analysis, your role at Clemson?

MR. PEELER: My role is to bring that -- I don't call it a common touch to it, but -- but a perspective that gets it and that -- whenever I make a decision, I try to put myself in the shoes of the people that are going to be affected by that decision, no matter what it is, large things, small things, whatever it is at Clemson.

And it's not just being a victim of your own success. You know, there's going to be a rainy day. You know, it might drizzle first, but Clemson is at a good place academically and athletically, and they kind of go together, and they build off each other because, as you pay attention to it, one helps the other.

But, again, back to my point of how much is enough -- and I'm not sure what that is, but I do pay attention, and I will continue to pay

attention, and I will try to continue to bring that commonsense perspective to the board of trustees. It's -- it's how I'm made, and that's not going to change.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, and I don't disagree with you when you talk about the relationship between academics and athletics.

But at the end of the day, we're there to be the academic institution. Football is an ancillary enterprise, and as Senator Scott says, you know, some years you're good, and some years you're bad. And I've been through more bad years than I have good years up there.

So I think we need to ensure that we're preparing for the time when maybe athletics is not where it is now, but we want to have the university positioned to where it continues to be an academic leader, and that's what I expect out of a trustee.

MR. PEELER: That's a point well-made and taken because I'll assure you my comment about athletics is not all about athletics. Anything that goes on at Clemson should enhance the academic experience of the students. And whether it's 20,000 or 22,000 undergraduate or 5,600 graduate students, what we must remember every day at Clemson is it's about them, not us.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and at the appropriate time, I'd move for a favorable report.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All right. Judge Clary, I assume you were talking about football and not basketball when you were talking about excellence in athletics.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I'm talking about athletics.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Oh, got you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I second the nomination.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Any other questions?

All right. There is a motion for favorable. All those in favor, raise your right hand, please. We have six favorable, and we have two proxies voting favorable also.

Thank you, Mr. Peeler.

MR. PEELER: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And our last candidate is Mr. John Pettigrew, if you'll come on up and let me swear you in, please.

Just raise your right hand. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. PETTIGREW: I do.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Welcome, sir, and make a brief statement.

MR. PETTIGREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, and I appreciate the opportunity to be here, and I thank you for your time and for your service to the people of South Carolina.

I'm here today because I love Clemson, and I care about Clemson, and I love South Carolina and care about the people of South Carolina. And it's my desire to serve on the Clemson board so that we can make sure that the university continues to do all that it can do to provide a quality and efficient and relevant education to the people of South Carolina.

Now, I have deep ties to Clemson, and that doesn't make me qualified to be on the board, but my ties go back over 100 years. My grandfather on my mother's side graduated in agriculture in 1918, and then my father went to Clemson on the G.I. Bill and was able to finish in 1949. I graduated in 1982, and my wife graduated in 1987. So I do have strong ties to Clemson, and I want to see Clemson continue to succeed and continue to do more and more in serving the people of South Carolina and being accessible to the people of South Carolina.

While I was at Clemson, those years, those four years, were great years, 1978 to 1982. I met a lot of friends. I learned a lot inside the classroom and outside the classroom, probably more outside the classroom, that has helped me in my life, and now I'm at the point where I'd like to give back to the university that meant so much to me and has helped me every day of my life. And so that's why I would like to serve on the board.

I have studied Thomas Green Clemson's will and know that he had a vision and a commitment to serving the average South Carolinian, and that would be in the forefront of any decision that I would make if I were fortunate enough to be on the Clemson board, would be is this best for the people of South Carolina?

I know that the legislature has been very supportive of Clemson, and we appreciate that. And I feel Clemson is doing a lot of good things, but I think there's room for improvement, things we can do better, and I would just be honored to have that opportunity to be able to be a part of that board.

Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Questions for Mr. Pettigrew?

Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Pettigrew. I see you're from Edgefield.

MR. PETTIGREW: Yes, sir. I grew up in Edgefield, and I lived there for 60 years, and we actually moved to Aiken back in August. But so

now I live in Aiken, but I -- Edgefield is where I was born and raised. Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Very good, very good.

Tell me a little about some of the things that you think that they can do better. I've heard that we're working on it and we've got a new vision for it. What are some things that they can do better?

MR. PETTIGREW: Yes, sir. I think we need to be more accessible to the people of South Carolina. We have -- at Clemson, the percentage of out-of-state students has continued to grow at Clemson.

And as mentioned earlier, now in the freshman class, it was about 40 percent from out of state, and overall it's a little over 60 percent in-state and 38 or 39 percent from out-of-state.

And the State of South Carolina gives a lot of money to Clemson. They've got a lot invested there, in all the buildings and facilities. I think in last year's budget, it was \$154 million total of state dollars went to Clemson.

And there are a lot of people in our state that want to be able to go to Clemson, and I think that they ought to have that opportunity, whether they are number one in their class or maybe a little further on down. They can succeed in life, and I think that Clemson needs to do more to welcome South Carolina students to the student body.

SENATOR SCOTT: What is the SAT score required now to get in Clemson?

MR. PETTIGREW: It keeps getting higher and higher, and I think right now the average is a little over 1300.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Is there any other school you know in South Carolina that requires 1300?

MR. PETTIGREW: Clemson's SAT score, from the information I've seen, is the highest in South Carolina.

SENATOR SCOTT: So that could be a major barrier, why there kids won't come, if you're required to get a 1300.

MR. PETTIGREW: Well -- well, that could stop some from coming, and, you know, Clemson can't accept everybody.

SENATOR SCOTT: That's understandable.

MR. PETTIGREW: We can't.

But there are some that are -- I'm afraid that are being bumped by out-of-state students, and Clemson has been aggressive in providing abatements or reductions in the tuition for out-of-state students to attract some top out-of-state students. And last year, that figure was -- the abatement figure was a little over \$33 million. And to attract the out-of-state students -- yes, you need diversity. You need folks from out of state. But I don't know if we need to be at the level where we are.

And then if you take that a step further, with out-of-state students, there was a study done by the State Employment and Workforce commission that looked at students five years after graduation to see where they were. Were they still in South Carolina, or were they somewhere else?

And according to that study, after five years, the Clemson graduates, 55 percent of those from in state were still on the payroll in South Carolina.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yes, sir.

MR. PETTIGREW: But only 14 percent of those from out of state were on the payroll in South Carolina. So it's about three times as great a chance that they'll stay in South Carolina and work, and we need the workforce, as I think you pointed out earlier, if they come from in state.

So I just think that we need to adjust that ratio a little bit with the in-state and the out-of-state.

SENATOR SCOTT: I was just concerned about the almost 600 kids who did get accepted and end up not being there, and then I got the answer it was money. But then you've got -- you spend \$33 million to bring out-of-state students here, so it's really not money.

MR. PETTIGREW: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: It's about where we put our priorities.

And then -- and the reason why I mention to you Edgefield, because I was in the general vicinity. I guess that's Highway 25 that brings us back -- back into it. And I'm looking at other schools who are doing recruitment and trying to get more students who come out of that region to start coming to Clemson.

But if I've got almost 40 percent out-of-state, that's not a reasonable concept to bring students in.

MR. PETTIGREW: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: And like the -- that the -- Representative Clary said, Judge Clary said, early on the relationship in the community -- well, that community expands outside of just downtown Clemson. It expands within your region.

And we're looking adjacent to you, and I mentioned Lander a minute ago, and I asked the question yesterday. A lot of your students, they're coming from within that same region, and a lot of these kids who can't afford to go -- of course, because of the technical education agreement with -- with -- I guess that's Greenwood tech up there. They're utilizing that to bring these students in.

I asked also about the cost, the tuition cost. And, of course, we're freezing costs, but if we give them money on the front end, and the General Assembly's now trying to give y'all extra money so that you

don't continue to raise tuition. But when you're giving away those kinds of dollars to out-of-state when the whole goal is to save these in-state students, I've got some real concerns about the impact of what it's actually having on being able to recruit these students.

And I know we're not going to solve all this today, but that's going to be a question again before this year is over with, especially at the time of funding, because if we're funding out-of-state students, I've got a real issue with that. Our money needs to be, of course, spent to bring these in-state students.

What's your concept of the kids who are coming out of, I guess, Greenwood, Laurens, Abbeville, McCormick, Saluda, Anderson, back up to Clemson, recruiting in that region? How many of those students are actually going to Clemson? Because you're not going to tell me all these students don't have good grades.

MR. PETTIGREW: Yeah. I don't know the percentage from a certain region.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. PETTIGREW: And of course I look at Clemson as trying to serve the entire state.

I can give you an example from Edgefield. A good friend of mine, an African American who -- you probably know him. I won't call his name right now. But his son was a top graduate in high school --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. PETTIGREW: -- out of Edgefield County, and he looked at Clemson. He looked at some other schools. And I encouraged his father for his son to take a closer look at Clemson, but he ended up going to Duke.

And I asked him why, and he said they gave him a full ride and paid for everything: room, board. A total of about \$270,000 was the value of that scholarship.

SENATOR SCOTT: His package.

MR. PETTIGREW: And at Clemson, we have scholarships, and we have the Palmetto Fellows and the Life Scholarships and whatnot, and the 15,000 tuition, that's only about half of it because you've got -- Clemson, in fact, estimates 15,580 for tuition and fees; room and board, 11,400; books and supplies, 1,400. And that doesn't include any transportation or other expenses, so that's about \$28,000.

So when -- when top students are offered the opportunity to go somewhere else and everything is covered, that makes it hard to compete to get those to Clemson unless we have a similar type of scholarship program for those students.

SENATOR SCOTT: How many students actually live off campus at Clemson? I was listening again to the judge talking about the relationship and housing. I googled it, and there are some three bedrooms, three baths, I think 1,200 square feet at 575. So are we encouraging kids to live off campus, or are we just creating this --

MR. PETTIGREW: Well, there's not enough dormitories.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- this fence?

MR. PETTIGREW: Yeah. There's not enough dormitory space to live on campus. And if you go to Clemson, Clemson has built more dormitory space, but also the private sector with apartments, a number have sprung up in the last eight or ten years too.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. PETTIGREW: To meet the increasing enrollment.

SENATOR SCOTT: They're doing the same thing here in Columbia too.

MR. PETTIGREW: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'm just trying to get a good feeling for the direction y'all need to go so you can actually get your numbers up because they just still don't look good.

Thank you.

MR. PETTIGREW: Yes, sir. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good to see you this morning.

MR. PETTIGREW: Thank you, Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you for your willingness to serve.

On the abatement, is that -- would you agree that's not unique to Clemson?

MR. PETTIGREW: That is not unique to Clemson, no, sir. All of the colleges and universities in South Carolina --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Including USC.

MR. PETTIGREW: -- have abatements to some degree. In fact, USC has even larger dollars that they abate on tuition to out-of-state students.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I just didn't want us to leave here today thinking that was unique to Clemson.

MR. PETTIGREW: No, sir. No, sir. You are absolutely correct.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So you've heard the comments and questions about -- and you, as a graduate, how do you ensure making sure that that Clemson experience, if that's truly a value that we place there, how do we ensure that that continues to be there for future students?

MR. PETTIGREW: Well, I think we have as -- more South Carolina students, I think, would contribute to that.

And I don't know if we need to get, really, any larger because the larger you get, whether it be an organization or a church or whatever, you lose a little bit of the personal interactions and personal contacts. I think one thing you alluded to, having some staff and faculty that have Clemson degrees, a Clemson background. Of course, not everybody can or will, but that should be part of it.

So -- and I think right now, people that go to Clemson love Clemson, and they still have that feeling. I don't think it's been lost.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I agree.

MR. PETTIGREW: But we have to be careful that it isn't lost.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And that's where I'm going.

MR. PETTIGREW: Right.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I want to make sure -- so you would be -- if you were on the board, you would be committed to making sure that the efforts were...

MR. PETTIGREW: Oh, yeah. Oh, I very much feel that and feel that that's important, yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And it's my understanding in the reading here that while you were at Clemson you served as student body president.

MR. PETTIGREW: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And you had the ability to attend the board meetings and would bring that perspective as well.

MR. PETTIGREW: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And I'll leave it to others on the town-gown relationship.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Pettigrew, can you share your perspective on the curriculum question that I've focused on today?

MR. PETTIGREW: Yes, sir. I think that the founding documents are certainly important and important that all students have a good understanding of that.

And as you pointed out, that's the law, and I think Clemson needs to make the effort to ensure that that's complied with and that the students do have that education, whether it be a one-hour course, whether it be on part of an introductory to Clemson course, an introductory to the founding documents course kind of combined.

I don't know exactly how credit-wise that should be part of the curriculum, but I think it can be done. If there's a will to do it, it can be done.

SENATOR VERDIN: So certainly something more robust than is currently offered.

MR. PETTIGREW: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: And, you know, I know we have a flagship institution in this state, but --

MR. PETTIGREW: That's Clemson, right?

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, I share the sentiment that some of these that are more closely related to them do -- well, actually, I paid three tuitions through there. I'll use the term standard-bearer.

MR. PETTIGREW: Okay.

SENATOR VERDIN: I do believe that if Clemson shows leadership in this arena, a lot of other institutions will fall right in behind them.

So -- because I don't plan to ask this question -- if I'm continued the honor of representing my colleagues on this panel here, I don't know that I'll be asking this question of everyone else. But because of my regard for Clemson and the standard that they set as the standard-bearer academically, I felt compelled today to focus on this arena.

But thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Judge Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Pettigrew, welcome.

MR. PETTIGREW: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: When we talk about abatements, and you've mentioned Clemson's \$33 million, and we -- it was alluded to that other schools have even larger percentages of abatements and -- but the question was not asked, how about the ratio of out-of-state students at other campuses throughout the state?

You know, we're just talking about Clemson. Clemson's not unusual. I think Clemson probably has a higher number, of the larger schools, of in-state students than the other large schools in this state. Would you agree with that or disagree with it?

MR. PETTIGREW: USC here in Columbia does have a larger number of out-of-state students and does have a larger amount that is abated. And -- but there are --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: How about Coastal?

MR. PETTIGREW: I don't know the numbers off the top of my head for Coastal.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: How about the College of Charleston?

MR. PETTIGREW: Yeah. They all use abatements. They do.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So it's not something that is just unusual for Clemson.

MR. PETTIGREW: It is not unusual for Clemson to abate the tuition.

It's been increasing considerably over the last few years, and that's -- that's what's caused me concern when we look at all those students staying here after they graduate and contributing to the economy of South Carolina.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, if you'll go sit in a Ways and Means Committee meeting, that's something that is -- confronts the colleges and universities every time they present their budgets.

MR. PETTIGREW: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: There's always someone there that is asking those questions, and it's not something that goes unnoticed.

MR. PETTIGREW: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Insofar as the relationship between the city of Clemson, the surrounding Clemson area, and the university, what -- what do you see that you could bring to the board of trustees that's going to improve that?

Because, you know, my contingent is that if you just go there for a football game, you go there for a board of trustees meeting, and you never move around and see what's going on in that area, you have no idea what kind of impact is occurring. So tell me what you would bring to improve that.

MR. PETTIGREW: Well, I would bring a fresh perspective as to not being on the board right now.

And in the past, I served as mayor of the town of Edgefield, so I kind of have a perspective of the local government and how the focus of the local government officials is to make sure that their community is a great place to live and to work and, you know, to do business, to raise a family. So I understand that.

And I just think that communication, though, is really the key to it and the ongoing communication, as has been said previously, not just when there's an emergency and a crisis, but ongoing communication all the time, back and forth with the town officials and the university to talk about what you have planned or give a heads-up on various projects, street closures, or whatever it may be. I think that the communication would go a long way to improve those relationships.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Any other questions? Do I have a motion?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: There's a motion favorable and a second. All those in favor, please signify by raising your right hand. We have six, and two proxies are also favorable.

So thank you very much. You're reported out favorable.

All right. Is there anything else good for the committee?

MS. CASTO: That's it.

CHAIRMAN REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That's it.

COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Now we'll move to Coastal Carolina University, 5th Congressional District, Lisa Davis.

MS. CASTO: Members of the committee, this is an unexpired term. We had a resignation, so this seat is for the 5th Congressional District. It expires June 30th of 2023.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: How are you doing?

MS. DAVIS: Good.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record, give us your full name.

MS. DAVIS: My name is Lisa Mabry Davis.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. DAVIS: I do, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement on why you'd like to serve on the Coastal Carolina board?

MS. DAVIS: Sure, I would.

My name is Lisa Davis, and I graduated from Clemson University in 1991, and I graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1993 with a master's in speech pathology. I'm a speech pathologist. I privately contract with BabyNet, and I own Meeting Milestones Early Intervention Services.

My son goes to Coastal Carolina. He will graduate, thank God, in May of this year. It's a wonderful institution, and I have served as Coastal Carolina's unofficial cheerleader in Cherokee County now since he's been attending the institution in 2016.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments?

SENATOR VERDIN: Where'd you say, Cherokee?

MS. DAVIS: Cherokee County, Gaffney.

SENATOR VERDIN: Gaffney like --

MS. DAVIS: Yes.

SENATOR VERDIN: I didn't look at the address. Grassy Pond by any chance?

MS. DAVIS: No, almost. Almost. It's more of the battleground area.

SENATOR VERDIN: Battleground.

MS. DAVIS: Yes, yes, yes.

SENATOR VERDIN: So --

MS. DAVIS: Cowpens battleground. Almost Grassy Pond.

SENATOR VERDIN: -- one of the five -- what's that road that runs over there, 11?

MS. DAVIS: Yeah, it's Highway 11. We live right off of that.

SENATOR VERDIN: Yeah, I'm just showing out for the Chairman.

MS. DAVIS: God's country, God's country.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Clary, also from there.

MS. DAVIS: That's right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I guess my question would be do you understand Gaffnese?

MS. DAVIS: I do. I do. And I'm so afraid that I may speak some in this microphone in front of you distinguished leaders.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: That's a plus.

Ms. Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I see that you noted that the school's weakness was its reputation as a party school.

MS. DAVIS: I did.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: So I have a son who's currently at the College of Charleston.

MS. DAVIS: Also...

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: And so he's made some comments along those same lines.

So I'm wondering how would you change that? What sort of actions would you take as a board member to change that reputation?

MS. DAVIS: Fortunately, I think the college is changing its reputation on its own, without my help. I was very surprised.

I think with -- with establishing more serious-minded majors -- Coastal Carolina University has an intelligence and national securities major now. It draws a very intense, very focused group of students. They have a certificate in geospatial technology. Again, drawing a very serious-minded student who is very focused and very driven.

I think with -- the bringing in of those programs certainly kind of downplays that party school reputation, and the security on that school has been phenomenal. My daughter attends another -- another school in

the state, and she's having a much better time than he is. So I think that, you know, the staff and the -- and just the direction of the whole university is going in a more serious direction.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

Mr. Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Move for a favorable report.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, ma'am.

MS. DAVIS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you so much for your willingness to serve.

MS. DAVIS: Thank you.

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'm going to move up to Tab H, Andrew Gianoukos, 1st Congressional District, B-2.

That's why I ask you to give us your full name for the record. That way, you can tell us how you pronounce your name.

MR. GIANOUKOS: Okay. Yeah. Andrew Anthony Gianoukos.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Oh, I said it pretty good.

MR. GIANOUKOS: Yeah, you did good. Closer than most people.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. GIANOUKOS: Yes, I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. GIANOUKOS: Yes. My name is Andrew Anthony Gianoukos. I was born in Charleston, South Carolina. So I'm a Charlestonian and an alumnus of the College of Charleston. Been in business -- two brothers are in business with. We're in the logistics business in warehousing and trucking with about 120 employees at this time. Been a big supporter of the College of Charleston. We were one of the founding members of the TD Arena.

Also, we supported and helped the College of Charleston golf team. I was a -- went on scholarship; part academic, part golf scholarship for the College of Charleston back in 1975. All three of my children went to the College of Charleston.

So, again, being a big and long-time supporter and a Charleston native, I've seen the college grow over a long period of time. And I thought it

was, you know, time, maybe, to hopefully lend my business skills and for my school that I went to, and whatever I can do to help it, to improve it, to work as a team member, that's what I'm here to do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

Questions, comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Mr. Gianoukos, for your desire to serve. A couple of questions for you. You talk about the College of Charleston's biggest strength: the quality of facilities, location. So are you telling me that the College of Charleston has everything that it needs in so far as facilities are concerned?

MR. GIANOUKOS: No. I think it's definitely at a good point, I mean, based on -- obviously, we were in the Southern Conference for a long period of time, and now, as far as with the Colonial -- but just based on where Charleston is, the proximity to the beach, the campus, the city, I think it's a perfect spot for any young woman or man in order to get their college education.

I think there's definitely improvements, as, again, as we've tried to help the golf program, just as there is for improvement in any -- anyplace. I know they've grown. They've bought a lot of buildings, a lot of assets. And, you know, being a, you know, a business owner, I'd like to see them continue to improve and continue to offer more so as, you know, to be competitive in whatever the area, whatever the conference they're recruiting from or even within this state.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I'm not as much concerned about the athletic part of it --

MR. GIANOUKOS: Sure, as a school.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- as I am the academic part of it and the housing and so forth.

MR. GIANOUKOS: Sure.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: When you -- you also talk about a large percentage of out-of-state students, so what do you consider to be a large percentage?

MR. GIANOUKOS: I think, you know, right now, I believe it's at 35 percent. I'd like to see it go down some. I know appropriations going for in-state students, I think -- I think we have a lot of good, smart men and women in our own state that I'd like to see more done to try to recruit those particular individuals to come to the College of Charleston.

But I think -- I don't think the percentage is way off key, but I think we can do some improvements to get more in-state students into the -- into the College of Charleston.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You also talk about ways to improve the school, that course programs need to be in line with manufacturing jobs. How do you accomplish that at an institution that is predominantly a liberal arts orientation?

MR. GIANOUKOS: Well, I think, again, you know -- yeah, being new and obviously haven't had a chance and sit down and talk to the other board members, I mean, as Charleston has progressed, you see a lot more manufacturers coming in from Volvo to Daimler to -- and I think that -- I'd like to see students -- more programs offered for higher-paying jobs.

Again, I'm not opposed to a liberal arts college because I know how college is, but I'd like to see us focus on even more programs, whether I.T., whether it's manufacturing sector, that when, you know, the student is -- we asking to spend 70, 80, a hundred thousand -- whatever it is -- for a college education, that when they get out, those higher-paying jobs are waiting. And I think -- I'd like to see more, being from the business segment of the world, I'd like to see more business, more manufacturing opportunities that the college could offer so these, you know, these students could get higher-paying jobs.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: And so am I to understand you're more concerned about in the management area, those students would be prepared to be -- help run and manage those companies in their operation?

MR. GIANOUKOS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: But at the same token, am I understanding you to say you want also for them to understand how the working man at the company actually function and some of their responsibilities as well?

MR. GIANOUKOS: Sure, sure. I know even, just speaking for myself, we started at the ground floor. Even though I'm owner of the company --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. GIANOUKOS: -- and worked myself -- worked my way up, you know, I think that's important to understand it from the bottom to the top. But I do see South Carolina, and in particular, the Charleston area, and even up in the upper part there, more and more manufacturing is coming into the state. This port is producing more and more opportunities, and I think, you know, those jobs, hopefully, are going to be higher-paying jobs. And I'd like to see us -- not to get away, totally -- obviously, we're a liberal arts college -- but I think we need to put some more emphasis on that --

SENATOR SCOTT: So you say as a technical school, concentrate on those who actually do that area work. You want to make sure the shift managers and those who can actually manage people mainly get some training.

MR. GIANOUKOS: Yes, but also the higher -- also the higher-level jobs.

SENATOR SCOTT: Those are higher -- yeah, yeah. Well, your shift managers and your district managers --

MR. GIANOUKOS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- company managers --

MR. GIANOUKOS: Yeah, and as they --

SENATOR SCOTT: -- get those trained, get --

MR. GIANOUKOS: With that educational background, they can move their way up and eventually, you know, manage, be, you know, high-level management for those particular companies. And, again, I don't, you know, want to see somebody invest a lot of money and they come out of school and there's nothing either there for them or they're low-paying jobs. And that's, that's what my focus would be more on as a team member.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

What's the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable. Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

MR. GIANOUKOS: Okay, thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

MR. GIANOUKOS: Y'all have a great day.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Stern, you are in the 2nd Congressional District, Seat 4. Brian Stern of Columbia.

MR. STERN: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir.

MR. STERN: How are you?

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

MR. STERN: Brian Stern. Brian Jeffrey Stern.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. STERN: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. STERN: You know, I would just like to thank you guys for the opportunity for serving on this board thus far. It's been incredible to serve my alma mater and come full circle. You know, for me, it's -- I'd like to say it was not too long ago that I was a student at the college, and now to be able to serve on the board and be a part of some of the tremendous change that we have going on there at the college, including the new hire of a president. It's been fantastic to be a part of and to kind of pave the way for the future of the college. So I appreciate the opportunity to serve so far and hopefully to continue to serve.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments from members of the committee?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Welcome, Mr. Stern, and thank you for also serving. I'm going to pose the same question to you that I did just a few minutes ago regarding orientation and training because I think that's important to me for people who are being brought in as new board member. Can you tell me how -- what you received when you came on the College of Charleston board?

MR. STERN: Sure. You know, the first thing that we did was, we had a dinner with the chairman and the new board members prior to coming on. And it was great to kind of, in a casual atmosphere, get a better understanding of who was on the board, be able to ask some of those introductory questions that you might not ask at a board meeting, just to get your understanding of the lay of the land.

From there, I sat in on a board meeting, not participating, but I was able to sit in and kind of see how the board was run. And then I met with all the department heads, different board members, and so on. I felt as if I was given a very good introduction to the board and understood what was coming with it.

And obviously, I didn't know everything that it entailed, but I was given a very quick crash course where I felt comfortable walking in where I wasn't walking in blind. So I felt as if the, the coming onboard process was fairly seamless.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And to follow up, I think your colleague mentioned that you're about two-thirds/one-third South Carolinians to out-of-state, and your tuition for an in-state student is \$12,418. What's the out-of-state tuition at the college?

MR. STERN: It is currently 31,600.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you also talk about ways to improve the school to focus on comprehensive institution, world-class port --

MR. STERN: Sure.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- Boeing jet manufacturing, and the need to leverage contracts. Tell me how you intend to do that as a board member.

MR. STERN: Well, you know, aside from Charleston's geographic location, which I think is one of its biggest draws, I think the fact that we -- big business has now come to Charleston as a result of the port there, along with South Carolina being a great place to work, we have some great big businesses that come there along with the port that we should leverage.

I think that as a college, being in that area, we need to recognize what kind of degrees and what kind of student that we're pumping out of that college and making sure that they are fitting the needs of the businesses and what the state has to offer.

So whether that be engineers or whatever it may be, coming out of Boeing or BMW or Mercedes or the port, there's various degrees that we don't take advantage of, and we have a lot of great, warm contacts there that want to continue to work with the college, and I want to make sure that we're offering those things to the students that are, in my opinion, low-hanging fruit.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And then, when -- on your statement of economic interest, you said you serve on the Richland County School District Two Board from 2016 to 2020; is that correct?

MR. STERN: You know, that is a typo if it says 2020. I apologize. That -- I served on the Planning Commission from 20 -- I want to say 2014 to 2018.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay.

MR. STERN: So that might have been a typo in there. My apologies.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Stern, this is what you have on file with the State Ethics Commission.

MR. STERN: Okay.

MS. CASTO: You may want to amend it with the State Ethics Commission because it says you're on the Richland County School Board, District Two School Board, instead of the College of Charleston board.

MR. STERN: Okay. I must have checked in the wrong box there. I apologize.

MS. CASTO: Yeah, yeah, okay. Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. STERN: The dates, though, for the -- currently for my board position, those dates are correct, so thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Desires of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable. Objections? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous. Thank you, sir.

MR. STERN: Thank you for your time, guys. Appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: As indicated earlier, we're going to College of Charleston, 3rd Congressional District, Seat 6, Craig Thornton, Greenville.

MS. CASTO: It's Tab J.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

MS. CASTO: On page 10.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir.

MR. THORNTON: Good afternoon.

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

MR. THORNTON: Craig Calloway Thornton.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. THORNTON: I do, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir. And actually, I guess, in lieu of a statement regarding myself, I'd just like to personally extend my sincere condolences to -- over the Rena Grant family. I know there was an unfortunate incident with her this weekend, and I know that she was a valued member of the Ways and Means staff and had been around this community for a long time.

While I don't know her well, I had met her a number of times, and she was an exceptional young woman. So I just want her family to know that our prayers are with them.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you so much. That's it for your statement?

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

Any questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah, thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Thornton --

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- for your willingness to serve. And this will be your second term. Tell me a little bit about the diversity program at the College of Charleston. I know y'all have been working on that for quite some time.

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir, and that's something we've been working on quite a bit.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah.

MR. THORNTON: And actually, I guess -- I'm sorry.

SENATOR SCOTT: Go ahead. Tell me what --

MR. THORNTON: Well, back in 2009, the college actually established, I think it's OID, which is our Office of Institutional Diversity. And the phenomenal Dr. Renard Harris is the director of that program. And it's a combination of looking at our diversity numbers and, one, how do we increase those?

I think currently, we're at about 8 percent as far as African-American numbers goes for our enrollment. And how do we increase those and attract more students of color into our university and getting more applications and actually getting them into school? But it's also a process of, once they're in school, how do we help all of those students actually succeed through the process?

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. THORNTON: You know, there's actually a program we have called Crossing the Cistern, where it's a process of meeting with those students and regularly checking in, being cognizant of their schedules and monitoring, I guess, their day-to-day to activities to make sure they're going to class and make sure that we're doing all we can to help them succeed throughout the school year.

SENATOR SCOTT: I noticed that y'all were struggling also with faculty and staff as well as teachers.

MR. THORNTON: Yeah, I think current --

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, is that coming? Because if you're going to track students, students have their folk that they can -- also can relate to as well.

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir. And that's one thing we're actually -- within the last 18 months, I believe, is when it first came up. We actually -- I think it happened before that, but most definitely, about 18 months ago, we started tracking the actual faculty and staff and actually looking into, okay, what's our population look like?

I think currently, we're at about 20 percent minority, with a large portion of that -- or actually, a small portion of that being African

American. I think it's 4 or 6 percent. I can't remember the exact number. But it's something we've done a deep dive into, and we're looking at, okay, how can we attract more -- more minorities as far as faculty and staff?

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. THORNTON: And I think we're, we're more heavily on the staff side than we are the faculty because I think the faculty is an area of focus we need to really dig into and figure out, how do we make a change with that and encourage more of that?

SENATOR SCOTT: What about your in-state/out-of-state students? How are you doing with that?

MR. THORNTON: I think currently, our in-state students were about at 65 percent enrollment, so with 35 percent being out-of-state. And it's a tough, tough area to focus on. Obviously, we want to focus on South Carolina kids. That's -- we're a state-funded. But I guess the hard part is, you know, we've set kind of our baseline: Okay, here's what it takes to succeed at the College of Charleston. And we accept every one of those kids in South Carolina who meets those standards.

But the problem is actually getting them to come to our school. As you know, the -- I guess the abatement game is one that's been floating around for a while. College of Charleston just got into it a couple of years ago, and we're much, much lower on the totem pole. We're actually putting some programs in place now to, one, help with diversity in South Carolina students but also those students in general because we're trying to offer them some additional funding to come to our school in state.

SENATOR SCOTT: Do you have an articulation agreement with tech schools?

MR. THORNTON: Sir?

SENATOR SCOTT: Do you have an articulation agreement with the tech schools? That's a great place to --

MR. THORNTON: Yes, we actually have a bridge program with the local tech school. It's kind of -- it's an extra layer of, okay, if you don't quite fit this mold, and we have some conversations about maybe you want to, you know, take a year to figure out if it's right for you. And then they actually take class -- I guess, take their classes in our classrooms, stay on our campus, but they're actually taught by the tech school teachers. It's a great program. We started a couple of years ago.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Thornton --

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- for being here and for your service. Being a relatively new member of the board, can you tell me what kind of orientation and training you had when you were chosen for the College of Charleston board?

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir. Actually, I mean, going in, what I had -- wasn't exactly sure what I was walking into. I knew it was something I wanted to do, but it didn't -- wasn't sure what all it entailed.

And, I mean, we put -- they put me through -- I mean, it was rigorous full two days, which doesn't sound like a lot, but, I mean, two full days meeting with the chair of the board, a number of members of the board, every different head of each segment of the school to better understand exactly, maybe, the needs they have, some of the things that they were going to be presenting to us going forward.

And it was just really -- I mean, a very, very good overall view of exactly what you could expect from the board.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you mention, in response to the questions that are presented to you, ways to improve the school, the development of a long-term strategic plan.

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: What are you doing about that?

MR. THORNTON: That's actually a very good question because it's the -- I guess, our current plan has not been revised since, I believe, 2009. And, you know, we just hired an excellent new president, Dr. Andrew Hsu, who has been phenomenal. And we are in the halfway point right now of the process of developing a brand-new plan. And that's something we hope to bring to campus. I mean, he's done a great job just by getting campus input and faculty and staff input. We want it to be a model that everyone believes in and can buy into that we can go forward with for the future.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: All right. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaking of your president, I had a chance to sit down and break bread with him last Christmas. Very impressed. I think you made a wise choice, and I hope he'll stay a long time.

MR. THORNTON: I do as well.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Congratulations on that selection.

MR. THORNTON: Thank you, sir.

(Motion for a favorable report.)

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable, seconded. Any discussion? If not, we'll take it to a vote. Raise your right hand. Unanimous. Thank you.

MR. THORNTON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir. Next, we'll come up to 4th Congressional District, Seat 8, Renee Romberger from Greenville.

MS. ROMBERGER: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, ma'am.

MS. ROMBERGER: Good afternoon.

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

MS. ROMBERGER: Renee Buyck Romberger.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. ROMBERGER: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. ROMBERGER: Thank you. I want to say what an honor it's been for me to serve on the College of Charleston board of trustees since 2013. My passion is the College of Charleston. As a graduate, I care deeply about the school, and I consider it an honor and a privilege to have had the opportunity to serve in this capacity, and I look forward to continuing my service if given the opportunity. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Welcome, Ms. Romberger.

MS. ROMBERGER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you for your service. Ways to improve the College of Charleston: You talked about funding as a constant struggle, and I understand that. Need to grow the endowment. What kind of an endowment do you have at the College of Charleston?

MS. ROMBERGER: We're now up to about a hundred million dollars in our endowment, so compared to many large universities, we don't have a very large-size endowment, so that's a huge goal for us.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So I guess that ties in with the biggest weakness, that lack of scholarship support?

MS. ROMBERGER: It, it does, and I think a lot of our ability to grow the endowment is related to leadership. And we are so excited about our new president. In fact, we just celebrated our 250th anniversary several weeks ago and had a day of giving. And in one single day, we raised over \$5 million for the College of Charleston. And I think it speaks directly to that people are so excited about our new president and his leadership.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Vice Chairman Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A few years ago, there was a controversy at the college about some book the freshmen were supposed to be reading.

MS. ROMBERGER: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And we had a few colleagues up here that went off the deep end about it. What, whatever happened with that controversy? Did it get, you know, satisfied, or is still going on? What?

MS. ROMBERGER: No, we still have the freshmen Reads! program, which is the program that initiated the book that was selected. I think you see greater interest and involvement in the board in wanting to understand the books that are being selected to make sure that they are appropriate for the students, but we also believe that challenging the students to think outside the box is a critical part of being in a liberal arts university.

And so we still have the freshmen Reads! book that is selected, and each student reads that, prior to coming in their freshman year.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And that's required reading by all freshmen?

MS. ROMBERGER: Yes, yes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Do they have any -- more than one choice, or do they have to read a particular book?

MS. ROMBERGER: It's usually just one choice, and not only do they read the book and discuss it during orientation during the summer, but then in the fall session, they usually have the author of the book on campus to interact with the students, and some of the professors use the book in their teaching in the fall semester.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, I know one thing. That sure caused a controversy up here.

MS. ROMBERGER: It sure did.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And I won't say which Representative.

MS. ROMBERGER: I remember.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You remember, huh?

MS. ROMBERGER: In my county, I do believe.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Speaking of that, do you live in Greenville now, or are you still in Spartanburg?

MS. ROMBERGER: I live in Greenville and work in Spartanburg.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And he's still doing it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You don't have to recognize him.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I tried not to.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator from Richland, Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your willingness to serve. I want to get your insight of where you think the school is with its diversity. And I know you, as a chief governmental affair officer, would have a little bit more insight because it would probably be part of what you're accustomed to in the workforce.

MS. ROMBERGER: Absolutely.

SENATOR SCOTT: So.

MS. ROMBERGER: I think we have cared about this diversity issue for a number of years.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MS. ROMBERGER: And I think caring is important, but action is even more important. And when we went through the process to select our new president, we did listening sessions throughout the community to listen to faculty, students, and staff about what we -- they thought we needed, what kind of traits we needed in a new president.

And the thing that we heard across the board is that we need a president who not only believes in diversity and inclusion, but also has a track record of making a difference and showing improvement. And so that was one of the key traits that we found in our new president, Dr. Andrew Hsu. And even since he's been at the helm, we have committed additional dollars to diversity initiatives.

We are adding more needs-based scholarships in South Carolina because we know that that's an important part of the strategy. But he not only believes in recruiting both faculty and students and staff, but also in creating an environment where people feel comfortable and accepted in that environment and want to stay in that environment. So the strategies that you'll see us coming out with in our new strategic plan,

there will be a number of initiatives focused on diversity and inclusion and acceptance. And we're really proud of that.

SENATOR SCOTT: I mean, I'm -- thank you. And I always go back to how diverse the Charleston area is.

MS. ROMBERGER: Absolutely.

SENATOR SCOTT: And how much talent actually come through there but doesn't remain or go to the schools there.

MS. ROMBERGER: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: And the concern is looking at the region, and those young people know the region. And being able to keep them in the region, even if you go in some of the smaller counties --

MS. ROMBERGER: Absolutely.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- would help to -- help us to fix some of those issues. Once we lose that talent out of that region, you don't get it back.

MS. ROMBERGER: You, you don't.

SENATOR SCOTT: And so if we can't figure out how to keep the talent, we're going to lose the talent permanently.

MS. ROMBERGER: Absolutely. And I think one of the things that we did was, we started a Top Ten initiative where we are automatically accepting students in South Carolina in the top 10 percent of their class. But just accepting them wasn't enough. I think -- I actually shadowed in alumni advising -- I mean, not alumni -- student advising --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. ROMBERGER: -- a couple of years ago and met a young man, African-American young man who was valedictorian of his high school class at Stall High School. And he was struggling to stay in school because even as brilliant as he is and was, he had to work two jobs to be able to stay in school.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. ROMBERGER: And so this, this focus on needs-based scholarships, I think, are a really important strategy for us to make sure that we not only recruit the talent, but they're able to remain at the college.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right. I know, because knowing that these kids graduate at the top 10 percent of the class, got good SAT scores, outside university will give a full ride.

MS. ROMBERGER: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: And we've had that discussion with some of the other schools too.

MS. ROMBERGER: And that's been our challenge, yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: And so --

MS. ROMBERGER: We have -- we have more applications this year than we've ever had, but our yield rate has not been high because we've not been able to compete with many of the other universities who are offering more subsidies to help them be able to accept admission to the college.

And so that's going to be a key priority for us.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, it's time to progress. I would really like to hear more and more coming from some of the small schools, what we can do to try to help assist and to make sure you get your numbers up, you maintain your students, because you look at Charleston as an example, the cost of living there, bringing other outside folk in to take care of those -- you're just paying more.

MS. ROMBERGER: Yeah, absolutely.

SENATOR SCOTT: And you continue to drive the cost up.

MS. ROMBERGER: Absolutely, and our School of Education, with teachers, that is one of our strong suits, is our education program at the College of Charleston, but we see many students moving away from it just because of salaries. And so we are grateful to the Legislature for your commitment to education right now, both K-12 and higher ed. That is what's going to help us keep tuition low and recruit and retain these students.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR VERDIN: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, Representative Clary has had -- you might not realize this -- or you've been sitting here a while -- Representative Clary, not just today but in this entire screening season has been keen to see how trustees are preparing -- besides your life experiences or professional skills or degrees, what else you bring to the table as relates to focus.

And I just noticed that you're doing something that I'm thinking we might suggest to our colleagues for either formal regulation by rule or even codification, and that is this shadowing you're doing. You are actually shadowing student, faculty, administrator, staff on a regular basis. And if every trustee in this state system were doing so voluntarily, it would be great, but --

MS. ROMBERGER: My biggest fear is that when you sit in a board seat, that you become isolated and disillusioned or disenfranchised or that you can become just out of touch with what's really going on on a day-to-day basis. And that's one of the reasons why we had the listening session when we were hiring a president because our students and our faculty felt like they weren't being heard.

And I think that's the fastest way to get your university in trouble, if you're not in touch with your real core mission. And to me, our core mission is educating students, and if we're not out there sitting on the ground, hearing and seeing and talking with students and staff and faculty, I don't know how we can be a very good trustee.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, I appreciate what you're doing --

MS. ROMBERGER: Thank you.

SENATOR VERDIN: -- and I'm going to look further into maybe formalizing this descent from the ivory tower down to the ground level.

MS. ROMBERGER: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Those Gaffnese, they are sharp as a tack. Sharp as a tack.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I -- as a matter of fact --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

I sat in on one of your sessions prior to your new president coming in.

MS. ROMBERGER: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'll tell you, that session -- I don't think you want to thank me on that one. I, I really -- it pointed a lot of different problems, especially with staff feeling comfortable even in talking --

MS. ROMBERGER: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- in those kind of sessions about what those real issues are. That's why I keep asking those questions.

MS. ROMBERGER: Well, I think it's --

SENATOR SCOTT: How far are you moving forward to try to fix some of that?

MS. ROMBERGER: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: But you can't fix it if they won't talk to you.

MS. ROMBERGER: Exactly, and I think that was what we learned through that process, is that just because -- if people are unhappy, the worst thing in the world you can do is not listen. When people are screaming -- and one of the questions you asked us is, Would you recommend having a student on the board of trustees or a faculty member?

And my belief is, they're only screaming to be on a board if they feel like they're not being heard. You don't -- you don't go to college hoping you get to sit in a boardroom and listen to boring board meetings. You want to be in a boardroom if you feel like they're not listening. And so those listening sessions, there were many that were quite difficult.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. ROMBERGER: And painful. But at his inauguration and at the 250th celebration, we had faculty and staff and students standing up and applauding him because they are so thrilled because they believe they have a president who hears them and is going to include them. And I think that's the most important thing we can do. You've got to be in touch with your stakeholders.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. It's unanimous.

MS. ROMBERGER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you so much.

MS. ROMBERGER: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Moving -- we're a little fast, little early. Some of them are coming on in, so.

5th Congressional District, Seat 10, under Tab L, McLaurin Burch from Camden. Good afternoon, sir.

MR. BURCH: Good afternoon.

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

MR. BURCH: Robert McLaurin Burch III.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. BURCH: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. BURCH: Sure. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, good afternoon. Thank you for allowing me an opportunity to appear before you today to talk about my alma mater and my vision for the College of Charleston as we enter the next chapter in our 250-year history.

As I just completed my first year of service on the board of trustees, it has been an extremely rewarding, yet also challenging, experience. College and higher education as a whole in South Carolina are facing some very complex challenges. The decisions we make today on how to allocate our resources has probably never been more important.

I've tried to put my finance and budgeting experience to good use by providing creative, outside-the-box solutions to these problems. I'm very pleased with our new administration and the direction the school is going, and I believe the best days are still ahead.

There are a few key areas that I remain steadfastly committed to improving. One is continued improvement in recruitment, support, and success and a diverse student body and faculty. Second is improving graduation and retention rates. And third, continuing -- continued analysis of our educational programs for relevancy and importance.

To sum these up, I think the overriding theme is student success, success not only in the classroom, but in terms of equipping our graduates with the knowledge, skills, and abilities that they need to succeed in the next phases of their life.

Again, thank you for your time, and with that, I welcome any questions.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you have any questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yes, sir.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve. It seems like it was just last year you were --

MR. BURCH: It was.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Time flies when you're having fun.

SENATOR SCOTT: He said he just -- what is it, your first term. Tell me a little bit about your input and what's going on with your diversity, your diversity program and some of the highs and lows --

MR. BURCH: Sure.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- that you guys are struggling through as part of this program..

MR. BURCH: We have, as previous testimony, put a lot of time and effort and resources into diversity, the recruitment of students, of faculty. It's, it's important to us. The chief diversity officer is now a member of the president's senior staff.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. BURCH: We've created a standing board committee that is now diversity, equity, and inclusion committee. And I think we have some phenomenal programs in place for the students that do come. But we've got to get them there, and we've got to do a better job of telling our story and marketing our -- what we have because we go -- I can't speak for the other schools, but I know that we go and do everything we can to attract the best and the brightest students of color or any, anybody, so.

SENATOR SCOTT: What about faculty and staff?

MR. BURCH: Faculty, I know, is lower than we want, and we are -- in the past year that I've been on the board, started to look at how can we recruit -- do a better job? We do face some challenges with -- just the

cost of living in the Charleston area is higher than I would say most areas of the state, so, you know, we've got to look at compensation, benefits, and the whole picture, and housing and not just, you know, a salary for a job, so.

SENATOR SCOTT: I know Charleston's probably one of the most diverse parts of South Carolina. How well are you doing with some of the local professional teachers and administrators having the interest --

MR. BURCH: Sure.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- in coming to work at the school, which I think helps also to offset some of the costs that you're talking about?

MR. BURCH: Yeah, I would say it's easier for somebody who's already there to come instead of recruiting somebody outside of the region where they don't, you know -- they might have established housing prior, so I do -- I don't have the numbers, but I would say that

--

SENATOR SCOTT: That's okay. That's okay. I'm more interested in the programmatic direction that the schools are going into because I know it really makes your community as a whole stronger.

MR. BURCH: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: And especially when you do some of your outreach and some of the other programs, people are more comfortable coming in

--

MR. BURCH: I think --

SENATOR SCOTT: -- coming into the school.

MR. BURCH: Our town-and-gown relationship, as you would call it --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. BURCH: -- is pretty good. I think there have been challenges in the past, but we have been very intentional about establishing a relationship with the surrounding community and being very open with communication and, and talking out and working through, so I think that's helped as well.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. BURCH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Thank you so much.

MR. BURCH: Yes, sir. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You mentioned something that's very important to me when you talk about the town-gown relationship with a community. And you said that it's pretty good. Is that similar to that commercial where the doctor is -- he's okay?

MR. BURCH: We have -- the College of Charleston is in the middle of downtown Charleston on the peninsula, which is -- there's, there's always contention, no between the school and the city, but -- for space, parking, housing. So with those constraints, I think we, we do a, a very good job. Our board chairman is, is local to the area and does a phenomenal job. Our new president is out and about, meeting with civic groups and -- so I don't think it's perfect, but it's pretty good. And I think it's improved over the last several years.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, I think that it's very important for colleges like College of Charleston, Clemson, where I live, to have a good relationship with the community because that's -- that can be one of the biggest stumbling blocks to that area if it's not the case.

Let me ask you, you talk about College of Charleston's biggest weakness is the ability to compete financially with larger universities. And, you know, that's a little -- it causes me to pause because I don't know that you necessarily have to compete with the larger universities because I think you have a mission that is very good, very solid, very unique.

MR. BURCH: That's right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So -- and I think you're also limited by -- certainly by the number of students that you can have.

MR. BURCH: Sure.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: How about explaining your answer in a little deeper --

MR. BURCH: I think "compete" more from a financial aid perspective. If, if we can't compete on a -- with abatement dollars for students and the -- and the cost of living, the whole cost to educate for four years, you know, I think that's more of what I was referring to, other than our program.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You have said a magic word there when you mentioned the word "abatement."

MR. BURCH: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Because that's one that's kicked around here a lot. Tell me about abatements at the College of Charleston and what kind of percentage of abatements do you have?

MR. BURCH: I think we have about 53 percent of our students on some sort of abatement or financial aid. It's a good tool that we're just starting to try to catch up on. And I know that our admissions office is tweaking the dials to, you know, How much do we offer? What are we trying to project? Enrollment; you know, if we offer it, will they come? It's a very important issue that, that is --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yeah. The thing about -- when I think of an abatement, you're -- it's a little bit different from the financial aid portion of --

MR. BURCH: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You know, we're talking about giving out-of-state students something in return for them coming here, those high-performing students, that type of thing. So are you merely talking about financial aid, or are you talking -- by lumping abatements in with that? I mean, I --

MR. BURCH: I was talking -- and --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I'm interested in the amount of abatements, the percentage of abatements that you're giving because that's something that's a bone of contention with the larger universities that you're talking about that, you know, quite frankly, I think that gets a little out of control sometimes.

MR. BURCH: Yes, sir. I was referencing financial aid and scholarships and abatements, not necessarily student loan debt.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you've been, as Senator Scott alluded to, the -- you're such a long-serving trustee. Tell me what has been your greatest challenge since you've been on the board.

MR. BURCH: Coming from a business environment and trying to learn the lay of the land and be patient with the changes that are coming that we've -- are working on with our budgeting has probably been my biggest challenge. I want to jump in and do everything I can to make a difference, but I would say that and, you know, our processes that are -- quite frankly, that we're looking to change. So just patience is probably the biggest.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, if that has been an issue there, then I would encourage you to not run for the General Assembly. Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable. Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

MR. BURCH: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next is the 6th Congressional District, Seat 12. Under Tab M, Randy Adkins from North Charleston.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. ADKINS: Good afternoon.

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

MR. ADKINS: Randy Edward Adkins, Jr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. ADKINS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. ADKINS: Sure. I'm here. I want to thank the Chairman and committee for allowing me to be here and serve as -- wanting to be a trustee of the College of Charleston board.

I earned my bachelor's degree in computer science back in 1998; master's degree from the College of Charleston in 2004. My education in critical thinking and problem-solving skills that I've obtained from the College of Charleston has allowed me great success in both my career and in my life.

I also met my wife of 22 years at the College of Charleston and express my love through service at the college currently. I'm on the board of alumni -- board of directors at the alumni association, as well as the Cougar Club board of directors.

I'm committed to serving the college, and as reflected -- it is reflected in my volunteerism and board service at the college. This experience, along with my professional experience, has prepared me to serve on the college and as a trustee.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

Questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you for your willingness to serve. And I'm glad to see there's someone from the Charleston area. And you were living in Charleston at the time you went to the college of Charleston.

What's been -- in your conversation with others in the area, what's been the biggest drawback for the university not being able to recruit more kids out of the Charleston area who would not have the housing problem, the transportation problem? Because they could commute daily to the campus but for some reason, it's been more difficult to get those kids to go to College of Charleston. What's been the real problem?

MR. ADKINS: I think one of the --

SENATOR SCOTT: As you see it?

MR. ADKINS: One of the issues that come up with those who are native is that sometimes, the perspective of the college and maybe that they're just wanting to do something different than be in Charleston.

Additionally, just being able to know about what the college offers. And as an alumni, it's been helpful to share that with different groups in the area of, you know, Here is what the college offers, and it is a good thing to be able to come and not have to go somewhere else and pay for housing and do all of those things when you can still be at home and get that type of education. And so I've been able to share that as I've been going throughout and talking to others.

SENATOR SCOTT: So have you seen the college itself try to do some focus groups within the community and the high schools in its outreach? Because you've got a lot of kids in that area.

MR. ADKINS: Yes.

SENATOR SCOTT: The kids are doing quite well, and if not, there's a program that maybe they need to look at as a recruiting tool to get these kids to stop and look at the College of Charleston.

MR. ADKINS: Yes. Renard Harris and the Office of Institutional Diversity have been doing some programs to reach out to the minorities and those that are in the area. And some of those programs do reach back to the high schools, which help provide that type of additional education and information about the college so that those that are -- would be interested can understand the true value of that education. So those programs help.

I have also participated in some of the mentoring programs that help once students get into the college. There's a transition that has to occur for many of those students as well.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Adkins, thank you very much for offering to serve. One thing that piqued my interest, ways to improve the college: increasing retention. What's the retention rate at the college now?

MR. ADKINS: Let's see here. I believe the retention rate is -- I had it down. Sorry, I have it on my paper here.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think it's 67 percent.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Is it -- is it --

MR. ADKINS: I think it's 81 -- 81 percent, I believe, is the number I have.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Is it --

SENATOR SCOTT: It's not here as 81 percent.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And in so far as retention is concerned, is that because people are transferring elsewhere, just completely dropping out of school? Do you know the reason for that? Because, I mean, 81 percent is -- could be better, but, you know, when I look at a lot of other schools, that's --

MR. ADKINS: Pretty, pretty on par.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: As one of your -- one of the other candidates said, it's pretty good.

MR. ADKINS: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So, you know, that's something that -- what would you do to improve that?

MR. ADKINS: I think it's just making sure that students have what they need. You know, I think it goes back to understanding, is it educational? Is it something that is in -- that the institution can provide to make sure that those particular students are there?

But, yeah, 81 percent of the freshmen that are coming in, they're staying, which is good. However, I believe you can always improve in what you're doing and being able to provide those particular freshmen -- maybe there's additional support that those students can have to be able to stay.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you say the biggest weakness is the perception that the value of the school is beaches, nightlife rather than education?

MR. ADKINS: Yeah. I think that's a big perception that the college still has to overcome, that, you know, the education is you're getting there is paramount. But you can still have the fun; no problem with that. But we're getting the education, and I believe if we tie our education to potentially what types of jobs you're getting, and many of our alums are out there with very fantastic jobs and doing very fantastic things in this world. And I think if we provide that type of value, that gives everyone a good tie-over in a relationship.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, I think to be around 250 years and to have the reputation that the College of Charleston does, I think that there are a lot of very good things that go on there, and I think that if that is an issue, then it would be, you know, branding, marketing to promote those things that are going on that are so good at the College of Charleston.

MR. ADKINS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? Desire of the committee?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable. Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous. Thank you, sir.

MR. ADKINS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, same seat, seat 12, Tab N, Ricci Welch from Manning.

MS. WELCH: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon.

MS. WELCH: Afternoon.

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

MS. WELCH: Okay, thank you. I -- my full name is Frances Ricci Land Welch. I typically go by Ricci Land Welch. I dropped the Frances, but my SLED report may refer to Frances, so.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. WELCH: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. WELCH: I would love to, thank you. I have been on the College of Charleston board since 2013. I took the seat after my mother, Marie Land, retired from that seat. I went to the College of Charleston in 1988. That was before we had iPhones and Find My Phone and track your child in college. And so my mother went with me to college. She started on the board as soon as I was a freshman at the College of Charleston.

I look back on transcripts from 2013 when I first applied to fill this position, and I kind of giggled because I had no idea what I was getting into. I had served on the Lander board for eight years, but as you get into colleges that have higher student population and in a city, you have a little different set of problems. So I have been on the board since 2013.

We have had our ups and downs. Representative Whitaker discussed that book; that was a down. That was a difficult time for us to represent the college. But we have had wonderful things happen.

We just had what I believe was the perfect presidential search. We had over 30 listening sessions with almost 800 participants come to those sessions to let us know what we were doing wrong, what we were doing right, where they thought the college should lead in the future, and who they thought or what type of person should lead the university. And I'm very excited about Dr. Hsu.

We have just started a strategic planning session. We are meeting at the end of March to try to decide where we're headed in the future because as you know, if you don't say where you're going, you're going to end up in all kind of places you never meant to.

I am an attorney. I practice law in Manning. I am the rural voice on the board. As my children used to say, I come from a town with no Chick-fil-A. And so I have a different perspective than some of the other board members as far as the struggles that students have.

But I'm real excited about the College of Charleston. We were here a few weeks ago. We felt like we had a great response from the Legislature and that we were headed in the right direction. So I look forward to serving again if that's the will.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you very much.

Questions, comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Scott?

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MS. WELCH: You're welcome.

SENATOR SCOTT: Tell me a little bit about your recruitment with kids coming out of rural communities.

MS. WELCH: Okay. Thank you, Senator Scott. So the Cougar Advantage; that's that 10 percent program --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. WELCH: -- that the other board members were referencing. That program is an automatic program to allow people who are in the top 10 percent of their class to come to the College of Charleston. We have seen a bump in our African-American enrollment due to that. We were up to 8 percent for three years in a row. Our minority population right now is almost 20 percent.

This program is helping. This particular year, our applications and admissions are using the Common App, which is a little bit easier application for students to use. Our African-American applications are up 43 percent due to that.

This year, we are allotting an additional \$600,000 dollars. So if you're in that 10 percent program, we will meet the Pell Grant and the Life Scholarship so that tuition is free.

SENATOR SCOTT: Is this a -- is this your -- is this a committee you sit on? You know more about it. Others have been telling me 8 percent, 8 percent. You're telling me you got 20 percent, so please, tell me more.

MS. WELCH: All minorities is 20 percent.

SENATOR SCOTT: Give me more.

MS. WELCH: Yeah, it's 20 percent. But our African-American population has run from 6 to 7 to 8, three years of 8, and then now we're down at 7.4 percent from the 8 percent.

SENATOR SCOTT: So your recruiting was at 20, but your actual sustainment was at 7 or 8.

MS. WELCH: The -- just total minorities. That would include Asian, any type of minority.

SENATOR SCOTT: Oh, so it's all minorities.

MS. WELCH: Some of the board members mentioned it. It's one thing to recruit diversity.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. WELCH: When those kids get to our college, they need to feel included. They need to feel special. They need to feel like they're one of everybody. And we're working very hard to do that.

There are little programs that I think are really neat that have just been started. Conversation and Cuts is an African-American barber shop that Renard Harris and Kenyatta Grimmage have started. Kids go in there, African-American males go in there, and they talk about what -- the struggles they're having.

There's another program called Crossing the Cistern, which is totally focused on having minorities graduate. One thing to get them in the door; we want them to graduate.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much Ms. Welch, for your service. I'm interested in the functioning of the College of Charleston board. Over the last few sessions, I've talked to a number of candidates and also looked at a lot of minutes from the boards of trustees in trying to determine whether or not a board is actually working and discussing and differing on issues so that a good result comes out in policy. The board that you sit on at the College of Charleston, how would you view it in so far as the interaction between the board members, the chairman, and the administration?

MS. WELCH: Okay, thank you. We actually just changed structures of our committees so that when we actually meet for Thursday committee meetings, the entire board sits in on every committee meeting.

Prior to, everyone separated for the day. I had very little knowledge of what was happening, say, in I.T. They've never put me on the I.T. committee. Now, we sit on committees, we've merged committees, and we're there together the whole day. So we are leaving time for us to be

a visionary board, a board that sets the missions for the institution, and that has gone real well.

We started that in August, so we've had an August, October, I think, and January meeting with that. That has allowed us to discuss vision and not get bogged by saying, These people are at the meeting; it started at 2:48. Those are things that aren't really helping us. We need to look for the future and help Dr. Hsu, give him the tools of what he needs.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So by having these meetings that bring the board together, do you feel that you're able to learn more about the college and the various components of it, rather than relying on the committee members that would be on a particular committee to inform you through their report?

MS. WELCH: That's, that's true. Listening to it and just having a global and holistic view and knowledge of the college is helpful.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You say that you -- you'd like to increase enrollment at the College of Charleston. Given the location, just the sheer limit in space that you would have, how do you propose to do that?

MS. WELCH: We probably don't have that much room, other than for about 500 or 600 hundred more freshmen. Then, we might have some housing issues, which we've had before, and that's a nice problem for a college to have. We can triple bunk students and enjoy the popularity of the school. But you're right about us being landlocked and having housing issues. We want to grow popularity of the school so we get the best-qualified students, and we want to keep and retain those students.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR VERDIN: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Are y'all still operating secondarily or remotely up --

MS. WELCH: North Charleston?

SENATOR VERDIN: -- North Charleston?

MS. WELCH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: What are you doing up there?

MS. WELCH: That is graduate programs in the business development program. Godfrey Gibbison is in charge of that. Those are mostly, I believe, nighttime classes. And it's a great location for people in the Dorchester-Berkeley County-North Charleston areas.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Vice chairman Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My son and daughter both graduated from the college, and they received an excellent education. But I agree with Representative Clary. I never could find a parking place down there.

MS. WELCH: At -- one of the listening sessions that I attended happened to be the graduate student, and it is a problem. If you don't live downtown and you're using the parking garages and spaces, it is a difficulty. And I'm just not sure how we fix that. That may be one that we have difficulty fixing.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, my son found a way. He parked in the city things, and I got about \$300 worth of parking tickets. So anyway, I do agree. That's -- you know, I don't see how you can really grow because you just don't have any room down there. It's a nice, you know, problem to have because it's such a beautiful city, but you're stuck. You really are, so anyway. Thank you for your service.

MS. WELCH: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Second. Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you so much.

MS. WELCH: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We now move to the 7th Congressional District, Seat 14, Penny Rosner from Myrtle Beach.

MS. ROSNER: How are you?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, ma'am. For the record, if you would, give us your full name.

MS. ROSNER: My full name is Penelope Smoak Rosner. I go by Penny.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. ROSNER: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. ROSNER: I would, thank you. First of all, thank you so much for being here. Thank you for listening to us. I know how much hard work you put into this, and thank you all so much for the support that you've given to the college.

My passion is education. I've taught in higher ed for over 22 years as an English instructor and lecturer. I retired in 2014 to pursue other things; however, I didn't retire my interest in education, particularly educating South Carolina students and all South Carolina students.

It has been a great joy, and I feel blessed to have had the last four years -- or, I guess, three and a half years serving for the college. And it's been an honor, and if you're willing, I would love to continue, have another term. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Questions?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Ms. Rosner, for your service. And you're winding up your first term on the board of trustees. Can you tell me what kind of orientation, training you had when you were elected and how you've applied that and what you've done to further improve yourself as a member of the board?

MS. ROSNER: Thank you. That's a great question. We have a very extensive orientation program. It goes on for at least two days. We have a mentor who is on the board who helps us. I felt like my transition into would be pretty easy, but I had quite an eye-opening experience. It's very complicated, very complex, and much different than being in the classroom.

I've had great support. I cannot say enough about my fellow trustees. They -- we listen to one another. Everything is very clearly explained. We all have a voice at the table. And I've served in -- well, when I first became a trustee, it was about six months in, and because I had higher ed teaching experience, then-president McConnell had me go to the SACSCOC conference. So I spent about four days there. And so I had my, I guess, my baptism going in front of the SACSCOC board for the college. And we did pass with flying colors.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: What, what has been -- what do you think is your greatest success in serving as a member of the board?

MS. ROSNER: I think my greatest success has been the relationships that I have built with faculty, with staff, the president's office. I think that we are a very inclusive board, and I think that that's who I am. I'm a very inclusive person. I listen, and sometimes when different groups can under -- just understand one another, whether it's faculty, staff, the board, they then realize that we're all here for the same cause. That -- I think that's my greatest strength. Now, do you want particulars that I've done?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: No, I think that that's helpful to me. When you -- when you talk about these various constituencies -- faculty, staff, and so forth -- I mean, they all have their niche --

MS. ROSNER: Oh, yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- and their turf that they're trying to protect. How do you go about balancing that?

MS. ROSNER: Very carefully. I think that the most important part -- and I think this was seen when we elected our president, President Hsu -- that we had listening sessions, we had surveys, we were so transparent, and I think that is the most important part of being a trustee.

We also need to be very approachable, not people in an ivory tower. And I think we are. I know we are very approachable.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You talk about the strengths and weaknesses of the college, and strength being teaching and the value of that liberal arts education. And I don't disagree with that. You talk about the biggest weakness being the historical buildings. I understand where you're coming from -- with that being a weakness, but that's also a strength --

MS. ROSNER: I think it is.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- of being located in Charleston in particular. So how do you work around that because, you know, those buildings, you've got to -- you've got to take care of those and make sure that they're functional and meeting the needs of your constituency. And I'm sure that's pretty expensive proposition, isn't it?

MS. ROSNER: It's very expensive, and I have served on the I.T. committee, and it was very eye-opening to me. This is one area coming -- I taught 19 years at Coastal Carolina University. The building were new. So they were wired for I.T. I had everything. And then, as I'm sitting in the I.T. meetings in 2016, I was shocked that we were -- we were -- the struggles. I never thought about it.

They're old buildings. Where are you going to put the wiring? Where are you -- keeping them up? We can't do anything without the Preservation Society and Board of Architectural Review giving us approval. So I think that we have -- I know we have a very good relationship with the city, and we just have to make it work.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, ma'am.

SENATOR VERDIN: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Boy, this is not, probably, the time or the place.

MS. ROSNER: Uh-oh.

SENATOR VERDIN: For the committee, but I'm going to go back to Representative Clary's same question. Twenty years from now --

MS. ROSNER: Okay.

SENATOR VERDIN: Sorry if it's unfair to ask you this, but you put it in your responses as the biggest weakness.

MS. ROSNER: Okay.

SENATOR VERDIN: Will that weakness be more amplified 20 years from now? I'm actually thinking, Who should own those buildings 20 years from now? What would be their greatest and best use to the state 20 years -- even 10 years from now, 30 years from now?

MS. ROSNER: I --

SENATOR VERDIN: One thing for sure, I don't want to see them fall down.

MS. ROSNER: Absolutely.

SENATOR VERDIN: And I don't know that they, 30 years from now, will be any greater a contributing presence to your core function. It's just something that every -- somebody needs to be thinking about.

MS. ROSNER: I agree, and I will tell you that we have -- for example, housing. We have -- there are outside companies who are -- come into Charleston. They've built apartment buildings so that we don't have so much -- I mean, we are stressed as much as we can be, but the students, once they leave campus, usually as freshmen, they want an apartment, so there are places they can go that are privately owned, just as they have here in Columbia.

I think that there will be a struggle. We've struggled with those buildings probably for 250 years, as we know. Of course, with technology increasing, maybe there will be an easier way for us to do it.

SENATOR VERDIN: It's not just the college. We all have -- I have a 173-year-old courthouse that is falling down that -- who wants to pay for it? No one wants to lose it.

MS. ROSNER: Right.

SENATOR VERDIN: But who wants to pay the exorbitant sums necessary to maintain it?

MS. ROSNER: I do own an old house in downtown Charleston. It was built in the 1850s. I've had to -- I have a newer, much newer home in Myrtle Beach, which is my primary residence, and we -- I have to struggle with the fact that that paint is always chipping. I always have a board that needs replacing. But you have to stay on top of it constantly. If you don't, then it becomes too much, and we can't afford it.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, I'm not going to apologize for using this Screening Committee to address it because I think you were right to point it out.

MS. ROSNER: Thank you.

SENATOR VERDIN: And not just this committee, but many people are going to have to work collaboratively in the public sector to address this question. Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. President, and good afternoon.

In your responses, I was just interested -- when you ran originally for this, it says -- and, of course, you mentioned, too, that you've worked in higher education. You've retired. It says you thought that that experience would be beneficial to the board.

So three and half years on that -- and I know you've mentioned some of the successes -- what has -- has that been beneficial to the board, and what would that greatest benefit to the board be?

MS. ROSNER: I believe so. I am on the academic committee. Currently, I'm vice chair of the academic committee. Trustee Welch is the chair. And I do believe it helps. One, I had less of a learning curve than others because I did understand such things as faculty senate, the order of how things are done. It's a process that we must go through in order to bring in a new major, to -- for whatever.

I also feel that faculty are very comfortable with me, having been in the classroom.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And I guess that -- on the other side of that, having been in higher education as an English instructor, what was the biggest surprise being on the other side as a board member?

MS. ROSNER: How long it takes to get things done. Anything that you want -- it's government, very similar. Anything that you want has to go in front of the faculty senate. It's a process, and I didn't realize it. When teaching, we just would get a memo that this was happening, and we would go with it. I didn't realize all that went on behind it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman, if I could, one more question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Certainly.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And also, I just thought it was interesting on number 8, talking about -- question about student representative and faculty representative on the board, and you mentioned that. But your last sentence that we were talking about, how difficult it would be to teach and attend regular and special board meetings if, I guess, if a member of the faculty was on the board. So your perspective, having been in higher education --

MS. ROSNER: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- you feel like that opportunity is being addressed as the current makeup?

MS. ROSNER: I -- we have a representative on the board. We are very open. Our president is very much into transparency. I know that faculty, besides their teaching loads, they're trying to do research, and they have their own meetings to go to, office hours, and we have a lot of meetings. And, you know, a special meeting for something or, you know, that we -- that we have to be involved in.

To really be a successful member of the board, you have to be either on conference call or preferably in the room, and I think it would be a challenge.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. President.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Second

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to the vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you so very much.

MS. ROSNER: Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, At-Large, District 16, Tab P, David Hay from Charleston.

MR. HAY: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir. For the record, if you would, give us your full name.

MR. HAY: David Michael Hay.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. HAY: I do. I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. HAY: Yes. I am here today, having started at the College of Charleston as a transfer from Presbyterian College back in 1978 where the tide didn't come in in Clinton, and I was ready to get back home where the tide comes in and out every day. And I have served the college in a variety of roles: on the alumni board, alumni president; foundation board, foundation vice president. And I'm honored today to serve as board chair.

It is a board -- I serve a board that is very intelligent and talented, with a sense of humor but a commitment to serve our alma mater and serve

our state. I would describe my leadership style as a happy delegator, recognizing that there's so much talent on our board. We had our very successful search that was chaired by Renee Romberger. We had the board restructuring of our committees, which was led by Demetria Clemons.

All of these people and so many on the board have so many talents, and those are just two examples of allowing people to flourish and serve. And that's my style, and I'm honored to be here, humbled to be here.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: That sounds like my style.

Questions, comments from members?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good afternoon, Mr. Hay, and thank you for being here. Thank you for your service. In some of your responses, I'm a little bit puzzled. You -- when asked why continue to serve, you were encouraged to run one last time. Tell me about that thought process.

MR. HAY: Sure. I really have -- this is completing my second term, and I felt like that was enough time. As I said, I've served in a lot of roles at the college. But -- I think turnover is healthy. But President McConnell and Interim President Osborne, as well as former board chairs Marlowe and Padgett -- both encouraged me to run one more time.

Their logic was, it's not fair and maybe not as effective to bring in a new president and not have continuity of leadership on the board. And that, that was the justification and the persuasion for me to run again.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And then, you talk about the student body shrinking, tenuous financial situation. How about explaining that to me because I'm a little concerned about that.

MR. HAY: Sure. We are too. A number of trustees have mentioned the slow pace of change or actions at the college, and one of the things that we have begun to do is identify trends that our future customers, future students, are interested in, identifying those and then building our programs around those.

An example of that would be computer science in Charleston and at the College of Charleston. Ten years ago there were 17 technology companies in Charleston. Now, there are over 270 in a 10-year period. And the Chamber of Commerce did a study and said, Y'all, Charleston area needs more computer science graduates, and we have built our program to answer those needs. As our region changes, we, as a board, are supporting the administration in looking at other areas to answer the changing interests of our future students.

Another example of that would be engineering systems -- systems engineering, which was -- will be our new program. Our applications for that -- we have over 400 applications for 15 spots. Another interesting fact of that is, students of color represent 40 percent of those applicants, and females represent 26 percent of the applicants for that first cohort. So those are areas where we are identifying needs and adapting and making offerings.

Additionally, the transition to the Common App has increased our applications over 30 percent for this year. And that should be able to deliver one of our largest classes in the last 10 years and also one of the more talented classes that we'll have. Coupled with the diversity improvements that we're seeing, the ship is turning, a degree at a time, but it's -- we're answering the call of the community, and we are answering the need to grow our student body.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Just a couple of more questions. Ways to improve the school: refurbish campus facilities. Tell me what you have in mind for that and also segue, then, into what your strategic planning is for the future.

MR. HAY: Strategic planning should be completed in the next month, and that is something that -- honestly, our old strategic plan was written, and it rested well on the shelf. We didn't review it, and we didn't act on it.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: When was that done?

MR. HAY: That was done in 2000 and -- ten years ago -- 2009. And that was done under President Benson, President McConnell. We didn't do a strategic plan. President Hsu has that strategic plan. We jokingly told him that if he were offered the job, we needed a strategic plan by Tuesday. And he heard us and has made that one of the top priorities.

In terms of need for facilities improvements, there are never-ending projects on our campus that are a problem. We have historic buildings, one, in particular, right in the center of campus that we've had to close until we could get funding to renovate it. We have -- we have closed the swimming pool, for example, and discontinued our swimming and diving program because the pool maintenance was -- we couldn't support it.

That sounds very dire, but I'm very optimistic. We have hired a new VP of facilities who is a real professional. I know that it was something that was incredibly frustrating for so many of us to walk across campus and see steam leaking out of manholes.

There was a water line this big running our from one of our facilities, and we could not close those facilities to do the maintenance that needed to be done. and our new vice president, John Morris, was able to do those

things. There's no more steam on the campus. That massive water leak has been cured. And so we've got a real professional to help us, and I'm very optimistic about going forward.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So when you talk about shrinking student body and issues that you discuss, those -- we all know that the population that you're going to be serving in the decades ahead is shrinking. So the challenge for the college and every other institution in this state is to figure out how to focus to attract those students, and it's going to be quite a competitive game.

MR. HAY: Yes, sir. I agree.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Hay --

MR. HAY: Sure.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- for your willingness to serve. How many members are on that board?

MR. HAY: Twenty.

SENATOR SCOTT: How many African Americans are on that board?

MR. HAY: One.

SENATOR SCOTT: That was quick.

MR. HAY: It's reality.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah. Do you think that -- do you think that reality check might be one of the reasons why it's taken the college to move in an area of being a very diverse school, because of the makeup of where people actually come from?

MR. HAY: Well, you know, I don't know how -- I serve --

SENATOR SCOTT: I understand.

MR. HAY: -- as trustee, and I was encouraged to run --

SENATOR SCOTT: Where does most of the -- where does most of the trustees actually come from?

MR. HAY: Well, it's from around the state.

SENATOR SCOTT: You've got seven congressional --

MR. HAY: Correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- but you've got 13 other at-large slots. So that -

-

MR. HAY: No, sir. There are just two at-large slots. Two governor's -

-

SENATOR SCOTT: What?

MR. HAY: Two governor's-appointed positions, one alumni, and two At-Large.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. HAY: And I represent --

MS. CASTO: There's two from each Congressional --

SENATOR SCOTT: Two from each Congressional?

MS. CASTO: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Okay. Do you think reshaping that board or making it smaller could help? No, let's just thought-process it. How big -- how tough is it to manage a board that big?

MR. HAY: It seems like I'm in quicksand here.

SENATOR SCOTT: No, you are. I'm trying to let you -- not let you go under. But, I mean, a board that size --

MR. HAY: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and the difficulties of trying to really get some diversity and also trying to have diversity in staff and faculty, and people who come to your school to work and to learn, look at -- and especially these young folk. They really do a lot of research now. You have a board that big -- and you're not the only one that's like that. There's another board, I think we've got a bill, actually, to make some changes on that board. But have y'all looked at that to see what the real impact has been?

MR. HAY: I --

SENATOR SCOTT: Has there been any discussion of that?

MR. HAY: From within? No, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: From the board? From the board?

MR. HAY: No, sir. We -- I am finishing up my fourth year. You're allowed three two-year terms as board chair.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. HAY: I'm finishing up that term. I actually like the size of the board that we have. This might be a dangerous statement --

SENATOR SCOTT: No, no, I understand.

MR. HAY: -- but I like the size of the board because it, it brings diversity of -- geographic diversity. In our case, racial diversity -- Demetria Clemons is our vice chair. Every meeting that I attend with President Hsu, I always invite Demetria to attend with me so that she -- because I value her.

SENATOR SCOTT: I understand.

MR. HAY: Not because she's black, not because she's a female, but because she is a trusted advisor to me.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. HAY: And very, very helpful in guiding the direction of our board. But, but we have folks from all over the state, and I think that is very helpful.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'm just thinking about all over the state, a state with 29, 30 percent African Americans, and then you've got other minorities in it and have one out of 20, and that's -- to me, that's not very much of a diverse board.

MR. HAY: I understand.

SENATOR SCOTT: And right, they bring, and they bring different ideas and different cultures and come from different communities. But our community is a lot diverse than that. And looking at how we, even those who maybe of a different persuasion, your thought pattern on how they can help to bring some of those individuals to your school because we see that's really not working very well. It's working, but not very well.

And what we can actually do, even in our own backyard -- Charleston, Berkeley, Dorchester -- even to be able to recruit even more students coming out of that particular area. I'm not asking you or your board --

MR. HAY: Sure.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'm just putting some ideas out there.

MR. HAY: Well, you know, we -- I value diversity. I've been through Safe Zone training twice, and the majority of our board have been through Safe Zone training, which is understanding LGBT issues.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. HAY: And recognizing that that's an important part of our campus community, both faculty, staff, and students, as well as our community at large. Our search committee, which I appointed, was led by a female. There were -- help me, Renee -- three females and one African American and two males on our search committee, and that was a decision that I made, recognizing the talents that are on the board. Again, I --

SENATOR SCOTT: Oh, you have some very talented people, very intelligent folk who answer the questions very well, and I know they're doing a lot of good work out there in the community. But I still question, how do we make these boards -- not just College of Charleston, because I'm not picking on one board.

That's a question I asked most of them when I come through, unless your numbers are pretty large. How do we improve that? What are the things that are standing in our way that won't let us have a more community is my concern. And I'm not telling you who need to go, who need to come. Our job is to look at them, screen them, but also my job is to ask questions.

MR. HAY: Sure.

SENATOR SCOTT: How do we also make these schools better?

MR. HAY: Well, my final comment on that would be, in having served on the volunteer boards --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. HAY: -- both the alumni association board and the foundation board, our president-elect on the alumni association board is an African-American male. There's very good diversity on the alumni board. In fact, I served with candidate Adkins' wife, Sherlonda, on the alumni board many years ago and suggested to both of them that they run for the board of trustees seat. So that's, that's what I can do --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. HAY: -- as one individual, as a volunteer, to try and encourage that.

SENATOR SCOTT: I appreciate that. Thank you.

MR. HAY: And again, I didn't recommend them because they're African Americans. I recommended them because they're good, solid people.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, there's a lot of -- there's a lot of talented folk, but it's also opportunity --

MR. HAY: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- to be able to actually participate. Thank you so much.

MR. HAY: Yes, sir. My pleasure.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: One brief question.

Good afternoon. You mentioned in here, recent years, and it's been brought up earlier about the -- trying to renew your growth in students. Talked about the quality of the board, outstanding individuals. Do you engage the board members? You've got seven congressional districts. You've got two board members. Do y'all engage the board in trying to do recruitment back in their districts where they're from?

MR. HAY: In fact, we -- last week, we had a reception for the high school counselors, and then we had an accepted students reception after that in Columbia. President Hsu, along with a number of the senior leadership team, as well as number of trustees, were there. And then recently, there was a yield party in Greenville which was attended by a number of trustees as well. So those are just examples of that.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable. Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you, sir.
MR. HAY: Thank you.

FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll let Ms. Davis be recorded.

All right. Francis Marion University, the 2nd Congressional District, Seat 2, Benjamin Duncan from Columbia.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. DUNCAN: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record, give us your full name.

MR. DUNCAN: Benjamin I. Duncan II.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. DUNCAN: I do, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. DUNCAN: My brief statement is I've served on the board of trustees at Francis Marion University almost four years now.

I have family in the Pee Dee area. I grew up in Sumter, but -- which is close to the Pee Dee. Some include it in the Pee Dee. I have family in Bennettsville, South Carolina, which is directly in the Pee Dee, and I understand the economic problems that are in the Pee Dee and most of the Pee Dee, and I feel that Francis Marion University is a benefit to that area, where 55 percent of the students there are from the Pee Dee area. Ninety-six percent of the students are from South Carolina. So Francis Marion University has been of great benefit to that area and to the state of South Carolina.

I also am the director of the South Carolina Disaster Recovery Office, and I understand the problems in the Pee Dee area from the multiple disasters that we've had over the last four years. So I see and work with every day the problems that are in the Pee Dee, and I would like to continue to serve.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I have a question.

MR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What is the total number of students, the population, do you know, at the -- at Francis Marion?

MR. DUNCAN: It's about 4,000, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Do you know what the breakdown is racially?

MR. DUNCAN: It's about 50-50. I think it's 49 and 51, but it's pretty close to 50-50.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Close to 50-50. And this is -- how many years have you served?

MR. DUNCAN: Almost four years.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And what are you all doing and what is the -- not what are you doing, but what is the number of, I guess, African Americans in reference to instructors? Do you know what population that is?

MR. DUNCAN: I cannot give you that number today, sir. The number of instructors to students is about 15 to 1.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Fifteen to one.

MR. DUNCAN: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I asked that question because as I represent -- Winthrop is in my district, and I occasionally ask students at the school there at Winthrop how many times they, in their years of matriculation at Winthrop, how many times have they experienced having an African-American professor, and I have not had one student out of probably 30 or 40 that I've asked that has had -- they either had zero to maybe one there in four years. And so I ask that question because of that.

MR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir. I understand.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: But thank you, and you and I share the same birthday, so I know that you're great.

MR. DUNCAN: Not the same year, I'm sure.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: You have me by about 16 years.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Clary.

MR. DUNCAN: Keep living.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Mr. Duncan, for being here.

To be consistent with some of my other questions, can you tell me what kind of training you've received when you were elected to the board of trustees at Francis Marion, and is there any ongoing training?

MR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir. I received at my initial meeting -- or prior to my initial meeting, we had a full day of training there at the university by the university president and other staff members.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And is there any training that is done by the American Association of Colleges and Universities at Francis Marion?

MR. DUNCAN: I have not participated in that. I have been a part of that because I served one year as executive director to the board of trustees at South Carolina State University, and I have been a part of that association and attended those meetings then. But I have not since I've been at the university.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay. And insofar as your board is concerned, you have a chairman. Is that chairman elected for a two-year term or a one-year term? How is that handled at Francis Marion?

MR. DUNCAN: Our chairman is elected to, I think, three years. Yes, it's a three-year term.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And I haven't looked at the minutes of Francis Marion, but do you have votes that are unanimous all the time? How exactly do you transact your business?

I apologize for the fact that I haven't looked back. I'll do that before I see our next group tomorrow. But tell me, do you feel like you have the ability and do you speak out? Do you vote against things that you don't believe in, that you don't believe that reflects the constituency that you represent?

MR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir. And we have an opportunity -- we most often -- all of the board members do ask their questions and get their questions answered before a vote is made. I've even asked pretty pointed questions on certain issues, and my thoughts are brought out, and my opinions are brought out, and then we have votes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And do your votes reflect that, if you disagree with a policy that's being implemented?

MR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: All right. And insofar as contact with alumni --

MR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- what kind of contact do you have with alumni and students?

MR. DUNCAN: I get questions quite often. Any issues, I take them to either the staff members or directly to the president. I get phone calls on occasions, and we get the answers that those constituents need.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for your service --

MR. DUNCAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- all the way around --

MR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- so with the state and on Francis Marion.

You -- if I'm reading this correctly under weaknesses and always room for improvement, it says that a limited campus life can be difficult for students to build relationships outside the classroom.

And I guess that -- are there initiatives that you as a board member or that the board has undertaken to recognize that as an issue? How are you trying to solve that issue?

MR. DUNCAN: Over the last year or so -- that was brought out in one of our board meetings, and they have done an excellent job of trying to do more with the students and having more activities for the students on campus.

As a matter of fact, we -- the board members get an e-mail every day talking about the activities that are provided for the students. And so we see a great improvement in that area.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So what -- do you have an idea of what percentage of your students actually are resident students versus commuting students?

MR. DUNCAN: I don't have that, sir. I could not tell you that right now.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions, comments?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable report.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion? We'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Thank you. It's unanimous.

MR. DUNCAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

Representative Davis has indicated she would like to be recorded as voting in favor of Mr. Myers for Citadel Board of Visitors.

Next, 3rd Congressional District, Francis Marion University, Tab D, Tracy Freeman, North Augusta.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Chairman, while he's coming forward, there are seven Francis Marion seats that you're screening right now, and they are all incumbents and have no opposition.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Freeman, for the record, give us your full name.

MR. FREEMAN: Robert Tracy Freeman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. FREEMAN: So help me God, yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. FREEMAN: Yes, sir, I'd like to.

First of all, good evening, and thank you for having us this evening.

I wanted to say virtually one of the reasons why I want to continue to serve on the board of Francis Marion University -- I've been on the board since 2010. I want to continue the legacy -- not the legacy, but the vision of the forefathers of Francis Marion University when the university first started 50 years ago this year, 1970, and that was to serve the students of the Pee Dee and also serve the students of South Carolina.

And I am very, very involved in the -- within the university and so forth, so I want to just continue giving back, giving other students chances that I had when I was there.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions, comments?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Of all your work on the board, what have you enjoyed most about being a member of the board, sir?

MR. FREEMAN: One thing that I enjoy about it -- of course, I'm on two subcommittees, and we do a lot of things in subcommittees before our regular boards. But one of the things I definitely enjoy is being the liaison between a lot of students, parents, and the faculty and the governing board of the university. And that means that I love doing -- I love recruiting students to the university.

Two things that I'll talk to you about that I tell a lot of our people, I'll talk to you about all night long, that I'm very passionate about. One of is what I do every day. I'm a residential home builder. And the second thing is Francis Marion University.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Do you by chance know how many you have that are considered resident students there at Francis Marion?

MR. FREEMAN: Yeah, it's approximately 50-50 right now.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Fifty-fifty on that as well?

MR. FREEMAN: Yes, sir, that's correct.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: It's 50-50 on that. Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What's the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable. Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion?

Yes, sir, Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Just a thank you and a salute for your previous military service.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Yes.

MR. FREEMAN: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you.

MR. FREEMAN: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

That will bring us to Francis Marion University, 4th Congressional District, Seat 4, Jody Bryson from Greenville. Good afternoon, sir.

MR. BRYSON: Good afternoon. Thank you very much.

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

MR. BRYSON: Yes, sir. My full name is Benny J. Bryson Junior. I go by Jody.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. BRYSON: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. BRYSON: Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it's an honor to be here today. I'm excited to run for another term on the Francis Marion board representing the 4th district. I've enjoyed the time that I've served on the board. I've had the opportunity to chair a couple of committees, and we've got a lot of positive momentum at the university, and I'm -- look forward to helping do my part to continue that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments from members of the committee?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good afternoon, Mr. Bryson. Thank you for being here and thank you for your service and your desire to continue to serve. When I look at your responses to the questions that have been presented to you, ways to improve the school: maintain

affordable tuition and enhance fundraising, because you also pointed out the size of your endowment. What is the size of your endowment?

MR. BRYSON: Representative Clary, I would have to check on that because I'm not certain, and I would not want to give you a bad number. But I can certainly find out and report back to you. It would not -- it would not be the size of my alma mater, Clemson University, to be sure.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, and, of course, we always complain over there that it's not large enough too.

MR. BRYSON: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: But -- and I guess it goes back. You talk about the visionary leadership of President Carter, and I agree with you. He is a tremendous leader, but that arm of administration is being able to raise funds, and I realize how difficult it is. But what kind of steps are being taken in your -- if you have a strategic plan in order to do that?

MR. BRYSON: The university has put a real focus on the foundation and has strategically been targeting industries in the areas as well as updating their donor base, prospective donor base, becoming scientific. As I stated, we're a very young university, relatively speaking.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Right.

MR. BRYSON: And so all of these steps are being taken in conjunction with raising awareness of the foundation and looking for additional partners to help participate in the growth of the university through the foundation.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: What kind of ratio do you have of in-state to out-of-state students at Francis Marion, Mr. Bryson?

MR. BRYSON: Our in-state enrollment is 96 percent currently.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Francis Marion is an excellent school, but it's more regional in its approach and in attracting South Carolinians.

MR. BRYSON: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Would that be a fair assumption?

MR. BRYSON: I believe that to be true, yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Anyone else? Mr. Bryson, this has nothing to do with the Francis Marion board, but I notice you're on the Southern Connector board of directors. How long have you been on their?

MR. BRYSON: I just finished my second term, and my final term, I might add. We have a -- there's term limits in effect, so I completed my service just recently.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Is it beginning to pay for itself, or?

MR. BRYSON: It is. They -- we have been setting usage records for several consecutive months now, and the revenues are in great shape. It has -- it took a long time. It had to go through a period of bankruptcy, but they came out of it very strong. They reissued the bonds to the private bond holders, and since that time, it really has boomed. And so it's not a lonely stretch of highway anymore.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If we want to connect it from Mauldin to the North Carolina line right at Blacksburg, what would that take?

MR. BRYSON: Oh, wow. That would be fabulous. However, a lot of right-of-way acquisition.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'm off subject right not.

SENATOR VERDIN: A lot of that growth, Mr. Chairman, is due to the outstanding economic activity that's taking place out at Jody's environs, his little corner of the vineyard at the old Donaldson Center.

MR. BRYSON: Well, thank you.

SENATOR VERDIN: In fact, what do you call it?

MR. BRYSON: SCTAC.

SENATOR VERDIN: SCTAC.

MR. BRYSON: South Carolina Technology and Aviation Center.

SENATOR VERDIN: I mean, they're building -- well, your Lockheed component is astounding.

MR. BRYSON: We are the -- in case you have not heard, we are the new production home of the Lockheed Martin F-16 Viper fighting jet. And production is underway, and the first one will roll off the assembly line in December. That's a-- that's a huge, huge --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And it's an --

MR. BRYSON: -- game-changer for the state.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- easier way to get there too.

MR. BRYSON: That's right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Chairman, it's probably all those trips that I make from Clemson down here on the Connector that's --

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay, motion is a favorable report. Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you, sir. Appreciate you being here.

MR. BRYSON: Thank you very much. I appreciate your time.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The 7th Congressional District, Seat 7, George McIntyre, Bennettsville.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. McINTYRE: Good afternoon. Good to be here.

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

MR. McINTYRE: George Chandler McIntyre.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good. Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. McINTYRE: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. McINTYRE: Yes, sir.

It's been an honor and a privilege to serve as a member of the board of trustees for 20 years at Francis Marion. I'm a graduate there, 1978, and it's just been an honor and a privilege to be able to go back and serve and be a part of the university family from a different perspective and to see how far the university's come over these 50 years, as we're celebrating our 50th anniversary this year, starting out very humbly in the basement of the Florence library back in the late '50s and early '60s, and then Francis Marion College began in 1970.

And now to see what's it's offering the citizens of the Pee Dee and the state of South Carolina in 2020 is just very, very pride -- it's a prideful thing. It's a good thing, and it's good for the citizens, I believe.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good. Questions or comments?

Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

Your tenure on the board is 20 years. Where does that put you in the overall number of trustees in length of service?

MR. McINTYRE: I believe there may be three or four that have been there longer than I have.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And if I'm reading this correctly, in that 20 years, you've only missed one meeting.

MR. McINTYRE: That's correct, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, you're to be commended.

MR. McINTYRE: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Mr. McIntyre, thank you for your service. In the 20-plus years that you have served on the Francis Marion board, have you served as chairman?

MR. McINTYRE: Yes, sir, on two different occasions.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Two different occasions.

And you've been in this room listening to my questioning of other members of boards of trustees. Tell me how the process works at Francis Marion insofar as the way that you move your proposals, your issues, and if I went back and looked at your minutes, tell me what that would reflect.

MR. McINTYRE: Our -- most of our curriculum, most of our policy start at the -- at the staff level. They do research. They bring it to -- of course, the president and the administration are involved in that.

They then bring it typically to a committee level, whatever that might be, whether it be academic affairs, student affairs, athletics. Whatever that might be, it comes to that level. There's a lot of communication along the way between the -- the faculty, the staff, the administration, and the board members.

A lot of issues that might could become contentious are worked out along that way. So I'd have to say it's vetted very well, and it starts -- and it's not something that happens overnight. It's just a process.

And then ultimately if we feel like that it's a policy or a curriculum change or improvement that we need to do, then it comes eventually through the committees, and then it comes to the board of trustees.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And in so doing -- I mean, you -- you have a president that's been -- that's well-known around here and very highly regarded. And insofar as opposing what he may want to do -- you've been there 21 years now -- does that happen?

MR. McINTYRE: There has been disagreement, yes. There's been disagreement over the years on different issues and things. But typically he keeps an open mind, and if a board member has an opposing issue or vote or an opinion, then he tries to listen and keeps an open mind about it.

And we do not have, really, a lot of division at the final vote because most of those things are vetted very well before that time. And so when you read -- reflect on those minutes, you will see most of the decisions are unanimous. But if there are issues that need to be resolved, they're typically done at the committee level or before they even get to the committee level.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So those committee levels, do they have minutes?

MR. McINTYRE: Yes, yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And that would reflect any disagreement that might occur there?

MR. McINTYRE: Yes, any questions or disagreements or issues.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Now, I -- what I'm getting at is, you know, I'm not looking for people who want to be the proverbial rubber stamp. I'm looking for folks that are going to represent the district and the state at Francis Marion.

MR. McINTYRE: Exactly, and that's exactly what we want to do as well, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I'll make it fast because we are running a little bit behind.

Costs compared to other colleges and universities, how do you all keep your costs competitive, and where do you all rank within the university system here in South Carolina, public universities?

MR. McINTYRE: We have always ranked in the bottom tier of costs, and it's reflective of the service area that we do serve. We're very cognizant of that, and we try to keep our costs as low as we possibly can. And I think if you'll look at it, we're probably in the top -- I mean, the bottom third of the -- of the costs per universities in South Carolina.

And I think actually when some study was done recently, if you consider all the costs, like housing and food, those kind of things, we're actually the lowest total cost as far as effectiveness goes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And what is your percentage of in-state and out-of-state students?

MR. McINTYRE: Oh, wow. We're South Carolina, and we're educating South Carolinians. We've got about 96 percent enrollment of South Carolinians.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So let me ask you --

MR. McINTYRE: It's the highest in the state.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I've been on this committee for a couple years, and what I'm finding, or at least what I'm hearing -- and I'm impressed with what you're saying about your costs being the lowest in the state without, you know, the out-of-state folk. How do you keep it low with in-state students? I mean, I'm trying to --

MR. McINTYRE: It's that great board of trustees, sir.

Seriously, I mean, Dr. Carter, we all know, is one of the best financial minds in the state. He does a great job in managing the budget. All of our vice presidents, the staff, they're all on the same mind-set of managing those dollars effectively.

We've been very successful in raising money outside of public money. We've started something called the First Generation Fund that's raising outside of the institutional money for first-time college goers. Those are the types of things we're doing, just raising monies any way we can

institutionally without having to come back to the legislature for more money or increasing tuition. So we're just working hard to keep those costs down.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I appreciate your service, and if you are anything like Representative Henegan, you're always working.

MR. McINTYRE: She's -- she's my hometown representative.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What's the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: A favorable report. Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any discussion? Take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you, sir.

MR. McINTYRE: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Francis Marion, At-Large Seat 9, Karen Leatherman, Florence.

For the record, give us your full name.

MS. LEATHERMAN: Karen Ann Leatherman.

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

MS. LEATHERMAN: Yes, I do. Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. LEATHERMAN: Sure. I would love to have that opportunity, and I appreciate the opportunity to be here before you guys today. I'm in the end of my first term, so this would be my second term that I'm encouraged, hopefully, to continue through y'all's vote.

You know, I feel like -- I'm a graduate of FMU. I graduated in 1980. I played basketball there. And I feel like I'm -- and I grew up in Florence, and I live in Florence County now. I'm a business owner, so I think I bring something to the table there.

I have served in this first term on the finance committee and the student affairs and athletic committee and just this last year moved to the executive committee because I became the chair of the student affairs and athletics. So I just feel like it's an opportunity for me in my life especially to give back to the community and to the school where I got my degree.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments?

Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I have one question. You say that you have a current enrollment of 4,000 --

MS. LEATHERMAN: That's -- that's --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- and ways to improve Francis Marion, more money for growth and development of athletic programs and student athletes. What kind of ratio of student athletes do you have to your student body?

MS. LEATHERMAN: It's probably about 10 to 15 percent through all the sports.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you also say that you've created an office of multicultural and international student affairs. Is that something that has been recent?

MS. LEATHERMAN: It's been there since I've been on the board.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay.

MS. LEATHERMAN: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And tell me a little bit about that.

MS. LEATHERMAN: Well, part of that committee that I'm on with student and -- excuse me, student and athletics -- student affairs and athletics is they report to the board every time, and the president of the student council, or student body government, is there as well as other representatives.

And they're always telling us and presenting to us what they're doing to educate students on diversity, all types of diversity, and that programming is reflected in their -- all the way with athletics and how things are handled there, and it can be even things as -- there's even a mental health initiative with this group where they're teaching kids, reach out, you know, before it becomes an issue.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, ma'am.

Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well?

Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. President.

And good afternoon. I appreciate your service.

MS. LEATHERMAN: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I just wanted you to comment briefly, if you would, where you said in the past it would have probably been a weakness about the connection to downtown Florence, and you've outlined that there have been several initiatives from that standpoint.

MS. LEATHERMAN: Right.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So how would you say overall is that -- is that being well-received by the folks from downtown Florence? Is the

university seeing additional support from the community as a recognition and as a result of that interaction?

MS. LEATHERMAN: Absolutely. I had mentioned that I graduated in 1980, and when I was there -- you know, Francis Marion, if you're familiar with Florence at all, is -- from downtown Florence is two, three miles down the road, but Florence people acted like it was forever; you know, you're going to Columbia. So we didn't really feel that support.

Now there is a partnership that has grown through the city council, the city manager, the city mayor, and the county as well. But in particular, the city of Florence and Francis Marion and the state -- you guys have been partners in all of that too. I mentioned the three facilities that have been built. So now there is a presence of students downtown.

We have our fine arts, performing arts facility. We have the Luther F. Carter health sciences building where we've added physician assistance programs, speech pathology, a doctorate in nursing. And there's just a lot -- a future for Francis Marion in the health sciences program, and that's the exciting part for me as a board member, to see that we're in a really crucial time there and offering a lot of new programs.

So to answer your question, yes, we have a strong partnership.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? Desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. It's unanimous.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MS. LEATHERMAN: Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, At-Large Seat 11 for Francis Marion, Tab G, H. Randall Dozier, Murrells Inlet.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. DOZIER: Good afternoon.

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

MR. DOZIER: Herbert Randall Dozier.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. DOZIER: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. DOZIER: Thank you.

I'm originally from Marion and Horry Counties. I attended school at Francis Marion University and graduated in 1977. I've been on the board of trustees at Francis Marion, and I'm very proud of this, since I was appointed in 1991 by then-Governor Campbell to fill a vacant seat.

I've served in a variety of capacities and chaired various committees since that time. I also have an honorary lifetime alumni membership. And last year I was named Outstanding Alumnus of the Year for 2019.

My family has an endowed scholarship in the family name. I'd like to continue to work on expanding that scholarship. I'm presently serving as vice chairman of the board. I recently served as chairman of the board from 2011 to 2014.

Francis Marion has played a very important role in the successes that I've achieved in my lifetime. Being from the Pee Dee, I don't know if I would have been able to go to school if it hadn't been for Francis Marion. I was the first in my family to graduate from college.

I'd very much like to continue to serve on the board to serve the institution and the Pee Dee area in South Carolina. Thank you for considering me today.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions, comments?

Mr. Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Dozier, thank you very much for your service, and now that you have been on the board for almost 30 years --

MR. DOZIER: I didn't serve consecutive for that because when I was in Greenville for 21 years, I had to resign for about a year. Then I was reelected. So I'm not sure if my consecutive term --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay. Well, let's say --

MR. DOZIER: It's about -- close to that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Let's say except for a one-year hiatus --

MR. DOZIER: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- between now and 1991.

Do you think -- tell me how many people are on that board that have served longer than you?

MR. DOZIER: One sitting right behind me, Mr. William Coleman, and just a couple -- unfortunately, some of them have passed on, so there are a few people, but not too many.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you have how many members?

MR. DOZIER: Well, we have two from each congressional district and some at-large. I think it's about 18, 19 members.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What's the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable. Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Discussion? Hearing none, let's take it to a vote. All in favor, say -- well, raise your right hand. It's unanimous.

MR. DOZIER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

At-Large Seat 13 for Francis Marion, Patricia Hartung.

Mrs. Hartung, I want you to say your full name --

MS. HARTUNG: Patricia --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- in case I mispronounced it.

MS. HARTUNG: Patricia C. Hartung.

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

MS. HARTUNG: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. HARTUNG: I would.

I'd very much like to continue my service on the board of Francis Marion University. Besides the reasons I enumerated on my personal data questionnaire, these are very exciting times at Francis Marion, and I think I'd be remiss if I didn't tell you a little bit about what's happening in that Pee Dee region.

What started as a two-year college as part of the branch of the University of South Carolina has grown into a university graduating students that are impacting many, many lives in South Carolina. While the university has remained true to its mission of serving the people in the Pee Dee, the university is identifying needs of the future and graduating students that will become those dynamic individuals that will change South Carolina, and I truly believe that.

I live in the west central part of South Carolina, and I see what's happening with other universities in the state. And I believe Francis Marion is doing an amazing job in sending people out, students out, to do the right thing for South Carolina. It makes me really proud to be a part of that institution.

My professional experience is in public service. I'm the director of a regional planning and development council, and I have served at the university since 1999, the same year Fred Carter came on board. It's a strong contributor to the economic development of that region.

I've done planning in community and economic development my entire life, and that is a textbook example of what is happening in a region where you have a committed board, a committed university, and faculty that are truly trying to make a difference in educating those students in that part of the state.

It's not only doing all that for the students. It is changing the face of downtown Florence, and I hope all of you have had an opportunity to go to Florence lately. They are now in the process of renovating the old post office and putting a health science -- or a health program in there with some medical labs, in addition to the -- the work that's been done in the performing arts center and in the health sciences building downtown. These are all economic development stimuli that are going to pay dividends for that part of the state in years to come.

Our enrollment is now at 4,000 students, and it has grown continually in the recent past, due in part to the faculty and the administration and the board's acknowledgement that the careers of the future are changing. I work in an organization where we deal very often with high schools and technical colleges in preparing students for the careers of the future. We have a workforce development program.

I see the work of Fred Carter and that faculty in really understanding the careers of the future, in working towards getting those programs put in place at the university level to make those students employable and contributing members of South Carolina.

I'm extremely proud of the accomplishments that the university has been able to do since the 20 years I've been on the board, and the faculty and the trustees work together very well. We meet regularly with them every time we're on campus. We have student government representation. And it's a really good, symbiotic relationship, and the end result is what's happening in the Pee Dee region of South Carolina, which is really phenomenal.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Two questions. Good to see you this afternoon.

MS. HARTUNG: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And thank you for your service not only on the board, but the work that you do with the council.

How big is the -- you say the way to attract more students is to continue the Bridge Program. How many do you have in your Bridge Program?

MS. HARTUNG: I don't know the exact number because it fluctuates. It depends on which of the technical colleges are participating in it.

But it has been a valuable resource in identifying those students who are probably not mature enough to come into the university right after high school, but with a little help would become excellent students, given the right surroundings.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So it's been a very successful program?

MS. HARTUNG: It's very successful, and this is not the only place that it's done. Other universities in South Carolina practice that as well.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And then one quick question as well. It says the biggest strength -- and you mentioned it in your comments -- educating students for real-time jobs.

So is that a specific focus with y'all working with other industries in the Pee Dee area, or how are you making sure that your students -- that there's that connection between jobs being available and their education?

MS. HARTUNG: Well, one of the things that our administration does, in particular our president -- he's very active in both community and regional and state affairs. Fred sits on the Governor's Committee on Medical Education. He's on the South Carolina Research Authority Board. He is a committee member of the Institute of Medical and Public Health.

He hears where those jobs are. He listens. He understands that those areas that we are introducing -- for instance, mechanical and industrial engineering. He hears from his colleagues in the Pee Dee region, the industrial companies in that region that those are the areas where we don't have sufficient graduates.

He sits on the Carolina Health Systems board. They say, We need graduates in such-and-such areas. He takes all that back. He meets with the faculty and the board of trustees, and he works out a way in which we can develop programs and find the funding for those programs that are critical to those jobs of the future.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. President.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: A quick question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A quick question in reference to -- and he mentioned the strength, but you have a weakness as insufficient funding, especially about the honors learning center.

MS. HARTUNG: That is something that I think is going to be very valuable to Francis Marion. We -- last summer, we came back in with a little bit of cost overrun. We're building a new honors building. It's about 15,000 square feet. It's going to house the honors college plus a couple of other academic programs.

When you have an excellent honors program and you provide those students who are qualified to participate in that program, you attract a very good caliber student. And I think if we had -- I think we're on the way to getting full funding for that, but there still is a lack. I think it came in last year at 1 -- a little bit over 1.1 million in cost overrun.

So I think if we could put a funding package together -- and for all I know, Fred's already on top of that -- then I think that that would be something that would be a star in the crown for the university, to have an excellent honors program.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Do you know if all the board members are at 100 percent in giving?

MS. HARTUNG: In -- I -- hmm. I believe we are. I can't say that for sure, but I believe we are, especially with this First Generation Fund. We all felt passionate about that. And Fred has really done an excellent job in identifying the families in the Pee Dee who have been able to accomplish something with their lives because they were given scholarships to attend Francis Marion and give back to the university.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Do you know what the -- and you may not know this answer. What is the minimum that a board member is required to give, or asked to give?

MS. HARTUNG: I have never been asked for a minimum. I give from my heart and what I can give. I have never been asked that question or told a number.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Okay. And do you know what the endowment is there at the institution?

MS. HARTUNG: Gosh, I really don't.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

MS. HARTUNG: I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, ma'am. Just to follow up a little bit on the Bridge Program, the -- and I understand that this would ebb and flow, but what's the approximate number of Bridge students that you have, and what colleges and universities do you have agreements with?

MS. HARTUNG: As far as --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Or technical schools.

MS. HARTUNG: -- technical colleges, I think there's Florence-Darlington Tech, and there's Horry County Tech. And -- and there may be one other. We did a new partnership with The Continuum. I don't know if y'all are familiar with that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Up in Lake City.

MS. HARTUNG: Yeah.

And that -- while that's not really considered the Bridge Program, we do identify -- we send faculty down there. They teach down there. They do alternative types of programs down there where those students can bring those skills back into the university and graduate in more traditional programs. But...

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And I assume that you have high school students that come onto campus and take courses and that are readily transferable.

MS. HARTUNG: Yeah, and we also have faculty that go to high schools. A good example is the Governor's School for Math and Science.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, ma'am.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What's the desire of the committee?

Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, the least I can do is offer a motion for a favorable report because everything else in my life has been a disservice to Patricia.

I hated -- you only see me here at these confirmations. One of these days, I'm going to try to step up to the plate and join all those other great Laurens County residents who come over and participate with you on your board and sing your praises on a professional basis.

So if your service to Francis Marion is half of what it is to our communities in the Upstate and Upper Savannah, it's certainly exemplary.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin moves favorable.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Senator Scott. Okay.

Thank you.

MS. HARTUNG: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let's see. The last one from Francis Marion. We're coming up on the last one, At-Large Seat 15, William Coleman from Florence.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. COLEMAN: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record, give us your full name, sir.

MR. COLEMAN: William W. Coleman, Jr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. COLEMAN: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Are you the old man of the crowd?

MR. COLEMAN: You know, I'm the last one to come up. Y'all have asked all the questions. I've been on the board the longest. I'm a 1971 graduate. I really finished my career -- core in December, and we were accredited in June, so I really graduated before we had a college.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other comments you'd like to make before we start?

MR. COLEMAN: No, sir. I -- you know, my wife's a graduate. I've got sisters that have master's degrees, nieces, nephews. I'm a big, hard supporter of Francis Marion.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments from members of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Discussion? Hearing none, take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

MR. COLEMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

MR. COLEMAN: Thank y'all for voting for me. I appreciate your support.

LANDER UNIVERSITY

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If there's no objection, we'll go to Lander University, and 1st Congressional District, Seat 1, Cary Corbett from Hilton Head.

MR. CORBITT: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir. For the record, give us your full name.

MR. CORBITT: Cary Carter Corbitt.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. CORBITT: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. CORBITT: Sure. I've been on the Lander board for about four or five years, and I really enjoy, not only the Lander -- serving on the

Lander trustees, but I've been fortunate enough to work for the Sea Pines Resort for right at 43 years, so I've been given the opportunity to serve on different boards and -- whether it's with -- through the Golf Course Owners Association or through our chamber or through our community, and the Lander board has been very, very enlightening.

From the educational side, we have -- when I first started to where we are today -- Rich Cosentino, which is our new president, has been with us about three years, has made a wonderful basic transformation to -- for Lander.

We've -- when I first started, we were down in enrollment and really kind of looking to where we needed to go and how we were going to get there, and now we're approaching -- this year, I believe we have 3,227 students. We've got about 95 percent of our dormitories being utilized.

And there's a lot of energy on the campus, and it's a pleasure to see what is being -- is going on there, and we've got some really talented faculty and administration, staff as well, and it's -- a lot of favorable things are going on.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: All right. Questions?

Mr. Clary.

MR. CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Corbitt, thank you for serving. How long have you served on the Lander board?

MR. CORBITT: I was a governor's appointee, so I believe it's been five -- around five years, maybe six.

MR. CLARY: And I'm very familiar with Lander. I'm -- I visit there quite frequently. My son-in-law's the women's basketball coach there.

MR. CORBITT: Right.

MR. CLARY: And you do have a lot of very good things going on. Tell me a little bit about your Bridge Program up there.

MR. CORBITT: Well, we have a Bridge Program with Piedmont Tech and Midlands Tech, and so it's something that Rich has really tried to pursue the last couple of years. And then we've also started with the University Center in Greenville, so we've got programs that we've launched this fall there, so...

MR. CLARY: And also, in addressing diversity on campus, you say continually looking at this issue. What kind of steps are you taking to address diversity rather just looking at it?

MR. CORBITT: Well, we've -- I did make some notes, so our -- we have -- 59 percent of our student body are Caucasian, and 29 percent are African-American, and that is continuing to increase.

We have -- let's see -- 80 percent of our student body is from South Carolina. And so we do have a lot of -- we do have conversation in our board meetings with regard to diversity on our faculty/staff, as well as

our student enrollment, and so as long as they -- these students qualify and are accepted, we are certainly open.

MR. CLARY: So do you have a diversity officer there?

MR. CORBITT: I would say yes, but I could not say that for sure.

MR. CLARY: All right. Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for offering to continue to serve. And as a board member there for several years now -- you're saying, what, five to six years, something like that?

MR. CORBITT: That's right.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I just wanted to kind of get a feel -- and you kind of caught my eye -- or my ears. I heard you saying -- and I'm hearing good things about your president that's been on board, what, about three years now?

MR. CORBITT: Correct.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So the board interaction from that standpoint, and as a board member, how do you -- do you set policy? Do you have interaction? What is the role of the board in helping Lander set its direction from that standpoint?

MR. CORBITT: Well, Rich is very open. He lets -- he brings the board into conversation in every aspect, and, yes, we have -- when we first started, we had some policies and procedures, but not near to the extent of what we needed to really guide the school.

And we -- each board meeting, we either approve two or three policies or sometimes many policies. And so we've made a big effort in the last year to where we've got a very, very large amount of policies that we've put forth to guide all aspects of the college.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So y'all have -- if I'm hearing you correctly, y'all have interaction, and just because he's presenting it, it doesn't mean y'all rubber-stamp it.

MR. CORBITT: Oh, gosh, no. No. We have a very strong board. We are very involved, every one of us. And so as they are presented, if it really is a policy or procedure that we need to implement, we certainly will approve it.

If not, we'll send it back for review. And so, no, it's not a blank statement, and it's not just a --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Regardless of how good a job he's doing, you take that interaction and y'all send things back for review if you y'all feel it's --

MR. CORBITT: If we feel that it should be, yes.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Has that occurred?

MR. CORBITT: It's occurred twice in the last two board meetings.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions?

Mr. Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All right. This is a very important question. Do you know of anyone that could help me get rid of my hooks off the tee?

MR. CORBITT: We've got a great learning center and a great --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That I can afford.

MR. CORBITT: -- head of instruction. Very affordable.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All right.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott?

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you for your service. I saw the articulation agreement and some of the other agreements you have with Piedmont Tech and Midlands Tech. In the service area where Greenwood is -- Greenwood, Laurens, Edgefield, Abbeville, McCormick, Saluda, and Anderson -- is that the largest area which you're drawing students from?

I know because -- and one time, y'all really actually charted out where the students are actually coming from and created some targeted areas.

MR. CORBITT: We -- I would probably say you're very close to correct. I'm from McCormick, South Carolina.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. CORBITT: And so I started out at Newberry and then transferred to Lander. Yes, it's probably a college that has more than, or a good amount of the locals from those counties that you're speaking of. But even at Hilton Head, I know of four students that we have going to Lander now. And so we target different areas and look at them, and we do site visits, and we try to get --

SENATOR SCOTT: The reason why I asked you that is --

MR. CORBITT: -- as broad as we can throughout the state.

SENATOR SCOTT: The reason why I asked you is because some of our smaller colleges, and that would -- maybe not tiny, but you're still a small college.

MR. CORBITT: A small college, absolutely.

SENATOR SCOTT: But they're beginning to look at like -- Francis Marion is an example -- becoming more of a regional university so that students can cut costs, not living on campus, but actually can commute every day. So whether that's --

MR. CORBITT: Well, we have a good many commuters. To say the exact percentage, I don't -- can't tell you that, but we have a lot of commuters.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah. That's becoming very common, especially after transferring after two years from the technical schools coming in.

MR. CORBITT: Correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: So I don't know how much knowledge you actually had on what was going on as it relates to commuters and those who actually come out of the geographical area.

Because what we're finding is that students who get educated in those communities tend to stay in those communities, and we're watching a large number of students who come to major areas of the state, and out of state, they just don't come back.

MR. CORBITT: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: And so we're losing the talent in those locations.

MR. CORBITT: Well, we've got a wonderful nursing program, and so as we graduate nurses, and they're -- a good many do stay within the Greenwood area and surrounding, but the nursing profession is a very sought-after profession.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, you've got Greenville --

MR. CORBITT: Greenville, absolutely.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and Anderson in that. And so you've got --

MR. CORBITT: Certainly. And Aiken.

SENATOR SCOTT: And Aiken. You've got some good hospitals surrounding you. Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is a favorable report. Is there discussion?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you. Thank you so much for your willingness to serve.

MR. CORBITT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: With no objection, we'll go ahead and get started. I'd like to call the meeting to order. This is the College and University Trustee Screening Commission. I pray that God continues to bless us all.

First of all, we have Lander University, 2nd Congressional District, Seat 2. Tab A, Angela Strickland from Chapin.

MS. STRICKLAND: Hi. Do I sit here?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Make sure your green light's --

MS. STRICKLAND: It is.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- shining.

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

MS. STRICKLAND: Angela Gilbert Strickland.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Great.

I'm going to swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. STRICKLAND: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. STRICKLAND: Sure.

I'm very glad to be here. Very glad to be here after having served on this board for the last four years. Very thankful for that experience. It was something I never thought I would necessarily be doing, but once it sort of came into -- the opportunity came about, it was something that I wanted to do.

And once I had started it, and as it's continued, it's brought me just a lot of personal satisfaction to be able to serve on this board, serve the students, parents, the university, the community, and it's just really been a very rewarding experience for me. And I look forward to serving another term.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Great. Any questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just have a question for you. I'm actually doing a deal in the House that eliminates application fees for students or South Carolina citizens, application fees that they have to pay to go to colleges and university. How do you all do it? Because you all are the only one in the state that doesn't charge an application fee.

MS. STRICKLAND: Well, you know, I actually didn't realize we'd gone to that process. I knew in past years, we would very readily give out waivers to a lot of people and, you know, we all had a stack of them, and I would give them to any prospective students that I knew were interested in Lander. Or even if they weren't interested, I'd say, Hey, here's a school you should consider; you know, that sort of thing.

So I actually didn't realize we had gone to the, to the no-fee. I actually think that's wonderful. I mean, I came from a very small town and was applying to lots of different schools. I had good grades and had, you know, the opportunity to go to a lot of places and wanted to apply to a lot of places, and it was tough to do -- have all those fees, for sure.

Even though I think, most of the time, they're \$25, you know, but it can really be a lot for people. And I think to, I don't want to say prioritize, but, I mean, the South Carolina residents, I mean, should get that advantage, for sure. So I don't know the exact, you know, where the money was shifted around. I do know that we have had that strong push in recent years to get enrollment up and to try to, you know, really get these South Carolina students in here.

Not that we don't value the out-of-state students as well. I mean, my husband was an international student, so, you know, there's lot of value in those folks. But we need to make sure that we're taking care of our citizens, for sure, in South Carolina.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Well, I just want to say thank you all for that. But the range is from, like, maybe \$40, and I think the high was \$95 --

MS. STRICKLAND: Oh, okay.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- for the fees, and -- but the same fee was for out-of-state and in-state, but I wanted to just say thank you to Lander for being at the forefront of making sure South Carolinians have an opportunity to apply to your school --

MS. STRICKLAND: Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- and the application fee is zero. Thank you.

MS. STRICKLAND: Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon, Ms. Strickland. First of all, thank you for your service. I have several questions for you. Number one, since you are such a relatively new member of the board of trustees, when you became a member, what type of training did you have or orientation that you could relate to me?

MS. STRICKLAND: Sure. Whenever I first came on, I think there was myself and maybe one other individual who'd come on at that point. We went up to Lander for a day, and we were able to just sit -- we sat down with the different -- obviously, the president, but the different vice presidents as well and were able to really just get a -- sort of an update on everything that had been going on.

We were in the middle of accreditation and a couple of other issues when I came on -- or reaccreditation when I came on four years ago. So we were able to sit down and really get the lay of the land. We were given, you know, a manual, so to speak, pretty thick, that had lots of different reports in it and things to get us up to speed. So we had that opportunity before our first board meeting to do that.

And, you know, and then we'd come into the board meeting and, you know -- as an attorney, I understood, you know, Robert's Rules and things like that, so at least I, you know, could follow how the meeting went. So I didn't need a lot of that background. But there was a lot of things when we have new members, you know, in those first meetings to make sure they understand the procedure that we're going through, following the agenda, how the voting works, and that sort of thing.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I've looked at a number of college and universities' minutes of their meetings, and there are some that everything that's done by a board is unanimous. Tell me how things work at Lander. Do you have -- are you able to have discussions and disagreement in trying to reach some sort of a policy decision?

MS. STRICKLAND: Sure. Yeah. There are things that are unanimous, but there's lots of discussion, for sure. And sometimes, you may see a unanimous vote, and that really doesn't give you all the behind-the-scenes, that there was a lot of discussion, you know.

So I do think -- ultimately, I think, as a board, it makes everyone feel at peace if we ultimately are able to sign off on a decision, even if maybe we started out not agreeing with it. You definitely can abstain or vote in opposition if you want to. I never have felt that I was not able to do that.

And once I came on the board, because I had no history or anything like that -- and, again, as being a lawyer and, you know, we like to look at the fine print and question things, there were lots of things that would come up, and I would just have questions about. You know, I see that this was done -- this contract was signed ten years ago, but, you know, kind of, What's going on there?

So, yes, I think that there's definitely healthy discussion. I do think that if we can get to an agreement by the end and then what you ultimately see is potentially a, you know, unanimous vote, there's still healthy discussion behind it, for sure.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, I guess the -- one of the biggest things would be that the minutes reflect that healthy discussion.

MS. STRICKLAND: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Because when the minutes don't reflect things like that, I think it might lead you to believe that someone -- that a board is a rubber stamp, and so I think that's very important.

A couple of other things. You mentioned how can Lander -- or the question was, How can Lander attract students, and your answer was, Lander has seen a high increase in students in the last four years, close to capacity in on-campus housing. What are you going to do in order to continue to grow the university, I guess would be my question.

MS. STRICKLAND: Right. Well, I know that we are very close to capacity with the on-campus housing. I know that there's always, you know, looking for additional land to purchase and additional things that can be -- I mean, there's still a few buildings that are probably pretty old and could be reworked and that sort of thing.

We've also got this relationship now with the University Center in Greenville, which is a potential way of increasing enrollment without having the extra strain of more students physically being on campus. And I do think there's still a desire to continue to grow, but I do think -- not that we, like, have some hard line; we have to stop at this many students.

But, I mean, I don't think it would make -- anybody would expect that Lander's going to, you know, add another thousand, 2,000 students, at least in the near future without some real, you know, growth of actual buildings and that sort of thing.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So have -- from the answer to that question, have -- has Lander basically maxed out on campus in so far as what you see for the future? Because, you know, where I come from, they just throw up apartments. And we put beds in those heads and keep pumping them into the institution.

What's the answer for Lander to -- if you're not going to continue to grow on campus?

MS. STRICKLAND: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I know the online or the University Center is a possibility. But tell me about that.

MS. STRICKLAND: Right. And I think that the other thing that we've recognized in addition to -- you know, and you have to remember, too, lots of students, as they, you know, get sophomore, junior, senior, they end up moving off campus.

But as far as on-campus dorms, I know that we're pretty close, at least in the freshman dorms, you know, to being pretty full. I do know that as we've discussed the -- really what the board feels, what everyone feels about how much more growth there should be, there's definitely been healthy discussion about, obviously, you need the beds to put them in, but you need the professors to teach them.

I know that it's very important to this board, and I think important to our president, and I'm sure important to the students and parents, that Lander maintains that -- you know, part of the reason people go there this nice teacher to -- professor-to-student ratio. And I know we've got -- my understanding is most, or if not all, of our professor positions are filled.

But I think, you know, we would have to not only physically put another building or continue to do that, but we would have to grow with the professors because we don't want to suddenly have 20, 25-student classes become 50-student classes. At least not for -- there are a few subjects that's okay in, but for the most part, that's something that Lander definitely prides itself on.

And it's tough. In Greenwood, my understanding, where Lander's located, there's not just tons of land that they could throw a building up on. And I know it's very important to the university -- when I went there, my sophomore year, I lived in what was called Greenwood High Apartments, and it was about 2 miles from campus. I thought that was very cool back then that I got to go all the way off campus. But especially for your freshmen, you want them to be right there, and there's not a lot of physical room because we want to keep green space. We want to keep all of that.

And then right around Lander is -- people live there. There are houses, you know, residences and that sort of thing. And I know that when things become available, that gets brought before the board that, Look, here's this little house, this little piece, that we could get that land, potentially tear that house down or whatever it is, and build there. So I know that we're always on the lookout for that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: My last question. What is the ratio of in-state to out-of-state students at Lander?

MS. STRICKLAND: I think it is -- gosh, I don't know if I have that number.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: If you don't know, that's okay.

MS. STRICKLAND: Yeah, I don't --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I'm sure somebody else is back there --

MS. STRICKLAND: Somebody will --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- that's coming behind you --

MS. STRICKLAND: Well, they -- one of them can get it, yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- that will get that number.

MS. STRICKLAND: So we can send it.

What is it?

MR. PRUITT: Ninety-two.

MS. STRICKLAND: Ninety-two?

MS. DOLNY: Out-of-state.

MS. STRICKLAND: Yeah, 92 out-of-state.

MR. PRUITT: No, in-state.

MS. STRICKLAND: In-state.

MS. DOLNY: In-state.

MS. STRICKLAND: Ninety-two in-state. I was about to say, 92 percent in-state.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: All right.

MS. STRICKLAND: I thought it was pretty high, in-state to out-of-state, yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, ma'am.

MS. STRICKLAND: Uh-huh.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah, I have a question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott?

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

Thank you, Ms. Strickland, for your willingness to serve. Which committee or committees do you serve on at Lander?

MS. STRICKLAND: I -- sorry. I am on the committee for -- academic affairs committee is the one, so all the planning of the majors and that sort of things.

SENATOR SCOTT: What's your greatest accomplishment in that four years since you're a former Lander student? Now you're back on the board -- probably one of the younger members of the board.

Probably be one of the persons to be there for a long time.

Looking at the future growth of Lander, as you remain on the board.

So what's your vision, your greatest accomplishment --

MS. STRICKLAND: Sure, sure.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- direction you think it needs to go in? You've got an excellent president up there who's doing a lot of great work.

MS. STRICKLAND: I agree. I think we have an excellent president. I think we -- and we've got great vice presidents there, professors. For me, I was a scholarship student and really would have racked up, I don't want to think how many loans if I wasn't.

One thing that I'm very focused on and have been very focused on is just to make sure that students who are in a situation similar to I was in, the sort of similar socio-economic background, are able to go to college and go to a good college. And especially from a small town, I wanted to go to a smaller college too.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. STRICKLAND: So I like the fact that Lander is the size it is. I have loved the growth we've had these last few years, but again, I wouldn't want us to go from 3,000 students to 6,000, you know, for example. I think that we're at a really healthy size and with a little more potential.

But it's very important to me and my vision just that we give access to those types of students. My husband and I personally fund a few

scholarships, and one of the big criteria for the one that I -- is sort of in my name is that it goes to somebody from, you know, a 1A high school.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. STRICKLAND: Very small town. If I can get a first-generation college student, that's, you know, the thing that I push for with mine. My husband's is geared towards international athletes.

SENATOR SCOTT: All right.

MS. STRICKLAND: Because he couldn't have gone to school here if he didn't have a full scholarship.

SENATOR SCOTT: All right.

MS. STRICKLAND: So, you know, just getting access to those types of students, you know, that just otherwise would either get lost at a big school or just wouldn't be able to swing the expenses of it. And Greenwood, luckily, cost of living is good there, too, so students are able to not, you know, just have enough money to just barely eat and go to school. They can actually, you know, have a fulfilled college life there.

So all of that's very important. Academics is extremely important to me that that stays strong. And Lander's just, you know, going gangbusters with a lot of their programs. And I was a poli-sci major, and they -- some of the speakers they've had come in and, you know, different things like that is just wonderful. That's part of the reason I really like being on academic affairs is to sort of see, you know, what the potential is.

And one of the big focuses has been to make sure that these kids, these students, come out with degrees that are marketable, that they can go to work with. I mean, I came out with a poli-sci degree, but I knew I was going to law school. But frankly, if I'd have known you didn't need a poli-sci degree, I'd have gotten a math degree or, you know.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. STRICKLAND: I mean, I do products liability, so I do physics and math all the time. I would have something different had I known, but -- and not that there's not value in a poli-sci degree, but there are some more, you know, very marketable, practical degrees that we have started getting at Lander, different, you know, emphases on different degrees to make sure that these students -- and their parents. It's important to the parents that the kids come out and they are able to find work.

So all of that -- that's a lot of different things, but that's the stuff --

SENATOR SCOTT: That's good thought. That's good thought. You've got a pretty good idea --

MS. STRICKLAND: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- pretty good scope of what you want to do.

I see you clerked for a good judge.

MS. STRICKLAND: Yes. Oh, yeah, Judge Lee, yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah, and some good value. Thank you so much.

MS. STRICKLAND: No problem.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Vice Chairman Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Ms. Strickland. I've just got kind of a personal question for you. What initially attracted you to attend Lander as an undergraduate?

MS. STRICKLAND: Sure. So whenever I was looking at schools, I was lucky enough to have good, good test scores and good grades, and actually was like a -- in your junior year, but you become a fellow for certain schools if you meet certain criteria. So then you start getting information about the schools.

It was really between there and Furman for me, and I knew some people who went to Lander and had really good experiences. And ultimately, what helped me get to Lander was the ability to have a good financial aid package. You know, I wanted to go there, but when it came down between the two, I wanted to go somewhere that was small, that I felt comfortable when I went on campus, which I did when I went for a tour, but that also -- I was lucky enough to get a full scholarship.

I only got full tuition to Furman and would have spent \$10,000 a year to go there. And to me, it was more important to try to come out debt-free at the end of that, knowing I was going to law school.

So when I went to visit Lander, I just really took to it. The professor that I -- knew I was going to be a poli-sci major, and the head of that department at the time, I just really connected with and just wanted to go somewhere that was smart for me to go to but that also -- you know, I was comfortable with the size. I didn't want to go to a big school. I graduated with 60 kids, so I didn't want to go to a school where I'd be lost, you know?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I really appreciate schools like Lander and Francis Marion that look after our own first. I've got a real problem with so many out-of-staters coming in who, once they graduate, they turn around and go back out of state.

MS. STRICKLAND: Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And I just want to thank you and your fellow board members and even Representative Taylor, former colleague, good friend.

MS. STRICKLAND: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: But thank you so much --

MS. STRICKLAND: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- for what you're doing for our state.

MS. STRICKLAND: Sure.

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is a favorable report. Is there a second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor of a favorable report, raise your right hand.

Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I also have Representative Davis's proxy.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary has Representative Davis's proxy, and I'm sure that Representative King votes aye also.

SENATOR VERDIN: I think he just stepped out.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Unanimous.

Thank you so very much.

MS. STRICKLAND: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, 3rd Congressional District, Seat 3, Linda Dolny, Clinton.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Chairman, there is a three-page addendum to the -- that did not get copied that is beside the notebook on Ms. Dolny.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good morning.

MS. DOLNY: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you give us -- well, for a start, good afternoon.

MS. DOLNY: You threw me for a loop there with that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: It's Monday. It's Monday.

MS. DOLNY: It is Monday.

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

MS. DOLNY: Linda Latham Dolny.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. DOLNY: Yes, I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. DOLNY: Angela did a beautiful job. Thank you, Angela.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: She really did.

MS. DOLNY: She's a hard act to follow. But I guess, first of all, I would like to thank you for your service. I've been here several times, and I am thankful for all you do for the state, as well, all of you, because higher education is a passion for me.

I'm also thankful that I've been on the Lander board because I've been blessed to watch it grow from what it was prior to 2015 to what it is today. And I love the energy. I love walking on campus now and seeing the students and how they response to the current administration versus what it was at one time. And I love learning and hearing that Lander is perceived much better, not only by the state, but by the parents of the students and the students.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Questions or comments from anybody?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Ms. Dolny, for your service. I'm trying to determine how long you have been a board member.

MS. DOLNY: Since 2008, I believe.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And in response to questions, there was a question regarding, should students and faculty be represented on the board, and you said no to student; faculty currently attends the board meeting. Do students -- do you have any student attendance at the board meetings, such as student body president, anything like that.

MS. DOLNY: Not routinely. We have had students at the meeting, but they come at special invitation.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay. And in so far as Lander's attraction of students, I know you had pretty substantial growth over the last three to five years. And I think you say now you're at 3,200-plus students. Does Lander have any sort of a ceiling that you're targeting in so far as growth is concerned at this time?

MS. DOLNY: Probably not as far as growth because I think that what we're thinking -- and we will be beginning to discuss strategy at our next meeting, and this will be part of it. But what we're thinking at this point is that most of the growth needs to be in different things. It needs to be online. It needs to be graduate level. It needs to be at places like the Greenville center. And that's where I think the bulk of our future growth will be.

One of Lander's drawing cards is its size for students who are living on campus. I'm very proud of the fact that our students feel like they get personal attention and that our faculty feels like that when they have an issue and they have a concern, they'll either go up through the faculty

senate or, if they know me personally, they'll call and say, I need some money. How do I get it?

And I, you know -- and so they get vested in these students, and I think size is a factor of that. It's hard to be vested if you've got 600 students in a class or 200 or whatever.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, ma'am.

MS. DOLNY: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? By the committee?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable. Do you have a question, Senator from Laurens?

SENATOR VERDIN: Well --

SENATOR SCOTT: I withdraw it.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Ms. Dolny, I'm sleeping over here. I'm just now getting zeroed in on you as my constituent.

MS. DOLNY: Yes.

SENATOR VERDIN: And --

MS. DOLNY: And by the way, your wife is my constituent because I love to shop with her.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, bless you.

MS. DOLNY: She has the neatest store.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, I tell people all the time, if you don't have any use for me, please have mercy on my wife and children. And I tell everyone that Kim totes my load all over the place.

MS. DOLNY: Well, I don't know about that, but she certainly helps me, so thank you.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, I appreciate your service, and I was just -- so I -- so you have the Tudor right across the street from Whiteford's and the ARP church.

MS. DOLNY: Yes. Yes.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, I'm zeroed in on you now.

MS. DOLNY: Oh. I'm not sure that's good.

SENATOR VERDIN: Move favorable.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I can tell you've got a great sense of humor, and I've got to ask you, you worked at Miller Brewing Company --

MS. DOLNY: Yes.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- and then went to seminary, or went to seminary and then went to work for the brewing company? You don't have to answer me.

MS. DOLNY: I don't mind answering it. If you go to seminary, you understand the importance of beer to the students, I can tell you that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable report. All in favor, raise your right hand, including the proxy.

Thank you so very much.

MS. DOLNY: Yes, sir, thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You've made my day.

I want to apologize. I have some new glasses, bifocals, and y'all look like you're moving when you're sitting still.

4th Congressional District, Seat 4. First is Terry Pruitt from Spartanburg.

MR. PRUITT: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir. For the record, if you would, give us your full name.

MR. PRUITT: Terry O'Neil Pruitt.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. PRUITT: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. PRUITT: Yes, I would. First of all, I do appreciate all that you all do for us. I know your job is not an easy one, and we do appreciate you.

And I would -- am happy to be here.

I'm a proud Lander graduate. I graduated in 1982 from Lander. I am a first-generation college student. My parents were great parents, worked in the mills in Spartanburg County, and as you know, that -- our heritage in Spartanburg County is definitely textiles, and I'm proud of that heritage.

But I graduated from Lander. It's had a tremendous impact on my life. I've since earned my masters and a doctorate and 38 years in education. Both of my children attended Lander. My daughter is a teacher in Spartanburg, and my son is an administrator in Summerville school district. My niece was just named Teacher of the Year in Spartanburg District 2 as a Lander graduate, so it's been a tremendous impact on my family.

And I value the experiences I had at Lander. I could have gone to numerous other colleges at the time. I was accepted to several, and reason I chose Lander is because of some relationships that I had

experienced. I was in band in high school. I graduated from Chesnee High School and was in All-State Band, and one of the band directors from Lander conducted the band and invited me to come for a visit at Lander, and that was it. That's where I wanted to go.

So knowing the significant impact it's had on my life, I would like to serve on this board. I think my 38 years in education -- I started out teaching at Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School. I taught there for 13 years, band, chorus, and theater. And then I moved on and was principal at Wade Hampton High School in Hampton. I was assistant principal two years, principal for six years, and superintendent the last five years I was in Hampton 1, so 26 years of my 38 years was in the Lowcountry, in Bamberg and Hampton. And I've been in Spartanburg as the chief academic officer now for 12 years.

And there was a reason I came back home. I believe God puts us where He needs us at the time, and since I've been back home, my family needed me there. So I just want to say that that's the reason I'm looking to run for the board because I think Lander can continue to impact students. I value diversity. I've looked at where we are with diversity in our students and faculty at Lander. I'm currently enrolled in the Diversity Leaders Institute at Furman and doing some work on equity and inclusion in our school district. So thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good. Thank you.

Questions or comments from members?

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you so much.

And thank you, Mr. Pruitt, for your willingness to serve. Tell me, your experience in Hampton County, rural South Carolina, very difficult, very difficult for young children to be able to, for their families to be able to pay for them to go to school, some of the learning problems these kids may have had so they did well on SAT scores as well as getting scholarship, and from that experience, how you can take that experience and help Lander to understand those type of students who may want to come to their school.

MR. PRUITT: Well, as I said --

SENATOR SCOTT: Your school.

MR. PRUITT: Yes, sir. I grew up in Spartanburg County and then went to Lander and then went to Bamberg.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. PRUITT: And so being an Upstate student --

SENATOR SCOTT: You went to Bamberg first.

MR. PRUITT: I went to Bamberg first.

SENATOR SCOTT: Oh, yes.

MR. PRUITT: I went to Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. PRUITT: And it was a different environment. I will say that my 13 years in Bamberg and my 13 years in Hampton, what I learned is, people make the difference. And in those districts, we had some people who cared a lot about students, but poverty was a real issue.

At one point, I think, in those districts, it was 75-plus percent poverty level. Our graduation rate was not where we wanted it, and we put some strategies in place. You can have high standards and you can have high expectations -- in fact, if you don't have high expectations and you don't have high standards, you're not helping children of poverty.

You need to have those high expectations, but at the same time, you need to provide them with support, support systems. So we did everything we could to prepare students for what they would need to go to college and also the, the -- you know, one of the biggest deterrents for children, especially first-generations college students, for them not going to college is filling out the financial aid form. That form in itself is so complicated, and not having parents who've ever experienced it is a challenge for those students.

So what we did, and we do this in Spartanburg as well, is, we take those students by the hand. We help them through those kinds of things to get in college and to make sure -- you know, another thing that we've done is, you know, supporting kids and creating those college-going cultures in our schools so that when they get to college, they not only get there and get in, they graduate from college.

So those challenges are numerous. I tell teachers that I work with now -- my role in the school district is to prepare curriculum development and training for teachers and all the academic programs. It's similar to what a dean would do in a college. And in Spartanburg School District 7, I'm working with teachers right now monthly. I have 52 teachers I'm working with, and I stress to them, you never know who is in your classroom.

And I'll give you a good example of that. I taught band, and I started my kids in 5th grade, and I taught them until they graduated in 12th grade. Nikki Haley sat in my beginner band class. She was in my junior band class. I've had students who have gone on and just done some remarkable things over the years, many of them to Lander, which I shepherded them to go there. I thought it was a great fit for children coming from small school districts.

But you need to encourage every child. Every child has a gift and the ability. So I'm passionate about that. I'm passionate about what Lander

can do for students in this state. I heard you mention students in-state and out-of-state, and I know we're at about 9 percent for the out-of-state students, and I do think they offer value, especially international students. But we need to use our state universities to impact our population in South Carolina.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Dr. Pruitt, and appreciate your willingness to offer to serve in this capacity. When we talk about that serving the people in our state, I agree with that to a certain point, but I also think that there is value when you have other people to come in because when -- if you keep doing the same things over and over again with the same people, you wind up with a result that's not very good.

So in order to attract students from outside the state, how do you do that with a university like Lander? And I'm well familiar with it.

MR. PRUITT: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I'm there a lot. I was there Saturday and very impressed with your homecoming that occurred there. How do you attract people from out-of-state? Because that is one way that you can increase some revenue. And I don't know that it would necessarily detract from the mission that you have in trying to serve the students of our state as well because I think that both can be done. So how do you do that?

MR. PRUITT: Yes, sir. I think you're correct. And they definitely -- I do want you to understand, I do think that students from other places, with diverse backgrounds, international students, et cetera, definitely add value to the -- to the education and the college experience and beyond.

I think-- I've heard folks say that Lander is the best-kept secret in South Carolina. I don't think it needs to be a secret. I think we need to, to promote the university beyond the state, you know, in marketing and that sort of thing: the caliber of the programs that we have, the standards that we set, the success of our students and our graduates.

But also the relationship piece, that if you talk to most folks who are, are graduates of Lander or they have a connection to Lander, it's not only the quality of education. You've heard several people talk about that small setting and environment. That is huge, and the relationships that are formed there at Lander.

So I think a way to do that is create that, that kind of knowledge of Lander beyond South Carolina, that, yes, we are small, but we are -- we are big in a lot of other areas.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You know, it's really interesting. I have a grandson that's been taking courses during his senior year on campus at Lander, and I think that's a fabulous way --

MR. PRUITT: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- to, to get accustomed to the rigors of college because it's much different than, than the technical schools as well as the high school. And that senior year is basically wasted for most students.

MR. PRUITT: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And there's so much remediation that has to be done when they get to college. Is that something that you would envision as a board member in promoting in that local area? Because I think that's a fabulous way to get -- number one, attract kids and expose them to the college campus, and then they also get credit to go away to college.

MR. PRUITT: Yes, sir, they do. I'll just give you -- very quickly, from my experiences, I've been in Spartanburg the last 12 years. We've developed four early college programs. One of them is the Scholars Academy Program at the University of South Carolina Upstate. Students go there, earn at least two years of college credit.

Another one's called the Viking Early College, Spartanburg High School Vikings. That's with the community college, Spartanburg Community College. They earn an associate's degree and their high school diploma in a four-year college transfer program, and we have some of those students who've gone on to Lander.

We've just signed an agreement with Converse College to where we will now have male and female. We're starting with 10 in a cohort next year that will go to Converse their junior and senior year, along with going to high school at Spartanburg High School, specifically as a pipeline to, to help us with recruitment of teachers. That program will be for students who want to be educators.

And then we have worked with what we call the Spartanburg County Early College High School through the community college as well, and those students earn their associates degree in a four-year college transfer program. That's a county-wide program. The others are District 7 programs.

But I definitely think that Lander could have a real presence in their region of our state with programs like that. And what we're finding a lot of times is, these students, they get on those campuses, they do well, that

rigor, they, they, they've got accustomed to it, and they stay there for their college careers. Now, many do transfer, but they do stay.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

SENATOR SCOTT: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'm a fan and supporter of Nikki Haley. Did I understand you to tell me that Nikki Haley -- you taught Nikki Haley in band?

MR. PRUITT: I did. She was in band in 5th and 6th grade.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What -- I'm curious. What instrument did she play?

MR. PRUITT: Yeah. One of the funniest things is, I introduced her when she was governor to the Rotary Club in Spartanburg. She played French horn when she first started.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: How did you keep her from leading the band? She kept --

MR. PRUITT: And then -- and then she switched to clarinet, but, so. Yeah, she was a leader.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable report. All in favor raise your right hand. Including proxies, it's unanimous.

Thank you, sir.

MR. PRUITT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, we have James C. Shubert from Simpsonville.

Good afternoon, sir. For the record, if you would, give us your full name.

MR. SHUBERT: Certainly. James Carl Shubert.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. SHUBERT: Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. SHUBERT: Certainly. I graduated Lander in 1988, and I was a resident of Greenwood pretty much most of my life. My father was an enlisted naval man who lied about his age at 15 to join the Navy. And we had brief periods out of state, but for the most part, I grew up right there in Greenwood.

I chose Lander University simply because at the time I was going into college, my mother was diagnosed with a mitral valve condition, so I had

to stay home and pay for my education. My parents were definitely blue-collar raised, and so as a result of that, I had to pay for everything from day one. And so Lander offered me an outstanding opportunity to be able to do that in the town that I grew up in.

And it also offered me great opportunities once I got on campus. The best opportunity it gave me is, I met my wife there. She's a Lander alumnus from 1988 as well. We have three children, and they're all either just out of college or about to enter college, and it has been an interesting, probably, five years of traveling around the Southeast and within this state, looking at colleges to see what they offer, see how accommodating and open they are, and as a result, I found out that our state has a lot more to offer, probably, than we are going out and actually telling people about.

And so as I stack up what they're telling me against my education at Lander, I can tell you that it definitely prepared me well. And so for the past 30 years, I've been a businessman, selling medical devices in a critical care CVOR suite, as well as having a small LLC that did some real estate and building.

And so State of South Carolina is near and dear to me, so I try to listen to what you guys do on a -- and the ladies do on a daily basis in this state, and I'm proud to be a South Carolinian as a result of it, so I'll take any questions.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I notice on your driving record, it's good. Very seldom do we see a candidate that has zero speeding tickets.

MR. SHUBERT: Said what, now, sir?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Zero speeding tickets. You're to be commended.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: He has great cruise control.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Shubert, for your willingness to serve. I know going on these college boards, everybody brings something unique to the table, especially in serving the board. What is that unique thing that you would bring to this board? The business experience is great, but what things would you bring that you think you could really help to improve Lander since you're a young graduate compared to some of the others that we've screened?

MR. SHUBERT: Sure, sure. You know, diversity in experiences on any board are important. I think the things that I, I've found that have made me successful are organizational vision casting, leadership, and

certainly, as probably all of fellow candidates here have is a high degree of integrity.

But organizational vision right now, I think, is really, really key when you start guiding or being part of the guidance of any organization. As I look at the board, they've done an outstanding job the last few years with growth. Obviously, recruitment in-state is up. When you look at how they've handled budgetary and cost controls; I mean, freezing tuition so more kids can get an affordable education at Lander for the past four years, those are all outstanding things.

But now, you know, as with anything, times certainly change regularly. And so as I look at what's happening across our nation and across our state, we have to be prepared that when our, our, our folks get out of college, they're prepared. I wasn't, you know, an educator, or I haven't been in any sort of governmental office. I've just basically hired people. And so as a result of hiring them, I see what they need to be prepared to get the job done.

So I think that's going to bring a unique position.

SENATOR SCOTT: In looking at the region of the state in which you grew up in as well as where you live now, most of the colleges are moving toward recruiting students on a regional concept. Tell me how you would actually tie into that.

And you mentioned something that was -- that I think was really outstanding. Once they graduate, to be able to keep these students at home, tell me about your ideology in terms of how you can actually make that work.

Because trying to keep teachers in rural communities and business people, that's a chore within itself. And so since you're in business community and you do a lot of hiring, tell me what you see that we probably need to change so those students will stay. And the -- if you, you know --

MR. SHUBERT: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: And if you're on that board, some things you'll be working to try to make sure that actually happens.

MR. SHUBERT: Right. Several folks have mentioned the fact that the school is getting close to capacity with facilities; haven't built a lot of facilities recently. You look at dormitories, and they're getting close to, you know, capacity.

So maybe we start looking at private-public partnerships within, you know, the city of Greenwood to try to help alleviate the housing concern if there's going to be continued growth with what Lander offers. So I think public-private is a good way to start.

SENATOR SCOTT: My last question. What about your local Chamber of Commerce, your business groups that are there? Do you have those relationships to help those kids get those jobs since that's one of things you mentioned that you want to accomplish with those young people and what you do on a daily basis --

MR. SHUBERT: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- recruiting and hiring people? Do you have those kind of relationships in the community?

MR. SHUBERT: Right. So part of what I've done personally -- it's just something I do personally -- is, I mentor a lot of college-age, junior and senior folks on what skills they need to have when they graduate.

And so what I do is, I try to put people together to get that done. A lot of times, within -- as any industry works -- 30 years of contacts, you start putting people together. And so I kind of work as a mentor, an instructor, a teacher, a confidant to help these kids, you know, get where they want to get.

Sometimes, it's in the nursing arena. Sometimes, it's in the sales arena like I do. I've had a couple, you know, a couple of them within real estate. And so it's really just networking. It's teaching these kids how to do it.

And it's amazing to sit with a senior in college and have a conversation with them and see how well they communicate. And quite frankly, you can get, from different colleges, the level of communication skills that they have based on the school they came from.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Shubert, you mentioned, in response to questions that have been submitted to you, the ways to improve Lander is through visibility, and then you mention that Lander biggest weakness is, needs better visibility. Then, when you talk about ways to attract students, that the Honors College is the best-kept secret, the unique characteristics.

How would you go about capturing these strong points that Lander has and then communicating them to the families and students that you're trying to reach?

MR. SHUBERT: Yeah, that's a -- that's truly a multi-layered question because -- a personal example is, I have a daughter that wanted a Christian education that went to Anderson University. I have a son currently who's a first sergeant at The Citadel. And then finally, I have a senior in high school that visited probably about 10 colleges to the

point I finally had to say, I'm tired of driving around the Southeast. And so -- and she's chose the University of South Carolina because she wanted a big, you know, football school experience, although lately, we haven't been playing good football.

But nonetheless, I mean, when you look at the three of them, it's very, very, you know, diverse.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You did not take her to Clemson.

MR. SHUBERT: Huh?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You didn't take her to Clemson?

MR. SHUBERT: She's going to South Carolina, the University of South Carolina.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I thought you said you wanted a good football school.

MR. SHUBERT: Following up with, we haven't been doing that well lately.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Sorry about that; not really.

MR. SHUBERT: I live in the Upstate, so I know what it's like, trust me.

But anyway, kind of looking at it, I -- you know, in listening to folks, the thing that I noticed good schools did, they branded their school well. They branded their academic program that they could hang their hat on extremely well. And when we went -- we went and sat with different schools, they were able to articulate that.

And then conversely, too, they came to our school, recruiting, and they established that brand and spoke to that brand very clearly.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well -- and I think that, you know, when I think of Greenwood, I mean, Greenwood is a terrific town.

MR. SHUBERT: Super town.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: It has a lot going for it. The biggest problem that it has is, it's geographically impaired. That's the way I always refer to it because it's just hard to get there.

MR. SHUBERT: Sure.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: No matter where you come from. And I think that is probably the challenge in attracting students and getting that word out because Lander really is a terrific school, and I think you have a lot to be proud of there, and the quality of your -- the people that I've seen on the board is exceptional. And once again, thank you very much --

MR. SHUBERT: Oh, you're welcome.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- for offering.

MR. SHUBERT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable and seconded. Any other discussion? If not, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Twice.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Unanimous, including the proxies.

Thank you sir. Appreciate your willingness to serve.

MR. SHUBERT: Thank you for your time.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, 5th Congressional District, Seat 5, Anne Walker, Sumter.

Good afternoon, ma'am.

MS. WALKER: Good afternoon.

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

MS. WALKER: Sabrina Anne Walker.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. WALKER: I do. I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. WALKER: Yes, sir. First of all, I am a proud of the fact that my -- you know, in the South, we say "daddy." We don't say "dad." But my daddy was a Citadel graduate, and I've always been proud of that. And my mother was a Lander graduate. I was very proud of that.

So I come from a long line -- we used to be called, believe it or not, Lander Lilies when it was all girls, but now we're the Lander Bearcats, and that's a wonderful thing too.

So I'm very proud of that, and I have three brothers. None of them applied to The Citadel. I applied to one school when I was in high school my senior year, and that was Lander because my mother went to Lander, and, of course, that's where I wanted to go.

And love Lander. I love what it's about. I have been a board member for a number of years. In fact, my -- I tell people my 40th birthday was yesterday. I'm telling a little lie there, but that's kind of where my energy level is right now, so that's a good thing.

And so I welcome the opportunity to continue serving, and I also want to thank all of you for your service because you spend a lot of time for our state, and I appreciate that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Vice Chairman Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just curious. Austin Wilkes Society; tell me what they do.

MS. WALKER: We work with adult and youth offenders, former offenders, homeless veterans, and children at risk.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Excellent.

MS. WALKER: We were started in 1962 by Rev. Eli Alston Wilkes. And a former member of the House, Parker Evatt, was the first executive director, from '66 till '87. '87, Carroll Campbell named him the Commissioner of Corrections. That's when I had the opportunity to come back to the agency as executive director.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Is there an end goal for these young people that you try to --

MS. WALKER: An end goal? Absolutely. The end goal for everybody we deal with, adults and children, is that they become tax-paying citizens that are responsible tax-paying citizens.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Excellent. Well, thank you for doing that.

MS. WALKER: Yes, sir. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable and seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous, including the proxies.

Thank you so very much.

MS. WALKER: Thank you. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, 6th Congressional District, Seat 6, Robert Sabalis, Orangeburg. Good afternoon, sir.

MR. SABALIS: Good afternoon.

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

MR. SABALIS: My name is Robert Francis Sabalis.

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

MR. SABALIS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. SABALIS: Please. This is my third time appearing before the commission. I thank you for the rigorous process that you go through. I also thank, as I told Ms. Price earlier today, that the Novocain from my dental appointment has finally worn off so I don't embarrass myself.

I've served on the board for five years. My first term was one year. I took over the position that was held by a veterinarian in Orangeburg who unexpectedly died of cancer. I then have served a full four-year term, so this is my third attempt.

When I joined the board, I wasn't that knowledgeable about Lander. Friends of mine who had served on the board asked me to consider service. I met with the president, and I met with Adam Taylor. I visited the campus and was extremely impressed. It's in line -- its educational program is in line with my education and what I think is important for today's students.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Question?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much for being here and for your service. You mentioned ways to improve Lander: increase retention after freshman year and improve graduation rates. Tell me what your retention rate is after the freshman year and then what your graduation rates are.

MR. SABALIS: It's between 66 and 68 percent, which is slightly lower than the national retention rate, which is in the high 60s, and slightly about the in-state retention rate, which I believe is about 64 percent.

The graduation rate in four years is about 43 percent, which is right about the national average.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You say that's for four years?

MR. SABALIS: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Of course --

MR. SABALIS: It goes up a little bit for six years.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yeah, and, you know, if you stay around here very long, you realize that they talk about a six-year cycle, so you say it's up a little bit for the six years?

MR. SABALIS: It is. It is. But that number does not include the students who have transferred from Lander to other schools, which, over the course of four years, can be between two and three hundred students.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: All right. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What's the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable, seconded. Discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous. Thank you, sir.

MR. SABALIS: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Appreciate your service.
Next, 7th Congressional District, Seat 7, Catherine Lee from Florence.
MS. LEE: Hello.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon.
MS. LEE: Good afternoon.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record, if you would, give us your full name.
MS. LEE: My name is Catherine Kunkle Lee.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?
MS. LEE: I do.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?
MS. LEE: A little bit, if that's all right. So I am a single mom of two wonderful children. And one is a junior in high school, and one is a junior in college at Wofford. And I am a first-generation student myself. I went -- grew up in a family that did not have college and, in some cases, high school degrees in their backgrounds. So college is a blessing that I think that I have a responsibility to help in that regard.
A little bit about just how I step to this role. My undergraduate is from Francis Marion University because I do live in Florence, and I was very active in the Alumni Association and president of the Alumni Association. And shortly after that time, Frank Carter called me in 2008 and said that our person from the 7th Congressional District who was -- I don't know if you know Tom Kinard, who recently passed away.
Tom was taken sick, and so I stepped in his role with Lander University in 2008. And I would describe Lander University from 2008 until 2015 as operating well, but operating in a very, probably reactive way. And what I mean by that is, whatever was happening out there in the world, we would imitate and do, and we were a very cautious and well-operating organization, generally speaking.
But in 2015, I think we really changed. In 2015, we became proactive, and we became strategic. And I'm excited to be part of it. We started by choosing to hold tuition and hold ourselves accountable to the costs associated with that tuition hold. That was -- that was bold.
Then, we moved to program evaluation, cutting things that shouldn't happen, that we were overinvesting in, so that we can invest in other things.
Then, we moved to a mindset of inclusivity so that we can have our staff senate come about and include students more often in things.

Recently, we're in what I call the policy era. We're all about making sure that we're governing appropriately, and that, I'm really excited about, too, because I'm a bit of a nerd.

And then finally, I'm excited that we're moving to online. And let me tell you my quick story. I decided to pursue my doctorate. I actually started toward ministry and ended up doing a doctorate with Liberty University so that it is a Christian world view but on leadership and strategy.

I used to have a very negative view of the online experience. And out of sheer necessity, I am now a participant in it and probably the biggest proponent of it. I'm very excited that Lander is moving toward that.

So there's my quick rundown.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good.

Questions, comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Ms. Lee. One thing that you mentioned, you talk about governing appropriately.

MS. LEE: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: How about expanding on that a little bit.

MS. LEE: Sure.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Because I think that's something that's very important now, in so far as our boards of trustees --

MS. LEE: Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- et cetera around the state are considering exactly what their role is and what it should be. So how about elaborating on that for me.

MS. LEE: Yes. That's something I'm really passionate about. In my current -- I work with McLeod Health in Florence, and I started out as the chief of staff to our president, and I'm now doing our strategy, and I do our board relations as well.

It is so important that a governing body understand that they are not the operating body, number one. Number two, it is extremely important that a governing body not be, as you described earlier, a rubber stamp. And moving to the level of governance means taking respons -- excuse me -- not responsibility; accountability. They are two different things.

Accountability means being aware of what's going on, asking questions, asking hard questions, but also assuring that those policies are in place so that we have the ability to not be reliant on the whims of individuals. And I think every organization should revisit those things on a regular basis.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: In your role at Lander, how do you -- how do you make sure that that is effectuated?

MS. LEE: Absolutely. Well, first of all, we're responsible to be able to be aware of everything that we're reading. We should read what we receive. We should ask a lot of questions. I had the unique time to be responsible for our fundraising and our development component during a time when we needed to ask a lot of questions about how we were approaching our development.

And so those are ways that I brought to the table, not just a curiosity, but a sense of accountability.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And tell me, how long have you served on the Lander board?

MS. LEE: Since 2008. In fact, Linda Dolny and I came on together, and we sat together in the same room and received our orientation. That's when I met her.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Ms. Lee, for your willingness to serve. What has been your greatest accomplishment in your 12 years? I know that you've got a broad array of experiences, from healthcare to management. What's been your greatest -- your greatest accomplishment at Lander since you've been there?

MS. LEE: Oh, okay. At Lander, or --

SENATOR SCOTT: At Lander. I'm -- not the world, but it's just Lander.

MS. LEE: Oh, so with Lander, yes.

SENATOR SCOTT: With Lander.

MS. LEE: Well, I was going -- heading down the route with my kids now.

SENATOR SCOTT: No, please don't. Don't do that. Don't do that. Just at Lander. You've had a chance to look at how this thing works.

MS. LEE: Absolutely. Well, I referenced it, actually. I think my greatest accomplishment at Lander was stepping in with a certain level of -- not being afraid to question things when we started to have a lot of questions about how our -- one of our current leaders was functioning with, with, with our foundation.

And I didn't know much about foundations, except that we have one at McLeod.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. LEE: And so I learned from that what I could, and that helped me become a better leader of that committee. That's what I -- I think that's my best --

SENATOR SCOTT: So giving the college some real financial stability.

MS. LEE: Absolutely. Now, I am not a financial wizard. Anyone would know that if they paid close attention to me. But the idea of asking the right questions without getting into the weeds, I think, governing -- taking my responsibility in that role appropriately is something that I felt like not only I brought to the table, but it takes a certain amount of not being afraid to do the right thing.

SENATOR SCOTT: You mentioned your fundraising ability. Tell me, how did that go?

MS. LEE: Oh, I'm a terrible fundraiser too. I'm really bad at asking for money. I'll give you anything, but I can't ask for it. In my role, what I mean by that is, as we were looking at -- I going to just say it quite clearly. We did not have the best expertise running our foundation, and we finally were able to learn that by asking questions and had to move to greater expertise. That, I take great pride in being involved in.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else? Desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable. Any discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor raise your right hand. Unanimous. Thank you so very much.

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Now the 1st Congressional District, nonmedical seat, Michael Stavrinakis from Charleston.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: This could take a while.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yeah.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good morning, sir. For your full name, what's your -- for the record, give us your full name.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Michael Emanuel Stavrinakis.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good. Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. STAVRINAKIS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement, sir?

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Yes, sir. I'd like to, like other fellow board members, thank you for the honor to serve. It is a great institution in South Carolina, and it's a challenge that I don't take lightly. And thank you for allowing me to be your trustee on the board of the Medical University.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions, comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, again, for your willingness to serve.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Tell me a little bit about the expansion. I know -- I think five, six -- four or five years ago, y'all bought some hospitals in some underserved areas, which I think was just great.

Is the hospital looking to continue that expansion? And I know I use -- always use 95 as a connector for Charleston, up 95 for the coverage area, but I think y'all have leaped way over that in Marion with some of the hospitals.

What's the thought process on the board, without giving up any of your top secrets that y'all are going to be sharing soon? Where are you headed, especially with those counties -- I think it might be five or six counties now that's underserved, and we're looking at how we make sure all those counties are actually covered.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: That is the exact purpose, Senator, is to help the underserved communities --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: -- either through a brick-and-mortar facility or through telemedicine.

And I think another key initiative is our Healthy Youth South Carolina, where we're going into rural South Carolina, but not -- with telemedicine, but also nutritional education, helping people learn how to keep themselves healthier to prevent having to have hospital stays and severe diseases.

SENATOR SCOTT: I will tell you that, from the Senate side, we are committed to broadband, really committed, because we know what that will actually do to help --

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- in the hospital setting. We have got a bill already in the Senate, and most of these senators are on that bill. And so we're hoping we'll get something done that will help you with your telemedicine.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: We appreciate it, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: So thank you so much.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Telemedicine is the key.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good morning, Mr. Stavrinakis.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Good morning, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Two issues. The Medical School is around \$60,000 a year. Is that consist -- a fairly consistent number around the country, or is that -- can you give me some information on that as to how we stack up against if not the country, in the Southeast?

MR. STAVRINAKIS: I think we stack up well. We do our best to keep tuition down. We do our best to keep in-state.

I think our student body in the College of Medicine is, I believe, over 70 percent in-state, which is one of the reasons why the number -- or average is a little bit lower, because we -- you know, we have fewer out-of-state, which that tuition's obviously higher.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: What would be an out-of-state tuition at the Medical University?

MR. STAVRINAKIS: At MUSC?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Sure.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: College of Medicine, I believe is probably around -- I want to say 80,000, 85-, something like that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Just one other question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Senator Scott has another question.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you so much again. I noticed on the application you did mention diversity. Do you want to tell us about your diversity strategy at the college, and I'm sorry you are the only one of the trustees -- I did not get a chance to ask that question.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: That's fine, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: But you've been there long enough, and so I'm pretty sure --

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- you know exactly what y'all are doing with that.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: And Dr. Cole has initiated a very aggressive diversity inclusion program. I was honored to serve on the original diversity inclusion committee for MUSC as a representative -- as a board member, along with Ms. Johnson-Williams.

We have made leaps and bounds and strides not only in graduating minorities -- we're one of the top in the country for a nontraditional black

college -- but also in employment and diversity inclusion education. As a -- system-wide we have 14- or 15,000 employees.

It's a -- it's a big job, and I just can't say enough about the job that Dr. Cole and Anton Gunn has done, and Ms. Williams, in just implementing a carpeted program that just hits on all aspects, and the results just keep getting better and better every month, every board meeting.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. I won't ask you to go into any details. I'll get a chance to talk to Dr. Cole when he comes up for the budget process. I'm pretty sure he'll be happy to tell us --

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Absolutely.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- about the strides that y'all are making.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: It's a project that means a lot to him.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you so much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else?

SENATOR SCOTT: Move favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable. Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, sir.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you so much for your willingness to serve.

MR. STAVRINAKIS: Yes, sir. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We have members coming in, but if there's no objection, we'll go ahead and get started. I'd like to call the meeting to order. This is the meeting of the College and University Trustee Screening Commission. I'd like to welcome everyone and pray that God continues to bless us all.

We have the agenda before us. Medical University of South Carolina, 2nd Congressional District, nonmedical seat, Mr. William Bingham.

If you would, come forward, sir. And have a seat, yes, sir, and get comfortable. Is the light burning green?

MR. BINGHAM: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good. Good morning, sir.

MR. BINGHAM: Good morning, and thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You've been doing this longer than me, I think, but for the record, if you would, give us your full name.

MR. BINGHAM: My name is William H. Bingham, Sr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes, you are. Let me swear you in, please, sir. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. BINGHAM: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. BINGHAM: I'd like to thank the commission, the members here, for the services they've given to the state of South Carolina. You do an excellent job, in my opinion, so I want to thank you for that. Thank you for letting me serve for the last 18 years. I've tried to do my best.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. You've done a great job.

Members, do you have any questions or comments for Mr. Bingham?

What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Let me just ask him one question.

MR. BINGHAM: Okay.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

And thank you for your willingness to continue to serve. What is the -- can you expand on what you think is the biggest -- you say weakness, but how about challenge that the Medical University is facing today?

MR. BINGHAM: The university, in my opinion, sir, is facing a great challenge in trying to continue to educate based on all the different hoops that they've got to fall through.

There's a lot of things that go on to educate a medical student in the various fields, and rotation is a problem, with all the private colleges and so forth just opening up and taking on some of this stuff. If we get clinical rotations, we could increase our sizes, I think. That's just my personal thinking, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much.

Good morning, Mr. Bingham.

MR. BINGHAM: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And once again, thank you for your service.

But to follow up a little bit on Senator Alexander's question regarding -- regarding MUSC's biggest weakness, challenges, the shortage of clinical rotation sites, would that be improved by the addition of new

campuses that -- I see that the Medical University is planning expanding into the Upstate areas and also in the Pee Dee.

MR. BINGHAM: That's one -- one way of doing it, sir, but you have to get accredited to the different hospitals in order to become a teaching hospital --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yes, sir.

MR. BINGHAM: -- to get the rotations. So that's what we're working on with my fellow board of trustee members. We're trying our best to do that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Move favorable report.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable report. Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, Sir.

MR. BINGHAM: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We sure appreciate your willingness to continue to serve.

MR. BINGHAM: Thank you, sir. I appreciate it.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Sylleste says there's an accident on I-26, so...

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I call the meeting back to order. You have your agenda before us. First is Medical University of South Carolina, 3rd Congressional District, nonmedical seat, under Tab A, Charles Schulze from Greenwood.

Mr. Schulze, if you would, come forward. Make yourself comfortable in that chair.

MR. SCHULZE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And make sure your light's burning green.

MR. SCHULZE: Thank you.

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

MR. SCHULZE: Charles Warren Schulze.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. SCHULZE: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. SCHULZE: I would, a brief one. Thank you, Senator.

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today, and thank you for allowing me to share my talents with a great medical university, a huge research engine, and a world-class healthcare enterprise by serving on this board of trustees.

We are now the largest state agency in the state of South Carolina with over 17,000 employees, 3,000 students. The MUSC enterprise operates under a \$3.3-billion budget each year. Our hospital system has over 1,700 beds now, equally spread between Charleston and rural South Carolina. Our physicians number over 800 of the best and brightest in the nation.

We have been ranked as the number one in -- hospital in South Carolina for a number of years and are currently ranked in the top 100 hospitals in the U.S. by two rating bodies. There are currently 1,146 hospitals in the United States, so that puts us in the top two percent of all hospitals in the United States. We see patients from every county, every state in the United States, and from many countries around the world.

We have 14 elected -- excuse me, 16 trustees, 14 elected by you, focused on education, research, and clinical care missions. We do not spend one minute ever talking about hiring a football coach or talking about the next trustee who travels with a football team. Other than receiving the required flu shot every year, we get nothing for free, and contrary to comments, I can't get any of your family, friends, or whoever in med school. It just won't happen.

Every member of our board of trustees spends at least 200 hours a year in their efforts. And I, as chairman, spend roughly 500 hours per year in my role. Each member of our board of trustees, in addition to their normal trustee duties, are assigned tasks each year by me to help assist me in my role and also to make sure they get immersed in a very complicated and complex enterprise.

The educational component, which is one of the smaller parts of our enterprise, requires the least amount of our board time because we have such great leadership. Not only is it one of the top freestanding medical -- academic medical centers in the United States, it is now one of the largest NHI research engines in the U.S.

One of our major focuses within the educational component of MUSC over the last ten years has been increasing the diversity of our students. I'm proud to say today that MUSC is currently ranked fifth in the United States, excluding Historically Black Colleges and Universities, in the acceptance of African-American males. We are ranked 90 -- in the 97th

pro -- percentile, excuse me, in the U.S. on the number of African-American students we graduate. So there's only 3 percent higher than what we do.

The clinical care component is the most time-consuming part of our efforts. We compete with both nonprofits and for-profit hospitals throughout our state and region for very scarce dollars and shrinking profit margins. Every week, a hospital or two closes here in the United States. The amount of pressure on our scarce resources is huge.

As we see hospitals closing, especially here in South Carolina, we at MUSC see the pressure to do something rise as communities, especially those in rural areas, and members of your bodies turn to us to help minimize these closings. We've been able to mitigate some of these negatives, with your assistance, through our telehealth science, which you helped fund. I can tell you without your support in these efforts, we would not be able to do any of this.

By the way, there are only two telemedicine Centers of Excellence in the United States. MUSC is one of them, and the other one, unfortunately, outranks us in the state of Mississippi. I can tell you that, in my opinion, without MUSC few nonprofit hospitals and not-for-profit hospitals are going to step in and do what we do, mainly because it's part of our mission.

I think that does it, Senator Peeler, and I'm ready for questions.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

Questions or comments from members of the committee?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have a couple of questions for you. You spoke about African Americans and the population that you have with diversity. While I disagree with you that the numbers are high, when I look at the numbers that you have here with -- in the dental school, you have 173 males, 154 females, 19 African Americans. Unacceptable.

MR. SCHULZE: Can I answer that, sir?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: When I finish.

MR. SCHULZE: Okay. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: The medical school, 410 males, 355 females, 90 African Americans. Unacceptable.

And I say that because I know that we can do better in South Carolina. We have 10 percent total African Americans in your system. The population of African Americans in South Carolina ranges from 26 to 30 percent. That should be reflected in all of the schools in South Carolina.

Do you agree?

MR. SCHULZE: Yes, sir, but let me add something.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: No, I'm not finished.

MR. SCHULZE: Okay. I'm sorry.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Do you have Bridge programs?

MR. SCHULZE: Yes, we do.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And are your Bridge programs with HBCUs in South Carolina?

MR. SCHULZE: They're open to every institution.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: No, no, no. That's not my question.

Are your -- are you -- do you all -- you're the chair; am I correct?

MR. SCHULZE: I am.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Okay. So do you have a Bridge program -- and this is a Bridge program with the HBCUs as we look at trying to increase the number of African Americans in the medical school, dental school, and the professional school that you all offer up under MUSC.

HBCUs, do you have a Bridge program with the HBCUs?

MR. SCHULZE: We do for all colleges and universities in the state of South Carolina.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I understand that.

My question to you, do you have a Bridge --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King, you're asking him a question again. Let him answer it now.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I wasn't -- Mr. Chair, with all due respect, I wasn't asking about all the institutions. I was asking about the HBCUs.

Are you aware of which schools are HBCUs in South Carolina?

MR. SCHULZE: Claflin, Allen, Benedict...

REPRESENTATIVE KING: South Carolina State.

MR. SCHULZE: South Carolina State. Yes, sir, we do.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

My next question, and then I -- this is my last one. We have interviewed or screened several members of your board that have come before us. One of the issues that I have is the lack of support for sickle cell patients in the state of South Carolina. Recently we lost one of our dear staff members, which we buried on yesterday, from sickle cell. I would ask that you vow with your committee to do more to educate people in the state of South Carolina about sickle cell.

Thank you.

MR. SCHULZE: You do have my support, Representative King, and we do have a great -- particularly in the children's care for sickle cell. It's one of the best programs that we have.

But I want to go back to your question. I understand your concern in the number -- percentages of any race to the total populations. But

unfortunately, while we can do a better job, that's not the way it works in the United States right now.

And if you looked at -- and you may not have had time -- the latest Association of American Colleges and Universities, which is the AAMC, the South region of the United States currently ranks the highest in the acceptance of African-American students. It's 9.9 percent. We're a little -- I think we're at 11.7.

The Northeast, 9.3 percent are African Americans. The Midwest is 5.7. The West Coast, those medical schools, both private and public, have about 4.2 percent African-American students.

Is that acceptable? I don't think so. But I just want to make sure that you understand it's a very complex situation. We -- diversity is atop of our focus not only in who we hire, the money we spend, but also with our students.

But I really think it's very difficult because you don't know what the applicant pools are. You don't know what education level people have. It's very difficult to go, well, South Carolina has 30 percent black, 60 percent white, and it should be the same ratio for everything. Maybe theoretically it should, but I think this shows -- it just isn't, but whatever it is, we're near the highest in the United States, and I think those other two rankings support that.

You can't get much higher in the -- than the 80 -- excuse me, the 97th percentile. There's only three percentiles higher. Can we do better? Absolutely. I promise we will. But I want you to know it is a major focus of us. Every meeting, every time we do something, it's a major concern of ours, and we do our best. And I will promise you that.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

MR. SCHULZE: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, let me thank you for your service.

MR. SCHULZE: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: I just want to share some -- I want you to share some of your ideas about rural medicine as we look at -- as I indicated to your president when he first came on, I think in the end there will be five or six hospitals, and that's about it. All the others are probably coming in under mergers.

And looking at underserved communities without having hospital services -- I think we're down maybe about four, and one of the four I think we share between two counties, and I know that y'all have gone into Marion County and some other underserved counties --

MR. SCHULZE: We have.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and trying to create other relationships with other hospitals, so you may end up being in their region.

But in looking at rural healthcare and rural issues, where is -- which direction are you carrying your board in to deal with those rural issues? I know from Charleston up to 95, I think we may have a couple of hospitals, and that's it, so you've got a large area to cover.

So tell me a little bit about your rural plans that you and the board are looking at carrying the hospital and to make sure we cover some of those that are underserved.

MR. SCHULZE: Thank you, Senator Scott. A great question.

There's two areas that we can be of help. One is where -- those areas where opportunities present themselves either for a purchase, like we did in Marion, Lancaster, Chester, or partnerships or what we're doing in Williamsburg County. They're going to get a new hospital for both of the -- Lake City and Williamsburg, and we're helping them with that.

Those opportunities are not many out there. The biggest one we have to help rural areas, y'all are part of it, and y'all are funding it, and that's in telehealth/telemedicine because it not only gets in doctors' offices, hospitals, but it gets in schools, to some degree in prisons. It gets where we can't get.

And I don't know what the actual statistic is, but nine times out of ten, you know, if you don't have a doc in the box and you can get to a telemedicine, most of the time you can get help doing that without having to go sit in an emergency room or having to go to a doctor's office.

So I don't -- I want y'all to understand, we see it. We know it. What y'all are doing in the area of telehealth is addressing a lot of those needs. It doesn't address everything, but it's -- the impact is tremendous.

SENATOR SCOTT: The broadband, building it -- I'm pretty sure MUSC is keeping up with that and working in conjunction with co-ops and cooperatives. It is a bipartisan bill, probably one of the largest bipartisan bills I've seen in the Senate since I've been here.

What would that actually do in promoting telemedicine if we're able to get this done this year so that you -- more planning for telemedicine -

MR. SCHULZE: You're talking about --

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and school broadband? Yeah, just --

MR. SCHULZE: You're talking about getting up to the 5G?

SENATOR SCOTT: Right. What would that actually do? Because we've been looking for a vehicle, and I think the federal government now has some funding out.

But the state having some legislation to actually work with co-ops and others to make this thing work, what would that actually do in --

especially with the rural hospitals that you're talking about, and most of them probably, if they've got anything, it's not very much to work with. MR. SCHULZE: Well, first of all, it's going to give you better imaging. Imaging is critical in the medical area. The higher level of imaging that we have, whether it's X-rays or whatever, is huge. Secondly, 5G is going to be so fast that the possibilities of going down and having problems communicating are reduced.

But one of the things we've just seen, stroke care, you have a magic window with strokes. Usually, like major trauma, one hour. In that one hour, if they can get you to a hospital and if they can do the imaging they need to do, they can decide whether you get the shot or you don't get the shot. If you need the shot and they can give it to you, that's great. If you don't need the shot and they give it to you, you're dead.

So it does several things. One, it gives them much better imaging. And you say, Well, if they're in the ambulance, what's that got to do with it? We're now looking at ambulances having small MRI/CAT scan --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. SCHULZE: -- machines. We're looking at that with Siemens and others. Which then will allow them to be on Wi-Fi at 5G. Those images that go back to the emergency room or the nearest trauma center are going to be just as good as what you can get in the hospital, and they can make that decision, whether you're going to get that shot or you shouldn't get that shot.

So those are just several of them, areas, but it's critical. The 5G is -- and it's coming whether we want it or not. It's critical.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Mr. Schulze, the Senator from Laurens, the chairman of the Medical Affairs Committee is here. On the subject -- I think you're having a meeting Thursday about coronavirus with DHEC.

What's the Medical University's relationship with DHEC on situations like the coronavirus? Do y'all work hand in hand? How -- explain to me how that works?

MR. SCHULZE: I don't know the exact answer. I know -- because this is so new in South Carolina at this time, and I heard part of the Governor -- his talk just a little while ago. There are a lot more unknowns than there are knowns.

We're already getting questions. Our infectious disease people are already working on it. I don't know where DHEC stands right now with working with us. But we've always worked with DHEC.

And, really, all the hospitals -- it's not just going to be MUSC and DHEC. It's going to be all the huge hospital systems: Prisma, which are in Laurens County, Self, AnMed, and all. We'll all be working together.

This thing, as I know it -- and I'm not a doctor. I think the mortality rate for flu is about two percent or so. This thing can be as much as four times as high. You have a four times higher chance of dying from this virus than you do from the flu.

So the sooner we can all get together and get testing kits -- which I don't think we have very many in South Carolina. I don't know today if there's been a reported case. I don't think there has been. But it's coming, it's going to be here, and we're willing to work with everybody. And, in fact, we're not going to beat this thing if we don't all work together.

SENATOR VERDIN: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: The first thing is the diagnosis ability, if you look at other states that are starting to see the cases emerge.

But we're looking forward to, certainly, the DHEC presentation. And if we discern or learn of some benefit that the legislature would need more immediately from y'all --

MR. SCHULZE: We're willing.

SENATOR VERDIN: We will facilitate that as well, communication and education on the process.

MR. SCHULZE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments? What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable report.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you, sir. We sure appreciate your willingness to serve.

MR. SCHULZE: Thank y'all.

And Representative King, I'm going to be working on that. I promise you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I expect you to.

MR. SCHULZE: I know you do.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Especially sickle cell.

MR. SCHULZE: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: All right. Let's go ahead and get started. Senator Verdin had to go ahead and leave.

Next, we'll go to Medical University of South Carolina. 4th Congressional District, medical seat, Frederick Butehorn from Spartanburg.

Good afternoon, Doctor.

DR. BUTEHORN: Good afternoon. Thank you.

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

DR. BUTEHORN: Is this on?

My full name is Henry Frederick Butehorn III.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. BUTEHORN: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

DR. BUTEHORN: Thank you, Senator Peeler and board members, for having me here. I'm honored to be the newest elected board member on the MUSC board. I was only elected in May. Y'all probably remember me.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Yeah.

DR. BUTEHORN: So I do appreciate your trust in me the last several months. And being the medical representative for District 4 has been quite an honor, and I hope to continue to do so.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments for Dr. Butehorn?

Mr. Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Butehorn, welcome back, and just in the short time that you have been on the board at the Medical University, tell me a little bit about the training that you have had in becoming a board member. Do they have an organized process, and if so, what is it?

DR. BUTEHORN: Thank you. Yes, they do. And it's more formal when you rotate in on the standard schedule. However, I met with the leadership in all the various colleges, as well as leaders in the hospital.

I stayed down there for an entire day earlier than the board meetings and met with them throughout the day to learn about the projects in their individual colleges and at the hospital to try to familiarize myself with the massive institution that is MUSC. I'm still learning every day, and I continue to learn about the complex nature of MUSC and the hospitals.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Do you know if there's any further training through any national organization? Has that been discussed with you?

DR. BUTEHORN: I'm not aware of that. I'm sure I can ask the folks, and perhaps there is some more training that will be done.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And insofar as your board meetings, we've had a rather lengthy discussion today over the role of the board of trustees in the operation of an institution. How do you view that, and how have you found that thus far at the Medical University?

DR. BUTEHORN: Well, the buck stops with the board of trustees, so we're in charge or approve pretty much every function at the university, so...

The hospital leadership brings and the academic leadership brings their proposals to the Medical -- the board. And then us, as trustees, review those and approve them, and we've been doing that to help the state of South Carolina. Our goals are to improve the health of all South Carolinians, not just those in the Charleston area, so we've been doing that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And these board decisions, is that something that -- is there a -- do the committees or the chairman of the board -- is -- do they drive the discussion and set the agenda? And do you have to reach a consensus or unanimity in order to get something done? Tell me about that.

DR. BUTEHORN: Well, absolutely, the chairman sets the agenda, and then the different committee chair people do lead the discussion on different events.

And since I am the newest member -- I've come in really late, so I'm not on any of those major committees yet. However, I've been recently placed on the MUSC 2025 committee, which is going to be the committee to help determine long-range, five-year plans for the Medical University, so I'm pleased to have been selected for that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And on decisions that are made, is there disagreement from board members that actually cast votes against policy proposals that are brought before them?

DR. BUTEHORN: Absolutely. There is vigorous discussion on multiple issues. However, in many cases, the board does understand the issues very well, and the vast majority of the decisions are not overly controversial. So most decisions are done by the -- with the full board's support.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So my final question is, from your brief tenure on the board, do you view it as one that is a rubber stamp of the

chairman -- committee chairmen's proposals, the administration's proposals, or is there room for disagreement?

And then the second part of that question, just because the chairman of the board feels one way, is he the sole spokesman, or are you allowed to have a voice?

DR. BUTEHORN: Well, the board policy is that the chairman is the spokesman for the board, so if you're talking about with the media and things such as that, the chairman speaks for the board.

We absolutely do have disagreement in the -- I'm sorry. What was the first part of that question?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Is the board merely a rubber stamp?

DR. BUTEHORN: Oh, no. No, definitely not.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay. Let me follow up on that, that the chairman is the spokesman, is the only spokesman. Is that board -- is that a board policy?

DR. BUTEHORN: The board policy is that the chairman speaks for the board, and we usually defer to the chairman to speak for the board.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Interesting.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just have one question for you. What -- maybe two. Can you tell me what is the -- since you've been there, what have you done to increase the number of or advocate for increasing the number of minorities being accepted into the Medical University of South Carolina?

DR. BUTEHORN: I'm a very strong proponent of that, and that's actually one of the reasons I'm on the committee for MUSC 2025, and diversity inclusion is one of our major pushes.

Currently, MUSC has approximately 3,000 students, and of those, 26 percent are underrepresented minorities, which pretty much mirrors the state, which is about 27 percent. So I think we need to continue to work towards getting more individuals in all of our colleges, as well as employed at MUSC. Leadership is also important, so we're working on having diversity in all positions, not just students, but also in leadership.

MUSC has been recognized by national organizations as being an excellent place for employment for diversity, as well as it's been recognized as being one of the top schools in the country for graduating specifically African-American males from the medical school, so we're one of the top five in the country for that.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So I guess -- I just recently found this out with Meharry Medical School, that there are some things called Bridge Programs where the -- they have them with the different universities, colleges, whatever.

But, also, they have a program within the school that allows for students to track into the medical school, meaning they may have already graduated from college, did not do well on the MCAT. But then what they do is, they have an opportunity to come and prove themselves.

Do you all have some type of program like that?

DR. BUTEHORN: Yes. So people can come to MUSC and get other degrees -- for example, master's degrees or do research, et cetera -- to improve their resume. And that's really on a case-by-case basis, depending on what their -- what the challenges are of why they didn't get approved or didn't get in.

So I can speak specifically for the medical school. The medical school admission committee member will meet with the applicant, go over their application. Our goal is to try to educate, especially South Carolinians, to be physicians for South Carolinians.

They'll look at their resume, see what they can improve, and see if MUSC is the right place for them to be to improve their resume, or would they be better served, for example, being at Clemson or Winthrop or another institution to improve their resume, or do they need more life experience or something like that? Those are all things that they will give them and let them know.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: My last question, in reference to the Bridge Program, have you all partnered with not only the state-supported schools, but HBCUs to have like a Bridge Program from like Benedict or some of the other institutions where it is majority minority people who attend?

DR. BUTEHORN: I would have to find the exact details. I know we have six colleges. I'll have to figure out which ones those are. We have accelerated undergraduate. You can go into medical school programs so you can graduate early from your institution and then come to MUSC and also have an expedited stay. So usually you stay four years in college and four years in medical school, but those programs reduce that to six, six years total.

So, yes, we are doing that, and we will continue to strive to decrease costs by decreasing time of education. And obviously we look forward to working with Historically Black Colleges as well as any other schools throughout the state and across the country to try to get those proper students to MUSC.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

Thank you, also, for your service. I know, a few months back, it was a little difficult, but now you're there, so we're expecting some great things from you.

Have y'all began to have some real conversation about MUSC expanding into some of the rural communities?

DR. BUTEHORN: Yes.

SENATOR SCOTT: I know you're in Marion County. Are there other counties y'all are already into --

DR. BUTEHORN: Yes.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- that y'all --

DR. BUTEHORN: Well, I can tell you, we've started a pilot project in Hampton, for example --

SENATOR SCOTT: Hampton.

DR. BUTEHORN: -- where we are using telemedicine to provide them state-of-the-art care and try to keep those patients there and also expedite their transfer, if needed, to the Medical University.

We have a new hospital that is being -- in the planning stages, still in the CON process, in Berkeley County. We have a new facility in Lancaster County, a new facility in Bluffton, and a new facility in Lake City. So those are all new hospitals that have been announced within the last year.

SENATOR SCOTT: Sounds great. Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon.

DR. BUTEHORN: Hello.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: After having served on the board, your observation of the thing that has been the biggest -- I don't know if the right word is surprise, but good and bad observation of what -- I guess that would be surprise on the good and the bad from that standpoint, having been on the board that was -- coming in from the outside.

DR. BUTEHORN: Well, the good and the bad are probably both the same in that -- the rapid expansion of what's going on. And I view that as very much a positive, but it's also a challenge in that we're dealing with new things that we've never dealt with before, outlying facilities and outside the peninsula of Charleston.

So this is brand-new for everybody at MUSC, and I believe they're rising to the challenge to be a true statewide institution, and I'm proud to be a part of that.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I think I noticed there that you mentioned your biggest weakness is the geographic location. And is that because of expansion outside or what?

DR. BUTEHORN: Well, in any institution that's on an ocean, you cut off your referral pattern. There's not many people out in the ocean that are going to come see you. So it's always a challenge.

Obviously, being on the coast, there's multiple other challenges. For example, this year, we had the hurricane, which cut into things and difficult to plan for. You've got the flooding down in Charleston, which is an issue in the medical district which we're trying to remedy.

But lots of challenges being down there, not only -- cost of living can be a little bit higher in that area. So those are challenges we deal with.

I do think the expansion, as I was saying, to different geographic areas of the state is helping to ameliorate those issues. I foresee that ongoing and becoming more of a -- more students and more healthcare education being done outside of the county of Charleston. I foresee that growing exponentially over the next five years.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So I hear what you're saying about it's hard to find people out in the ocean to serve, but I think, the last I saw, you have a lot of folks that are moving to the Charleston area. So you have a lot of individuals that, in some areas of the state, in rural areas, that are suffering from -- so I would hope that you would see that as a positive for customers as well.

DR. BUTEHORN: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Mr. Chairman, I have one question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have one quick question.

What is the status of the new children's hospital?

DR. BUTEHORN: It is approved and ready to go, so we've gotten final approval. Everything is ready, and the plan is to be moving in -- I guess we're in a public forum, but sometime in the next two weeks. So we should be in there --

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay.

DR. BUTEHORN: I know there's been some challenges --

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Yes.

DR. BUTEHORN: -- and as with any large building, much less a hospital, lots of regulations, you know, to get through.

So all the punch card things are done. Everything's done. Some last-minute issues have been taken care of. And the last I heard, which was in the last week, it was two weeks, sometime in the next two-week period, so we're very excited about that.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay. Good. Yes, we're excited about that too. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What's the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion favorable.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, Doctor.

DR. BUTEHORN: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Fifth Congressional District, medical seat, Dr. Murrell Smith.

Dr. Smith. Good morning, sir.

DR. SMITH: Good morning.

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

DR. SMITH: I'm sorry, I -- my hearing --

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

DR. SMITH: George Murrell Smith, Sr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good. Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. SMITH: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Would you like to make a brief statement?

DR. SMITH: Well, I'd just like to second what Mr. Bingham said. I appreciate the -- y'all letting me serve on the board, and I hope I can continue to serve and be an asset to the Medical University. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions, comments from members of the committee? No. What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is for favorable. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, sir. Thank you, Doctor.

DR. SMITH: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Sixth Congressional District, nonmedical seat, Barbara Johnson-Williams from Orangeburg.

Good morning, ma'am.

MS. JOHNSON-WILLIAMS: Good morning.

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

MS. JOHNSON-WILLIAMS: Barbara Johnson-Williams.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. JOHNSON-WILLIAMS: Yes. Yes, I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. JOHNSON-WILLIAMS: I, too, would like to say thank you all for allowing me to serve, and I hope to also be able to live up to the expectations of this district, the county, and the state.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions? What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR VERDIN: Favorable report, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you. Thank you, ma'am.

MS. JOHNSON-WILLIAMS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Y'all must be doing a good job down there.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Now 7th Congressional District, medical seat, Paul Davis from Darlington.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I'm going to start asking some questions.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good morning, sir.

DR. DAVIS: Good morning.

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

DR. DAVIS: Paul Thomas Davis II.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. DAVIS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

DR. DAVIS: Sure. Thank you.

As they said, I would like to just say thank you for the opportunity to serve. It's been an honor and a privilege, and I would like to continue to serve in this capacity.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good morning, Dr. Davis.

DR. DAVIS: Good morning.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: How are you?

DR. DAVIS: Good.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: First of all, thank you for your service.

And since you are a relatively new board member, I wanted to ask you, as I have a number of those other board members from the various institutions, what type of orientation and training do you have whenever you roll onto a board such as the Medical University? And I know your background; you're a dentist. There's a lot of different facets to the university. Could you tell me about that?

DR. DAVIS: Sure. So I came onto the board and took over a term for Dr. Conyers O'Bryan, and when I came onto the board, I was oriented internally with the president, the CEO, the CFOs, and, you know, got all of that orientation internally.

But probably the most I've learned as a board member is from these guys, from the mentors like Dr. Smith over there and others. And I still have a lot to learn, but that's been the biggest asset that I've had, is all the years of experience on the board.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you mentioned mentors, and I certainly understand that. Does the Medical University have any sort of an assigned mentor to a new board member, or is it just the board at large?

DR. DAVIS: Just the board at large. There's no specifically assigned mentor.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Also, you, in response to the questions that were presented to you -- ways to improve the school, number of beds in hospital, improve cost standpoint with the university.

When you talk about the number of beds in the hospital, I guess we would be talking about the hospital as a whole, which would be statewide, or are you talking about just specifically in Charleston?

DR. DAVIS: Well, I think both. So statewide, we've tried to address that. Now I think we have over 1,600 beds. And locally in Charleston, it's a little bit of an issue, so that's -- that's one of our primary goals, is to open up the hospital for more tertiary care, which is an endeavor that we have really been focused on.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good morning.

DR. DAVIS: Good morning.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: You've been on there a relatively brief period of time, on the board, and you talk about the growth and expansion of MUSC in healthcare.

So what does that future look like? Where is MUSC wanting to go from that standpoint?

DR. DAVIS: Well, MUSC, I think, with our mission for the state of South Carolina, we believe that the best care is provided locally and that -- you know, we're looking at ways to reduce healthcare costs, and we believe that we can do that by going out through telemedicine, through other areas.

And the recent purchasing of the regional hospitals has provided a lot of opportunity to reach out into underserved areas, and we believe that's part of our mission for the state.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Favorable.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Move favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable. Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand?

Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Chairman, I also will have Representative Davis's proxy. She just messaged me.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: So noted.

Representative King said he couldn't make it today, right?

MS. CASTO: Right, yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Doctor.

DR. DAVIS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I appreciate your willingness to serve.

DR. DAVIS: Thank you.

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, we'll move to South Carolina State University. First is the 2nd Congressional District, Seat 2. They have two people offering for that seat. First of all, Douglass Gantt from North Augusta.

MR. GANTT: How are you doing, sir?

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

MR. GANTT: My name is Douglas Donel Gantt.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. GANTT: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement? Make sure the light's burning green.

MR. GANTT: I'm sorry, sir? I --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Make sure the light's burning green so we can hear you.

MR. GANTT: Oh, yes, it is.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Would you like to make a brief statement on why you'd like to serve on the South Carolina State University board of trustees?

MR. GANTT: Yes, I would.

I'm -- I'm the very first person in my family to attend college and graduate from college. South Carolina State is very dear to me simply because during the -- during the time of when I was at South Carolina State, when funding was really cut for students who were there, it was those individuals who were able to put their arms around me and ensure that I received a degree.

And how important that degree has been for my family. It wasn't just an opportunity for me to operate in corporate America and work in government, but it actually changed the dynamics of my family. My family, after I graduated, now everybody who graduates from high school goes on to go to college.

And what I would like to do, serving on the board, is to ensure that the people who currently serve on the board, that I speak that kind of information to them, hoping that some other kid will have the same opportunity.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I have a question, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Gantt?

MR. GANTT: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Gantt, how often do you visit South Carolina State's campus, and what have you done there at South Carolina State recently? With all that South Carolina has gone through in our recent history, what have you done to try to help South Carolina State University?

MR. GANTT: Thank you so much for that question, Representative King.

Currently, I serve on the RISE committee, and the RISE committee is a committee where we go about, you know, asking and requesting funds from individuals or past graduates of the institution. I've traveled to various states to talk to previous graduates.

And this past year -- we've been doing it for one year. I'm one of the cochairs. There's four of us that serve on that committee. And we raised \$2 million for the institution.

Also, I wear my pin proudly. I'm a lifetime member of STATE Club and South Carolina State. I also am just a few thousand dollars short of where -- we have what they call the Miller Society where they honor South Carolina State graduates who donate \$100,000 or more to the institution. I'm one of those individuals who -- like I said, just a couple thousand dollars short. I should be there this particular year.

And I'm also a treasurer for STATE Club. And the STATE Club, we go about raising money from individuals who donate to the institution. Of course, STATE Club supports athletes as well as students to attend. So I would also say that I'm one of the top donors for that particular group as well.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I appreciate what you are doing for South Carolina State, and had I not asked that question, we would have not known that.

Let me ask you another question. You say that South Carolina State's biggest weakness is perception. As a board member, tell me what the perception is, and then tell me, as a board member, what do you do or what do you think you can do to change that perception?

MR. GANTT: Well, I think, you know, the perception for some, who probably never attended the school or have never been on the grounds, is that you possibly could be receiving a lesser of an education if you attend South Carolina State, and I think a lot of times people haven't had that opportunity to speak to the individuals who are prior graduates.

I'm an individual who is a graduate. Like I said, the first time in my family anybody ever attended college. I graduated from South Carolina State. I was the first student from South Carolina State to receive an internship for Governor Riley.

Through that internship, I got an opportunity to meet a lot of different people within this arena, and I got a chance to serve on a project in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for a contract that was owned by Governor West during that time. And I think -- currently, right now, I'm a territory manager for Pfizer Pharmaceuticals in the vaccines division.

I say all that not to receive applause for me. It's just to say that I'm one of those products of those -- of that institution to say that -- I was told by a professor there that, look, the most important thing you can do at this institution is open up your books and learn what's in them.

And so I say that the perception should be that you can earn a degree from South Carolina State and go on to earn a master's degree from a PWI, a predominantly white institution, like I have, and I think more kids need to hear that. You know, given the opportunity to graduate from South Carolina State, I think, you know, people like me and others who I know can stand before this committee and talk and tell you why that institution is so viable and why the perception shouldn't be, for some, as it is.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome, Mr. Gantt.

MR. GANTT: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I appreciate your willingness to serve.

I noticed you say that students and faculty should be represented on the board. Do you have a percentage in mind, and should they be voting members?

MR. GANTT: Yes, I -- I don't have a percentage in mind, per se. I didn't think about it in depth in that way.

But I did include in my write-up that I thought that they should be represented, mainly because when you're making decisions for people or about people or with people, those individuals that you are discussing and talking about should be there to represent themselves. I think if we are at a point where we are considering whatever that goal is, everybody should be making contributions and decisions for all of us to reach that goal collectively.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You know, we've had some issues with other schools in the state as far as representation on the board and

should, you know, the faculty be included, should students be included, and, you know, it became a mess, really.

So I -- you know, if you choose that, I certainly hope you will choose wisely because some boards do not believe in student participation, at least as far as votes. And so that's just my two cent's worth. Thank you.

MR. GANTT: Well, thank you for sharing that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Gantt, for your willingness to serve.

MR. GANTT: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Tell me what do you think you will actually bring to the table if you are chosen to be on that board and some of the things that you would like to change that you think would better South Carolina State, as a graduate myself.

MR. GANTT: Okay. Well, currently what I think I bring to the board is, as I said earlier, I've worked government. I worked at the Savannah River Site for approximately eight years in -- you know, in the corporate office there for Wackenhut Security. I had an opportunity to work at the Department of Energy headquarters through that connection. So I say that to say that I have an abundance of experience in working with government.

I also say that I -- like I said, I'm a territory manager for Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, so I work for one of the largest corporations in the country. And so I have a lot of information and, I think, a lot of knowledge and things that I've learned to work -- that I can bring to the table from a private business perspective.

And the way I think that I can improve or bring something different than maybe some of my other colleagues is the fact that I've learned through working in private business as well as government that I need to do more listening than I do talking right now. So -- also, I have conducted a lot of analysis at both locations that I've been at, and, you know, through those analyses --

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you. You know, even with all -- even with all of the experiences you've gotten from working in the private sector and transferring it over, the real challenges on the board, did you know, is trying to convince your colleagues of the direction they need to go in and whether or not you -- your good listening and doing analysis can convert to being a good leader --

MR. GANTT: Correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- so you lead your colleagues into making some real changes that will move the institution forward.

So having, as you indicated, the opportunity to graduate from a majority school as well as the HBCU and being able to bring some of those comparisons to what the institution might be able to do better, we're probably looking for that as an answer.

MR. GANTT: Okay.

SENATOR SCOTT: You gave an answer in terms of what your education and experiences have been, but how do you translate that into how the school can better manage its affairs, looking at its curriculum, also in looking at what its infrastructure needs or construction, deferred maintenance, and how we get there?

And I was glad to hear that you are raising money because that is a key part. And I was there the other night for the event they had. But it's a key part. How do you convince them either that the system we have can be improved and offer something to move in that direction, if that ends up being the committee that you actually work on, which I anticipate that's probably where you're looking because that's where your strengths are?

MR. GANTT: Right. Well, again, several -- or I should say a few of the board members that are currently there, I work -- I'm the treasurer for the STATE Club.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. GANTT: So some of the board members, like, you know, the present chairman of the board, I've worked with him for several years.

SENATOR SCOTT: Rodney.

MR. GANTT: Yeah, Rodney Jenkins. And with me being a member of the STATE Club, I've had to -- I've got relationships with Donnie Shell

--

SENATOR SCOTT: Donnie.

MR. GANTT: -- which, you know, I've talked to him on several occasions as well. And, again, I think a lot of times, you know, coming to an agreement -- or many times, everybody knows what they -- what they want to say when they come to the table. I just think sometimes we don't listen or come prepared to listen to, you know, evaluate the other person's side.

And my relationships with them, I just believe that I can help push the university forward because I'm willing to listen first and, you know, be the worker second. I'm willing to do that. I think sometimes that's what keeps us from advancing and growing and, like I said, doing these analyses and bringing these -- the information to the table because that's what has brought about change for other universities.

One of the things I would like to say, in the sense of -- you know, there are several universities that have issues and problems. One, most

notably, is Penn State. Penn State had serious problems. But somebody decided in a room that they were going to have a white-out, and everybody wore something white to a football game and said we're going to forget the past and we're going to move forward.

And I think that's some of the kind of conversations that need to be had at South Carolina State. Bad things happen at a lot of places. But where do you want to be next year, or five years from now, or ten years from now?

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And Mr. Gantt, thank you for offering to serve.

I agree with you in your response to Senator Scott's question just a moment ago. We have to learn from the things that have not been as pleasant as we would like for them to be, but we also have to apply those lessons and move forward in a positive way.

Tell me -- tell me this. You've talked about your work history and where you've worked. What did you do at SCANA?

MR. GANTT: Oh, at SCANA, I knew Billy Amick. I was just telling them just a moment ago I worked for Billy Amick as a boy at his property.

And I was the manager there. I was responsible -- at the time, we were -- we were moving forward, of course, toward doing similar to what they were doing at Enron, which is turnkey operations, and I ran the home security division in Macon, Georgia. So I was responsible for implementing it and getting that started in Macon, Georgia.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I also noticed that you're currently a member of the Aiken County board of elections.

MR. GANTT: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you understand that if you were elected to this position that you would have to resign that seat?

MR. GANTT: Correct.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And when you talk about South Carolina's biggest weakness -- or South Carolina State's biggest weakness and the perception, what kind of steps do you take to overcome that perception?

I've listened to your personal story and the way that you've talked about it on an individual basis, but how do you reach a wide range of young people to change that perception?

MR. GANTT: Thank you for that question, Judge Clary. Look, I'll be the first to admit, I'm not the best or biggest social media person, but I think social media has an impact today like it has -- well, I would assume it's new to all of us.

In my opinion -- I have two kids. One is a graduate from the University of South Carolina here in Columbia. And my way -- and my way of thinking that you would do it is just like I tell them. I couldn't get them to read the newspaper. They wouldn't dare pick up a newspaper. But the moment that newspaper came on that telephone, they couldn't wait to sit down at a table to share with me what they knew about what was in the news.

So I think one of the biggest efforts and steps we can take is put forth all the successes that we have. We have a success sheet that we put out during our last meeting, and it talked about all the positive things that -- you know, that go on at South Carolina State, you know, all the success that, you know, people are having academically, athletically.

It's just like -- now we've even got a kid now that's, you know, competing and participating in the Olympics. These are things that you don't know. I think every institution brings something different for every kid and every person. So to me, social media would be the first steps that I would take to make that happen.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon and, again, thank you for your willingness to serve.

And kind of a follow-up to Judge Clary there as far as attracting new students and additional students, what is the enrollment at SC State now?

MR. GANTT: I'm a pharmaceutical rep, and I'm normally asked to only say things that I can verify and validate. So without having the piece of paper, I can only tell you what I've heard. I don't -- so I want to make sure I'm saying the right thing.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I understand.

MR. GANTT: But to my understanding at our last meeting, we had -- they said it was like 2,100. I think that's the number that President Clark shared with us.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And as a member of the -- of the club and as -- acting as treasurer, how do you -- are y'all engaged or how do you think the board could be better engaged in trying to attract additional students to SC State?

MR. GANTT: We are engaged, and -- but, of course, the STATE Club, and being the treasurer, we normally involve ourselves a lot with athletics. That's --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: You don't try to do any recruiting or be ambassadors back in the communities that you live in?

MR. GANTT: We do.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: How big is the STATE Club?

MR. GANTT: The STATE Club now probably has close to 200 members.

But we do -- we currently have a program now that -- where we're training -- you have to be trained in order to be a recruiter at South Carolina State, and this training is set up at our various STATE Club organizations, our alumni chapters. So we have people who come out, and they -- like I say, you are trained, and then you go out, and you recruit these individuals at various schools, you know, when they have the programs at school where they ask institutions to show up.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And one final question, if I could. Just observing from your information you provided, if I read this correctly, you're a graduate of SC State in criminal justice. Is that correct?

MR. GANTT: Correct, yes.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yes, sir, and you're a pharmaceutical salesman.

MR. GANTT: Absolutely. Like I say, all you've got to do is open up the book and learn what's in it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, congratulations.

MR. GANTT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: A favorable report.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. It's unanimous.

Thank you for your willingness to serve, sir.

MR. GANTT: All right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Macie Smith from Columbia.

Good afternoon, ma'am.

DR. SMITH: Good afternoon.

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

DR. SMITH: Dr. Macie Lynn Perry Smith.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Take a seat. Would you like to make a brief statement?

DR. SMITH: I don't know how brief it's going to be, but I'll try my best.

I'm Dr. Macie Smith. I am a two-time graduate from South Carolina State University. I attained my bachelor's in social work and also my master's in rehabilitation counseling. And if you would allow me a few minutes, I just want to tell you all a little bit about why I want to be a part of the board of trustees at South Carolina State University.

Outside of me being an alum, I remember when I graduated from high school -- and that would be North High School. Not up north, but North, comma, South Carolina High School. That's where I wanted to go. No other school. I didn't apply to any other school. When I took my SAT, I took it one time, scored what I needed to score to get into South Carolina State University.

But it was almost like a -- a rite of passage for me. I didn't realize the rich culture I was going to embrace. I didn't realize the level of confidence that I was going to gain by attending South Carolina State University. And so after I got my master's in rehabilitation counseling, I knew that I had a responsibility.

I've been a licensed social worker for over 20 years and a gerontologist. I work with families who are living with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. As I'm working in public health, I'm finding out from the data that African Americans are twice as likely to develop some of the top ten chronic illnesses, with Alzheimer's being the one that's devastating to the entire family with no form of cure to curtail the disease.

And so, you know, I'm from the country, and so when you learn better and you know better, you do better, and you have a responsibility to share that information with others. And so I feel it is a responsibility for me to go back to my alma mater and share as much information as I can and help to build the capacity of students.

Over 93 percent of the students there at South Carolina State University are African Americans. Over 50 percent are females. That's me. And so if I have the knowledge and the skills and the expertise and the resources in the community to connect our students to be able to be more active in STEM, more active in medical, more active in law, then

I feel that's my duty, and that's one of the major reasons as to why I'm expressing interest in becoming a part of the board of trustees.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good.

Questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Dr. Smith, for your willingness to serve.

There was an earlier question asked to the chairman of the board at MUSC about African Americans applying and being accepted at MUSC. How can you take that experience and knowledge that you have in rural South Carolina --

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and students -- Hodge Hall is -- should be your home place for all the science courses you've taken there.

How do you convince some of these young folk that they're able to go into the different areas of the medical field to help us fix some of these rural issues that now, after 20-something-odd years, you've had a chance to really take a look at?

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir. Senator Scott, that's an excellent question.

I will say that I am a researcher, and my research has been published in three professional journals. Alongside of me has been a student along the way. And so what I do with the work is I always engage students.

Better understanding what various areas of medical is, what it looks like -- you'll be amazed as to how people don't really understand what different components of the medical arena looks like. They just feel, okay, it's cancer, or it's heart disease, it's larger than what I am or what I can do, and not really realizing that the food that they eat, their lifestyle affects the -- their longevity. It affects their ability to reduce their risk of chronic illnesses.

So what I do is I take students outside of the classroom. I am an assistant professor at an HBCU, at a PWI, and also at an online university. And so with all of my students, with my field experience, I take them in the community.

Recently, February 14th, Valentine's Day -- I remember it because I had on red shoes -- I was in Orangeburg, South Carolina. I often take my education events in rural communities because when people better understand how they can make preventative measures to reduce their risk of developing chronic illnesses, they tend to do better.

And so I had several -- five students from the College of Social Work at South Carolina State University attend the training and participate and

to volunteer, to build their interests, to build their capacity. And they were very excited about gerontology.

A lot of students don't know what gerontology is. A lot of adults don't know what gerontology is. So I just say when you think of Geritol, when you hear the term Geritol, what do you think of? They always say, Old people. I say, No, it's older adults; we're not going to say old people. But that is -- it's the study of the older adult population over the age of 65.

And so, you know, you'll have students say, Well, I want to go into mental health. But what does that mean? I want to go in child and family. Well, what does that mean? So I take them out into my world and have them apply the theoretical perspectives and foundations that they learn in class.

I also teach my students how to do research because with any university or with any organizations, you want to diversify the funding that's coming in. I'm the president of a nonprofit organization here, the National Association of Social Workers South Carolina Chapter. I do a lot of partnership with the Department on Aging because they are the lead when it comes to our aging population.

And with blessings, all of us will age, so this topic applies to everyone. So being able to show students how to apply the theoretical perspectives to real-world experiences and also to their personal life engages them and increase -- and it piques their interest.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Dr. Smith. I'm afraid that gerontology applies to several of us who are sitting around this table.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Speak for yourself. Speak for yourself.

DR. SMITH: With blessings. With blessings.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I know Senator Alexander was saying something about --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yeah. Yes, yes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: With your background, obviously, you could have gone to any school you chose to.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Why did you pick SC State? What appealed to you?

DR. SMITH: Well, I will tell you that it was close to home. That was number one. But I wanted a good school that was close to home, to my mom.

And also when I learned about the Orangeburg Massacre. When I learned about the Orangeburg Massacre -- and it was almost like it was a part of me, and I wanted to learn more about the history. I wanted to learn more about me as an African-American female, the strength that I had.

When I went to South Carolina State University, I wasn't confident at all, contrary to what you might see here today. I wasn't confident at all. But they -- my professors, my -- the staff, my other classmates really, really galvanized and, as Mr. Gantt said, opened up the book.

And you always have to be able to apply the information to yourself. And so the way that the information was presented to me gave me the courage and the confidence to be who I am all the time, no matter what room I'm in. And so the rich history of South Carolina State University was what just really piqued my interest.

And to find out that the Orangeburg Massacre was right in the Orangeburg, South Carolina -- you always look at television and you look at history books, and you think it's someplace else. But, oh, it's 20 minutes down the street? Oh, that's where I'm going. That's a part of who I am. And it actually allowed me to be able to complete my doctorate at Nova Southeastern University and to say proudly that I'm a South Carolina State Bulldog.

And so I think a part of that -- and you didn't ask me this question yet, but the enrollment piece you asked Mr. Gantt about, being able to get that information out to people. I'm on social media all the time. But because I'm a Generation X and I work with various generations, I know that's only one component.

So you have to be out there on social media because with visibility comes viability. You have to be out there on various forms of media -- print media, radio -- and you have to be consistent. I am a proponent of coalitions and subcommittees. If we have a board of trustees, I think that we should break it down into committees and have people focus on various areas, develop a comprehensive plan, identify actionable items, identify target dates, identify people who are responsible for doing particular items. It should be a fluid document. We should communicate throughout to see what's happening, what's not happening, and what changes need to be made.

And so we always have to -- we always have to have a vision, a mission, and also a document that has the information written in black and white with responsible parties.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Did I see that there's a memorial to the three students who were killed at State?

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir. That was recently --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Has that already -- that was recently?

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. That's -- I'm afraid I'm old enough to remember that, and I think a few others are. That was a sad tragedy in our history unfortunately.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: So I'm glad to see they're being recognized.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That's all I've got. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I've got one.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon.

DR. SMITH: Good afternoon.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And I appreciate your willingness to serve.

And you have two degrees from there. I was just curious, if I'm reading correctly, your employment now, part of that is faculty at the University of Phoenix.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir. I teach online at the University of Phoenix, I'm an assistant professor in the College of Social Work at the University of South Carolina, and I'm an assistant professor at Benedict College. And I do guest lectures at South Carolina State University.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So would you see -- would there be any conflict with you serving on the board of SC State while doing any of these other roles?

DR. SMITH: No, sir. Each one of those roles are -- they're solicitations, and so I can choose to accept the classes or to not accept the classes. But that won't interfere with the work that I would do for the board of trustees at all.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So -- just -- just another observation, Mr. Chairman, and question, if I could.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Sure.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So with the University of Phoenix -- all online courses, if I understand correct.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So how will that have an impact going forward, or how do not just SC State, but all places of higher learning address that trend of -- do you see more students wanting to get their education online versus going to the brick-and-mortar university of a four-year institution?

DR. SMITH: That's an excellent question, Senator Alexander.

It just depends on the generation. It depends on whether or not they're a traditional learner versus a nontraditional learner. Some students do well online. Some students do well face-to-face.

But there is a growing trend of online education. You know, individuals who have families or who have demanding experiences or demanding lifestyles, but they still want a higher education, online education absolutely fills that void. And so I do see a growing trend.

However, there are some perceptions about online education too. Some, in data I've seen, not real education, depending on the university. If they're for-profit universities, you know, there is some concern there.

So I think we're going to see -- we've seen a shift from traditional to online, but I think we're going to see another shift back to traditional universities because traditional universities now are also offering online courses as well, as they should because people's lives and people's situations are changing, and we have more technology. We have technological advances, and so we have to move along with the time and be able to fill those gaps when they exist in order for people to attain a higher education, to be contributing members of our society.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR VERDIN: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Smith...hey.

DR. SMITH: You know, I'm just here, and I'm just -- you know, the sinuses -- you know, allergies are not my friend this week, so...

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, I appreciate the -- some of your remarks regarding why you were attracted to SCSU --

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: -- 25 years ago. It related to you personally, culturally, and historically, your experience within your community, and I'm noticing in your responses about diversity.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: So South Carolina State has had the challenges of maintaining enrollment --

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: -- struggling to have that critical mass of enrollment to function. And you point out there's 93 percent African Americans.

To address diversity, the ethnicity component, the equation, the ratio needs to be addressed.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: I don't think anyone would imagine that an HBCU would ever revolutionize racially.

DR. SMITH: Uh-huh.

SENATOR VERDIN: But I do think it's interesting that you have a concept that maybe seven percent minority enrollment -- majority population/minority enrollment is not good enough, and I -- and I find that refreshing because in Laurens we have a gentleman, a Caucasian, that graduated from South Carolina State nearly 30-something years ago.

DR. SMITH: Wow.

SENATOR VERDIN: And I'm looking forward to the day that he's not some outlying anomaly because he got a tremendous education within his field, the technical field. It served him well.

And as we think about the facilities there, the enrollment --

DR. SMITH: Yes.

SENATOR VERDIN: -- the potential is there. I know not everyone is going to have the same cultural attraction to come there like you did, but, you know, everyone wants to make a good living.

DR. SMITH: Oh, yeah. Oh, definitely.

SENATOR VERDIN: And I know that a lot of the curriculum offerings might address how you might see an increase in other racial compositions in the student body.

But I am curious what you think might -- you know, just like we're trying to see a balance reflected in these other schools, the state schools, you take the convex with an HBCU, and I've always thought, What would be the ideal? What would maintain the distinctness and the traditional characteristics of a school that still -- if you change that -- and I know you've worked on it within the faculty and staff as well.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: And it seems like a great area to bring that financial stability --

DR. SMITH: Right.

SENATOR VERDIN: -- to the institution.

DR. SMITH: And also to -- you know, the history is history, so it's going to be sustained there at South Carolina State University.

But as far as diversity, you know, we've got to look beyond male and female and race. There is the LGBTQ+ community. There is the older

adult community. There is the senior community. There is the military community.

And when we look at diversifying our student population, we simultaneously have to look at diversifying our faculty and also our staff in addition to diversifying the board of trustees. I feel like the board of trustees should mirror the student population because that's the commodity. I'll leave that to the General Assembly to do their due diligence in diversifying that.

But in terms of the student and the faculty population, I'm a -- again, as a licensed social worker working in mezzo, macro, and micro social work, you have to start with a plan. We can't just go out there doing stuff because, you know, you don't know what road is taking you there; you don't know what the mess-ups are and how to address those particular disparities.

But once you start off with a mission, you develop a comprehensive plan with certain people in place to have targeted responsibilities. And so when we're looking at enrollment, we have to talk about what type of students, what we want our student body to look like.

Once we figure out where we want that -- what we want that student body to look like, then we go there. That could be the elementary schools, the middle schools, the high schools. And think of it outside of the typical realm. Go to some of the job fairs. Go to some of the health fairs. Go to church on Sunday morning. Students are everywhere.

If we expand our perception of what the student body should look like, it looks differently. And so once we expand that and better understand what -- where they are, then we go to them.

And being able to share our successes -- when we had a football player in the -- in the Super Bowl -- I'm not a football fan, but I, you know, look at it for snacks. We have a football player in the NF -- the Super Bowl, and then we have someone from -- in communications from South Carolina State University.

And so being able to highlight, you know, the highly sought after ROTC program, the speech pathology program, the education program, having that consistently as a part of the message in all of these different communities and areas -- and don't wax and wane from it. But, again, you have to have a coalition that's targeting these particular areas and not leaving any -- you know, any group of people out, you know, nontraditional learners, traditional learners. These are the things that we need to have a continual focus on, and, again, go to where they are once we figure out who they are.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Unanimous. Two great candidates for one seat.

Thank you.

DR. SMITH: Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Fourth Congressional District, Seat 4, Jameel Allen from Greer.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. ALLEN: Good afternoon.

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

MR. ALLEN: Jameel O. Allen.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. ALLEN: (Affirms.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Please have a seat and come forward. Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir. First of all, I want to acknowledge the Governor, the General Assembly, and all the contenders here that poise in position to take on seats at these various universities.

And with that, my desire is not politically motivated. My desire is fundamentally revolved around SC State University. Obviously, you can see it in the write-up, I'm a grad. I graduated in 2001.

I almost didn't have the opportunity to go off to college. I worked hard. I lobbied across the Southeast to get into a university and graduated from col -- well, high school with a cumulative GPA of 1.9. My SAT score was about a 1280, and that took perseverance during my senior year of high school.

We were ranked number one in the nation, the Southwest DeKalb football team, so obviously academics weren't high, and sports dominated at the time, but football was about 95 percent of my toolbox. And so it was -- it was a situation where we had to really do some praying and focusing on the big picture.

And after I persevered on the SAT, SC State University gave me an opportunity through their psychometric program coupled with entering the university through a Prop 48 status, meaning I could not play football

that first year. They gave me a window to revamp and really think about the academic side of my path forward.

So with that, I was able to persevere. I got my grades together and ended up getting up an academic scholarship. Gave up football going into my senior year, and I would say the rest is history.

But during my negotiation stage with SC State University prior to graduating from high school, I told them, If you give me an opportunity, I'll be indebted to you for the rest of my life. So I've -- I've given back to the university. I've served as chairman of the board of visitors, which is a sub-board of the board of trustees. (Clears throat.) Excuse me.

That board was put in place to serve as a corporate arm for the university, and I think my last stint was in 2012 with the board. I also served as an ex officio member of the board of trustees at the time.

But, again, my experience at SC State University has really propelled me forward. I am a publicly traded officer -- an officer for a publicly traded company now. I got my first stamp with the Fluor Corporation right of undergrad. Relocated to Dallas. I took on solid mentorship, solid sponsorship from a global leadership standpoint. So I would say probably that those are the two tenants that have carried me forward, is solid executive sponsorship and mentorship over the years.

And today I sit in a row where it's all about governance. It's all about integrity. It's all about developing the next generation. It's all about driving margins. It's all about diversity inclusion. But it's also about making sure we meet the targets for our shareholders.

So with that, I look forward to bringing that experience back to SC State University. I've been in and out. I've served as a guest speaker, over a decade ago as the Executive Speaker Series speaker. But I look forward to being in a more fluent role from a governing standpoint. I feel like I've got the qualifications to do that.

So I wanted to try to keep it brief on that intro, but I'm glad to be here and glad to be in town today. It was a struggle to be in town today, but I'll turn it over to you, Senator.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: It's good to have you.

Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Mr. Allen, for being here, and you have a very interesting and unique story, and I appreciate you sharing it with us.

A couple of things that you hit on, particularly at the end of your presentation, you talked about governance, integrity. How about expanding on that a little bit for me and your view of what that entails?

MR. ALLEN: Well, that's a good question. I think it boils down to leadership, making sure you've got the right athlete in the right seat, and saying -- what you say you're going to do, you're going to actually follow up on it.

In our business, the proof is in the pudding. If we don't make our numbers, you know, we're getting reprimanded by Wall Street. We've got to have a really good story, but we can't fabricate that story.

If we've got pride in what we do as -- we design, build oil refineries, power plants. We maintain those domestically and globally. I've always been in that business. But if we've got some external forces that are influencing the growth, we fundamentally have to make sure that we articulate that to Wall Street, our customers, shareholders, et cetera.

So not compromising the results, not compromising what we believe in from an integrity standpoint and fiscal responsibility standpoint so when it's time to go back to the drawing board and right-size and put the right athletes in the right seats, making decisions that are fundamentally focused on long-term sustainability for that organization.

And the fundamentals don't change. They would be applicable to SC State University or any university in this room today.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You also talked about South Carolina State must have a comprehensive diversity inclusion program.

Going back to what Senator Verdin was speaking with Dr. Smith about, HBCU, 93 percent African-American, how do you -- how do you go about developing a comprehensive diversity inclusion program without -- without interfering with the character of a Historically Black College or University?

MR. ALLEN: No, obviously a good question, especially from an HBCU perspective.

Obviously I went on to Arizona State University. A lot different as far as the population mix. When I think about that question as it relates to SC State University, it boils down to articulating a vision and a proposition of the university, whether it's academics, whether it's athletics, and talking about what we've done year over year, decade over decade, a little over a century.

And I think once you get that message out regionally, nationally, and globally, you'll get more of a diverse mix of candidates. And I'm not talking about -- I'm talking about African Americans obviously, Canadians, Hispanics, Asians, et cetera. It's a great university, and one of my roommates was a Caucasian from Canada on a tennis scholarship. We still stay in contact today.

One of the things I really want to talk to y'all about is relationships at some point. They're so important. He's an executive today in Canada and actually a customer, as well, of mine.

But, again, a very unique, diverse situation from that standpoint, but I think we've got to hold ourselves accountable from a fundamental standpoint of getting out there and making it a target, whether it's Asians, Caucasians, whether it's, you know, African descent. We've got to -- it's got to be intentional, and we've got to just put more aggressive measures in place from that standpoint.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And I think you -- you definitely hit on something there.

When my daughter graduated from high school, she got this crazy notion she wanted to go to the University of Georgia. And she went there, and her roommate was an African American from down in the lower part of Georgia, and I think that was one of the greatest -- greatest experiences for her in getting to have that relationship with that young lady, who remains her friend and our friend to this day.

Thankfully, she had the good sense to transfer to Clemson after that one year and -- but that was a great experience for her.

Let me ask you another question. You talk about the biggest weakness at SC State is the ability to cross-pollinate with alumni in giving back to the school; alumni is not active because of communication.

I mean, that is an issue that I think every institution faces. So give me your idea of how you -- how you overcome that.

MR. ALLEN: That's a good question. I use that term quite a bit in corporate America, cross-pollination, especially in my role.

But it starts with the student. It starts with nurturing that student, that -- who's the customer. So we'll talk about -- I heard earlier, absolutely, that student needs to serve on the board and have a voting right because you're sowing into that existing customer, which will be your eventual shareholder at some point.

But, yeah, absolutely, I think, you know, from a big picture standpoint, that's what we need to be focused on.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, and my final comment, I believe that students should be heard from. Whether or not they have voting rights or not, that's something for the boards to determine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Allen, for your willingness to serve.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: I sat and I listened to your diversity package you talked about, and I'm looking at some of the larger institutions, like USC that has a diverse population of 5.3. I'm looking at Clemson, who has a diverse population of blacks of 6.3. And South Carolina State is 7. MUSC we grilled not too long ago, and just in the school of medicine, overall of 11.

And when USC, which is a school of business, Clemson is ICAR, and MUSC is medicine, and when I look at the drawing card for a diverse population, it's speech pathology. In the school of speech pathology, they always have a number of white students who want to come in. And I look here at this plan you rolled out to bring Asian and other students in, if you -- if you don't have this diverse population to draw from, what is South Carolina State's drawing card to bring all these Caucasian or white students in?

I'm not yet -- and I've been around at the university now almost 50 years. So tell me what we're doing wrong or what the school is doing wrong so we can attract students in. And it's a long way from one or two students to having seven percent at that university, given where we are in that particular region.

So please help me to understand this concept that you have when I'm looking at you coming out of corporate America and their numbers are terrible.

MR. ALLEN: That's right, Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: So tell me what you're going to do different sitting on that board than the board is already doing, A, and also attracting not only students, but also faculty and staff who want to come to the institution when the school pays less money than some of these larger schools. I'm really interested in this answer.

MR. ALLEN: Good question, Senator Scott. I think it boils down to going out and cross-pollinating with corporations, and we've heard the term coalition, but putting strategic initiatives in place to make it more attractive not just for African Americans, but the general candidate that wants to come to the university.

So I think from a big picture standpoint, we're going -- we're going above and beyond what we consider a legacy and traditional at the university. We've got to make the university more attractive, but I think we've got to get out and communicate more on the service offerings and the academic programs, et cetera.

I'm going to talk about golf. I talk about tennis. I talk about some of the other programs when I was at the university. That's another opportunity to bring in some of that diversity

SENATOR SCOTT: But you realize all --

MR. ALLEN: -- to get those numbers.

SENATOR SCOTT: You realize all those students that come in have to come in with scholarships?

MR. ALLEN: That's correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: And those scholarships require them to have money.

MR. ALLEN: That's correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: And looking at where the university's come in the last six or seven years in its struggle because of a number of reasons, especially the economy, the parents' PLUS program, the change in Washington, and many other programs that created a lot of -- schools to have a lot of problems to keep from the doors being closed.

And all of a sudden, I'm looking for this big diverse plan you're going to have that's going to change the landscape, and I'm really, really interested in it because it will help fix a whole lot of other problems that these other HBCUs aren't working with.

MR. ALLEN: And that's a good question. I mean, we struggle even in corporate America on diversity --

SENATOR SCOTT: You do.

MR. ALLEN: -- as it relates to building power plants or an oil refinery or a manufacturing facility, and most of your regulated companies require 10 or 15 or, in some cases, a 20-percent stay in associate procurement.

But I would encourage a full survey. I would encourage research. I would encourage a very intentional committee to go out and look at the numbers and put a tiered plan in place, a five-year plan with significant improvement year over year with accountability metrics in place.

But, again, it goes back to getting out and articulating a proposition of the university by region and on a national scale and, in some cases, internationally where it makes sense so that those folks know what we're offering at SC State University.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah, some of the schools were, such as -- I'll be brief. Some of the schools like Francis Marion have gone to a regional concept, and even in going to a regional concept, it has a good draw of African-American students.

But I don't think it's doing all of what you're talking about even. That used to be one of the largest areas we drew from for students, throughout the Pee Dee, until Francis Marion changed its concept.

If you're elected to the board, I'll be happy to see you four years down the road to find out just how well your plan actually worked. Thank you so much for your willingness to serve.

MR. ALLEN: Absolutely. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate your comments. I want to first start off by saying that in recent, we have had some of the most amazing candidates that are interested in South Carolina State.

I have a couple questions for you, and I want to first start off by saying all HBCUs across the country -- I'm a graduate of an HBCU, Morehouse College in Atlanta, your hometown. But all HBCUs are experiencing a decline in the number of students because we are now competing with other universities who are able to give scholarships that we cannot give.

Would you agree with that?

MR. ALLEN: I agree.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: The other thing I think that South Carolina State has -- and I'm asking if you agree with me -- is an issue with facilities, dormitories that are not up to par.

So when we're talking about diversity and when you have other universities across this state that offer a better living environment, would you agree that that is going to be an issue? As you have promised here to bring about diversity on that campus, until we can cure some of the ills that are there in reference to infrastructure, those will be issues to bring about diversity on that campus.

MR. ALLEN: Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: My next question to you is, as a very busy man, as I would assume, what do you think is the time commitment to be a board member and to be an effective board member on the South Carolina State University board of trustees?

MR. ALLEN: You know, from a leadership standpoint -- and, again, the fundamentals don't change with leadership. I mean, you've got to -- you've got to go in, and you've got to look at the programs that the current board is undertaking and, obviously, make a seamless transition to support those programs.

But from an implementation perspective, I would say anywhere from two to four years -- really four years -- three to four years to see some real results and start tracking them from a metrics perspective.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: My last question is what do you think is the role of the board of trustees in reference to influence from elected officials? When serious decisions have to be made about the university, who do you listen to? Do you listen to your -- to your faculty, your staff, your students, and to your heart, or do you take the advice from the elected officials who make it and elected you?

MR. ALLEN: Well, I think that -- I'm going to use the term cross-pollinization again. I think that cross-pollinization has to take place across the full spectrum because the issue -- the students are the number one customer. You've got the faculty and the staff that's right there as the governance body making a, you know, salary. But then you've got the board of trustees that's the governing body, but then obviously you've got the Governor and you've got the General Assembly, who you ultimately report to.

So you've got to make sure that they're getting all the facts and the details, and you've got to be able to sit down and map out a plan that's feasible and viable from a long-term sustainable solution perspective. I know we didn't talk about any specific examples, but, you know, you've got to look at it from that standpoint.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Well, if you are a part of the board -- and South Carolina State has made amazing gains in the past few years -- I would hope that you will mesh well with the board and move this university forward.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman, just a couple...

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

And, again, thank you for your willingness to serve.

A couple of things here. Where it -- where it says that you visited, how often do you visit, or how often have you visited the university?

MR. ALLEN: Well, quite -- quite periodically. Again, I was chairman of the board of visitors. I was in the -- you know, part of the football program.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Are you on the board of visitors now?

MR. ALLEN: I'm not, no, sir. You know, that board was put in place to support the board of the trustees over a decade and a half ago, and I served about eight years on that board.

But I get back to speak and give back to the university. That's my obligation. I get back to serve as an Executive Speaker Series speaker. I was part of the School of Business when we got accredited, so I pat myself on the back for being a part of that -- that precedence for the School of Business. But I do get back, and I fundamentally focusing on the engineering school and the School of Business. I'm not a -- I don't have an engineering degree, but what we do today is engineering-focused on oil and gas and the power side.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Would your work have any -- allow you the opportunity to attend meetings as necessary?

MR. ALLEN: That's one of the conversations I had with our CEO. He understands my commitment to the university, and I'm going to remain flexible in both being there, present, and for all the official meetings.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And I looked -- it looks like you're involved in your -- how long have you lived in the Greer -- the greater Greer area?

MR. ALLEN: I built my first home in '04 in Greer. I didn't live there until 2013 because of all the international travels.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Great. Well, it looks like with the -- you work there in the community with several different boards. I commend you for being involved in your community as well as your willingness to be on the board at SC State.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir. Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion?

I've got a quick one. Was Willie Jeffries your coach?

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What would he say about you?

MR. ALLEN: I'm not sure if I want to put that on record.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: No further discussion. We'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, sir --

MR. ALLEN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- for your service.

MR. ALLEN: Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman, Representative King asked -- his proxy is favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And I have Representative Davis's.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King and Davis favorable.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: That was the best question of all. We should have started with that one.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We'll come back into order. Next, the 6th Congressional District, Seat 6 for the South Carolina State University board of trustees under Tab 8, Wilbur Shuler from Orangeburg.

Mr. Shuler, for the record, if you would, give us your full name.

DR. SHULER: Wilbur B. Shuler.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. SHULER: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Would you like to make a brief statement?

DR. SHULER: Yes, sir.

A couple of things right off the bat, I'll say this right quick because I heard some questions come about it while I was sitting back there. I'm a fiscal officer, so I deal in general numbers. The populating enrollment for the first semester was around 2,400. The second semester was around 2,200.

We do have an agreement with MUSC. We have a nuclear energy program that's at -- where we have an agreement with Savannah River. And we do -- are working on -- I'm not sure if they're completed yet -- an agreement with Francis Marion as it relates to a speech, language, and hearing opportunity.

We do have 33 chapters in our alumni association, and each of those assoc -- each chapter, each has a training person for recruiting. So I just wanted to make sure I get that right quick.

I want to thank you again for allowing me to apply for this position on the board of trustees at South Carolina State. You have been provided with my qualifications. I tried to make sure that I gave you as much as I can so that you can keep these discussions to address concerns of yours and not concerns of mine.

I'm supposed to have 15 minutes, but I'm going to do less than 5 minutes to give you an opportunity to make sure that I have an opportunity to address your concerns.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Who told you you had 15 minutes?

DR. SHULER: Well, that was on the -- that was on the sheet.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What staff member put that on the sheet? Sorry.

DR. SHULER: I make sure I read the sheet. I'm sorry I missed another item, but I make sure I read the sheet.

That interim board that you all put in place some time ago had a point of stabilizing the university, and that, they have done. In other words, they stopped us from sinking, and they stopped the bleeding, as the old folks say.

This -- all of this has been done, and we're now on a new -- charting a new course. The tide has actually changed. Some of the new board -- my fellow board members have introduced ideas to the university, as I have, to try to improve the situation at the university.

I must say again at this point, I'm a fiscal officer, so some of the things that you may ask, I focus very clearly and very strongly on the fiscal operations of the university. I have been an administrator and a SACS evaluator for many, many, many years. And so I've -- my focus has always been on those -- on those items.

While I have been involved with evaluating the board of trustees at other universities -- at another university and I have been involved with evaluating the academic strength of a satellite university, my strength is still with the fiscal affairs area.

One of the sad things that I had to realize when I became a board member is that -- many of us being raised by a single mother and a single grandmother, we were always taught to look at a situation and try to fix it. Don't complain about it over and over again, but do something about it.

Well, when I got on the board, I brought that attitude with me. But as a board member, according to Belle Wheelan, the president of SACS, she told me that I'm going to have to throw that aside because if I got involved with trying to fix things, that crosses over from the board responsibility of policy into the area of administration. That hurts me, but I have to deal with that.

A major item that I've been concerned about with that has been with our financial reporting. And when I look at financial reporting, I know that you may not know what these acronyms mean, but IPES and NACUBO.

NACUBO I can tell you about because that's the National Association of Colleges and Universities Business Officers. SACS relies on them to provide the basis for the structure of a university, and I have been constantly looking for reports that will reflect that. I know that the reports that we've been giving to you all in the General Assembly does follow that outline, instruction, academics, reporting those things. But some of the internal reports of which I rely very heavily on -- on which I rely very heavily does not always reflect that.

But there have been some novel ideas that came up in our board -- in our board meetings about how to improve enrollment, how to improve our image, and so those ideas have been presented to the university, some of which have been looked at. I would like to see some of them more actively -- more action on some of those. But as a board member, I have to, as Belle Wheelan said, bite your tongue and keep talking and keep pushing, and maybe they will come to fruition.

So having said that, South Carolina State has a unique -- is a unique university. It's -- it prepared -- it takes -- I'm going to use a word here. It takes a diamond in the rough and polishes it very well. And it also

takes those who -- those polished diamonds and makes them shine even more.

I have personal experiences with those because I got out of high school and I don't know whether I would have gotten into any college or university at the time. And I'm -- at that time, you had -- you had zero courses of math and English. If you didn't score a certain level, then you were in that -- you were placed in that category.

Well, I had zero math and zero English, but when I went to the math instructor, she told me I didn't need that, that I was on the cusp of being a person that really needed to be in her regular class. And she said that she will work with me -- if she sees that I'm falling behind, she would work with me and call me in and give me the kind of instruction that I needed so that I could be successful in that class. She did.

The English lady said the same thing. But since I came up in the, quote-unquote, ghetto, I didn't think that my vocabulary was sufficient to skip that level. I didn't think I spoke the proper English in order to skip that level. So then I went ahead, and I went ahead and enrolled in that.

And you can see from my resume that I gave you that South Carolina State not only prepares people to be successful in their field, but they'll prepare you to go anyplace. You can see that I have a master's -- one of my master's degrees from the University of South Carolina, and my doctorate is from the University of Memphis. So South Carolina did give me a first-class education.

My son, whom I didn't think would get out of high school, came to college, and now he has two master's degrees simply because of the kind of relationship that the university has with its students. And my daughter, who could have gone anyplace -- Yale, UCLA, Harvard, anyplace -- and she would have been successful, she came there, and now she's a pediatrician.

So the point is, South Carolina State is able to take people where they are and carry them where they want to be. And so that's the kind of thing that I think -- the value that South Carolina State has to this community and for the community at large.

I'm ready for you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: That would be a great motto.

Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, let me thank Dr. Shuler for his many years of working at the institution.

Outside of, I guess, some other fundamental questions in the back that we've got some concerns about, I want to just move a favorable report unless somebody has some pending --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I've got one question.

SENATOR SCOTT: You've got one. I'll withhold that. Go ahead. I'll withhold.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Senator Scott.

I meant to ask this of some of the other folks that are incumbents. Has State been able to stabilize their enrollment numbers? You know, for several years, they were losing quite a number of students. Have you been able to rectify that situation?

DR. SHULER: Well, the university enrollment went up to about 2,900, and it has been fluctuating, and that's why it's dropped right now. There are things that we can do as a university to reverse that trend, and I told them that I thought that the university enrollment should be around 4,500.

That was shared by many of the board members and many of the staff. But the problem is, I can't fix that. I can continue to point out things that need to be done, and some of these things, Ray Charles can see. But I need to -- I have to keep my position as a policy person as opposed to an administrator.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Right.

DR. SHULER: And having served as an administrator for years, it is -- it's a little difficult to stand back and see something that you know needs to be done but you can't get in there and do it.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: It seems to me like State is suffering from other schools drawing a lot of the students that originally went to State that may be going -- getting other opportunities now, particularly in this state.

And I realize you depend heavily on, you know, students who come in and -- you know, and help fund the university. So once you don't have the 4,500, it's going to be tough to meet all your obligations. So I wish you luck in trying to get those numbers back up.

DR. SHULER: Yeah, that's correct. One of the things that you will see, that we need to -- the General Assembly, in its wisdom, put forth to the traditional white institution a requirement to increase their minority enrollment. The unintended consequence of that is that it negatively impacts South Carolina State.

That means that we have to do things differently. We have to go after not the A students because the University of South Carolina and some of

these other major universities are going to get them. We have to put forth a strong effort for the B and C students because they are being ignored. And because South Carolina State can take you where you are and carry you where you want to be, we need to focus on that, and that's where we will get our students.

We will not get our students by constantly and continuously looking for the 4-point grade point average students. We know we can do well with those who are not. I'm an example. My son is an example. And the gentleman that you had just before, Jameel, is an example, and I think he told you his grade point average was 1.9. I beat him by one point. I think mine was 2-point.

But if we take these -- these are the kind of people that you can take, South Carolina State can take, and make them highly productive citizens. And so let the University of South Carolina and the others go after and get those students. Let's do what we do best. We take you where you are and carry you where you want to be. And that's my story.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, thank you very much. By the way, I had 1.3 my first semester at college. I had a real good time, though.

DR. SHULER: But I'm saying coming out of high school. I thought I was the sweetest thing since sliced bread when I went to college.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chair, I have a question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Can you tell me what is the graduation -- from freshman year to graduation, how long is it taking your students?

DR. SHULER: Well, it's taking a student now about five years. Now, I cannot put that down and swear to it, but it takes about five years.

There are some programs that we have on campus that are six-year programs, especially the program in engineering. That is not a four-year program by any stretch of the imagination. Those -- those by nature are six-year programs.

So I want to believe -- my son graduated in four and a half years. My daughter graduated in four years. And I think I took a little longer. But I can't -- I want to believe that it's around five years with all of the things that I know about South Carolina State.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, a question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

You made a statement a minute ago that the other schools are taking your students when I'm watching on a ten-year span the growth of South Carolina, almost 600,000 students -- 600,000 in population. And also I'm looking at students who, prior to the diversity part, five or six -- seven years ago when I really began to talk about diversity, trying to keep some of our best and brightest in the state.

Is it -- is it really taking the students, or is it cost to go to school? A student -- a student -- I'll give it to you. Is it cost to -- are they taking the students, or is it cost to go to school, or is it curriculum in terms of some of the course and the outlining and stuff that these other schools are offering that become attractive?

Because our biggest concern with the larger schools is enrollment of out-of-state students, and always the real question is how we keep the best and brightest kids at home. And even looking at the HBCUs -- and I work with all of them in terms of having scholarships and also keeping the cost of going to the schools down.

What's the real challenge? No one can take your student if you offer a student what they want, and with many cases, even in working with some of the larger universities, they say we can't afford to get those students because we don't have the money for scholarships. So really, what's really happening?

You said 4,500, and we saw 4,500. There was a real issue with deferred maintenance and housing and a number of issues and balancing the books, and of course you were a part of the administration at the time. So really -- really, other than just an open statement and with your statistical background, really what is the problem?

DR. SHULER: I'm trying to be careful in what I say --

SENATOR SCOTT: Say what's on your mind.

DR. SHULER: -- in an open meeting here. But the -- one of the -- when it comes to the programs that we have, we have -- we have programs where we have faculty and students to support them.

And often there are programs that we want to put in place because we think the community and the state and the nation need them, but we can't put them in place because we have not been able -- unable to find students that -- in large enough numbers that were interested in those particular programs.

So we have a -- we have a problem there of trying to let them know that these are viable programs, these are viable fields to make a career in, not just a job, but to have a career in these fields. So that is one thing.

You mentioned about the condition of the facilities. I have a -- I have a concern there that's probably beyond one of the concerns that others

have. Many years ago, South Carolina -- the state of South Carolina allowed the university to have tuition and a university fee.

Tuition was for major renovations, repairs, and debt service, so that anytime a roof went bad on a facility at South Carolina State, we sent the form to Grady Patterson and got the money down and fixed it. Now when we have a roof that needs repair, we have to come to the General Assembly, and by the time the General Assembly gets around to approving it, the top floor is already rotting out.

So we -- there are certain things that have happened over the years that have allowed us not to keep our facilities in the kind of condition that we need them to be. We have housing that -- student housing that are very good housing, and after so many years, the university is supposed to take them over.

But in Wilbur Shuler's opinion -- and that's my opinion. It doesn't make it right or make it wrong. It just makes it my opinion, is that we have disposable housing. And by that, I mean in 20 years, they need to be replaced. So in 20 years when you give them back to me, you know, I have nothing.

So there are a lot of things about that when you look at housing that, while we try to keep them up, when -- we do have a problem there because of the way we do it. And many universities are going to outsourcing these kinds of things, and outsourcing is fine. But I've always thought that the more I have under my thumb, the better my facilities and better my everything is going to be and I should not be relying on someone else's level. I want my level of sufficiency to come.

There was a third one that you mentioned that I'm missing.

SENATOR SCOTT: You were -- about the student part, actually offering curriculums that these students are attracted to.

DR. SHULER: Yeah. What they think there is the -- one of our -- one of our programs, the nuclear engineering program, it's one that every -- in which -- it seems to be top-notch for people who are interested in coming to the university. The speech, language, and hearing is another one. And engineering is not a cheap, inexpensive field.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, education with teachers --

DR. SHULER: Yeah, education --

SENATOR SCOTT: -- since South Carolina State used to turn out more teachers than anybody else.

DR. SHULER: We used to turn out more teachers than anyone else. You're correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: So what's happened?

DR. SHULER: I'm not sure what happened. It bothers me because my wife went through that education program, and it was at the peak. And

so in the years that we have been away, it's all of a sudden not where we think it needs to be.

So -- but the frustration that I have is that as a board member I can't fix it. And --

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, let's -- let me -- let's go right there. As a board member, it's your responsibility to ask the pertinent questions --

DR. SHULER: I do.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- to administration to try to figure out where the problems are so they can be fixed.

DR. SHULER: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: If teacher education is going to be one of your number one programs, then you need to find out what the state needs to be doing, what the school needs to be doing, and moving in that area, especially if that was a -- a large area that we recruited science teachers, math teachers, K-12 teachers. I mean, that was a big issue, and that makes up at least a good thousand students --

DR. SHULER: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- if you can build that department back.

DR. SHULER: And you're right.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman, I have a question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Shuler, I have a question for you. You said something that piqued my interest. Who hires the president of the college?

DR. SHULER: The board of trustees hires and fires the president and sets policies, and those are the responsibilities, but who hires the president? It's the board of trustees.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: The board of trustees.

So when you told Senator Scott that certain things were out of your control, I think the General Assembly has elected the boards of trustees across this state at the best interest of the state and the students. So if you see something that is wrong as a board trustee, don't you think you have an obligation?

DR. SHULER: Yeah, we have an obligation and a duty to do exactly that. And I don't -- I don't make any bones about it. Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So moving forward, your -- as you are asked that question and as you reflect as a board member and as you sit behind that table or that desk there in Orangeburg, remember that we put you there to make those decisions. Sometimes they are hard.

And I say that with all due respect because the people that you see sitting around this table, and especially Senator Scott and I and our

communities which we represent, we were hit extremely hard when it came to South Carolina State. And so, you know, I have an expectation of all the board members that go down to South Carolina State to represent us, the people that sit around this table, well. And if at any time that you all feel that you can't, please let us know.

DR. SHULER: No problem.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

DR. SHULER: None whatsoever.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What's the desire of the committee?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Favorable.

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable and seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous, including Ms. Davis.

Thank you, sir, for your willingness to serve.

Members, that completes our agenda on South Carolina State.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: That was with additional information we were provided.

MS. CASTO: Right.

Mr. Shuler --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Pending the information you're going to get staff.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chair, I make a -- let's go back over that. I make a motion to give him a favorable report with the additional information being in the office by 12 noon tomorrow to staff.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Without objection.

Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We'll go to At-Large Seat 8 at Tab F, Louvetta Dicks from Rock Hill.

Good afternoon, ma'am.

MS. DICKS: Good afternoon.

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

MS. DICKS: Louvetta Roseboro Dicks.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. DICKS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

MS. DICKS: Good afternoon. I'd like to --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement? Sure.

MS. DICKS: I'd like to start by saying thank you for this opportunity to be considered for a seat on the board of trustees for my beloved university, South Carolina State.

My -- my roots run pretty deep. As a supporter, my family has been involved with attending South Carolina State for many years. Oddly enough, my mother grew up in Columbia. She was a member of a family of ten. Her mother was a stay-at-home mom, and there was not a whole lot of money, quite honestly. But her father and -- well, her parents had a strong belief in education, and all five girls received degrees from South Carolina State.

To put that into context, I'm probably a little older than most of the other candidates at this point. My mother is a graduate of the class of 1948. And she still is actively involved in her support of the university, and that support and that role model, it affects me and encourages me to give the best I can give to the university as well.

I know that we have a proud history at South Carolina State, and as a child who grew up in the '60s and a former history teacher, public school administrator, and middle school principal, I can weave that history lesson together in my mind at times. So I'd be happy to entertain any questions that you have for me.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Certainly.

Questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: I thank you for your willingness to serve. Tell me a little bit about your of late activities that you've been involved in South Carolina State on or either off the campus, if you've had any involvement.

MS. DICKS: I've had --

SENATOR SCOTT: I noted something from the -- from the other role. You spent a lot of time doing the K-12, which I'm very happy to see you did that.

MS. DICKS: Yes, I --

SENATOR SCOTT: But tell me about some other involvement.

MS. DICKS: In the 2000s, being that I fully believe in being a life-long learner, I earned an educational specialist degree in 2007.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. DICKS: And I followed up with my doctorate of education. I think that was 2014.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. DICKS: So I was on campus a lot of times during the time when I was taking classes.

Additionally, some of those classes were offered at the Rock Hill School District office. It was a cohort group, is how I really got started in the educational specialist. And that cohort was very inclusive. There's been a lot of discussion about diversity. So that was one of the times that different individuals were able to have positive impression of South Carolina State and to participate in the educational process as well.

In addition to being a student, I attend -- I'm a -- we're season football ticket holders, so I'm at the home games and some of the away games. I participate in alumni activities. I'm a member of the York-Chester alumni association. I am a life member of the national alumni association.

As I've stated, my mother is a supporter, and she rarely misses an opportunity to give back and to attend the foundation's gala. So we were at the gala a couple weekends ago, and being that my mother is 92 now, she made a plea. She put that plea out early on, for all of the siblings and their family members to attend.

I have another -- I'm the oldest of three girls. I have another sister who also attended SC State, and I -- and then I have what we call the USC Gamecock action. I have my middle sister who went to USC, and her daughter is currently a senior journalism major at USC. So everybody was there.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Clary? No.

What's the desire of the committee?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable. Seconded. Any discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you.

MS. DICKS: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: With proxies, Davis...

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You're unanimous. Thank you, ma'am.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Now we go to South Carolina State University, Tab T, Doward Harvin from Florence.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. HARVIN: Good afternoon.

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

MR. HARVIN: It's Doward Keith Karvel Harvin.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: All right. Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. HARVIN: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. HARVIN: Just that I'm happy to be here, happy to be back before you again, and I'll try my best to answer any questions that you all may have for me.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions? Comments?

Give you a chance to catch up.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

MR. HARVIN: While you all are --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Scott -- what, would you like to add to your--

MR. HARVIN: Go ahead.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yes, sir. Tell me about your experience since you've been on the board.

MR. HARVIN: I've had a -- I've had a very pleasant experience. Being one of the new guys to join the group that was already there, I feel like they did a good job of bringing me up to date and -- or bringing me up to speed about what was going on at the university.

They allowed for me to ask questions, even the dumb ones, so that I could figure out some of the small details about things that were going on. And even, you know, when we disagreed -- which I think any competent board should disagree -- I think it ended with the vote, and we moved on to the next thing.

And so I think that's a testament to just the group of people that we already have serving on the board of trustees.

SENATOR SCOTT: So how healthy is the board now?

MR. HARVIN: I think it's -- I think it's going fine. When you say "health," what is it --

SENATOR SCOTT: Healthy, growing, moving forward.

MR. HARVIN: Oh, yeah, yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: Getting the issues solved. How healthy is the board?

MR. HARVIN: So we have -- well, they, they had already created committees to deal with particular issues, and so the committees meet as needed. Sometimes we create ad hoc committees to deal with specific

issues, and so just as quickly as we can, we try to deal with what we have been presented with.

And so I haven't -- I think it's pretty healthy as far as that, that issue.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is a favorable report.

(Motion is seconded.).

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Unanimous. Thank you, sir.

MR. HARVIN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Appreciate your willingness to serve.

MR. HARVIN: And just briefly, I would like to thank you all for continuing to support the university.

SENATOR SCOTT: You're welcome.

MR. HARVIN: You all have a blessed day.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And so I move to Tab 8, At-Large Seat 12, Ronald Friday from Blythewood.

Good afternoon, sir. For the record, if you would, give us your full name.

MR. FRIDAY: Ronald D. Friday.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. FRIDAY: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. FRIDAY: Yes, sir.

Good afternoon, Honorable Peeler and distinguished members of the South Carolina College and University Screening Commission. I am grateful and honored for the opportunity to share my expertise obtained from the military and the institutions of higher learning with their prestigious history and South Carolina State University.

Throughout my journey and professional and personal life experiences, it is always -- it has always and always will be about excellence to ensure our greatest resource -- in this situation, the students -- prosper through a transformational process.

With your endorsement today, I can assure you with my unquestionable commitment, courage, competency, and candor, South

Carolina State University will become an institution that others will choose to emulate.

Finally, almost two years ago, I appeared before this committee, receiving a favorable recommendation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments? What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And Ms. Davis.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And Ms. Davis.

MR. FRIDAY: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you for your service to the nation.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. What rank were you?

MR. FRIDAY: Command Sergeant Major, sir.

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CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'd like to call this back to order.

I'd like to welcome the Senator from Newberry, Senator Cromer, here as an observer.

SENATOR CROMER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Now we're on the University of South Carolina, 1st, 2nd Judicial Circuit, Miles Loadholt from Barnwell.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. LOADHOLT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. LOADHOLT: Miles Loadholt.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good. Now let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. LOADHOLT: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. If you'd like to take a seat, you can make a brief statement if you desire.

MR. LOADHOLT: I'm Miles Loadholt from Barnwell. I grew up in Fairfax, South Carolina, which is in Allendale County, and attended public schools and graduated from Allendale-Fairfax High School.

I was fortunate enough to go to the University of South Carolina, graduated from business school in 1965, and I've been fortunate to go to

law school and graduated from law school in 1968 and have been a practicing attorney in Barnwell since 1968.

My wife is a University of South Carolina graduate, and my daughter, who was here earlier, is a University of South Carolina graduate and is a practicing attorney in Columbia. And to the best of my knowledge, my wife and my daughter are the only mother-daughter homecoming queens in the University of South Carolina history.

But I've enjoyed serving the University of South Carolina. I served on the board of the Western Carolina Higher Education Commission for 25 years and served as vice chairman for 20 years. And I've served on the University of South Carolina board of trustees since 1996. And I have established scholarships for deserving students at the University of South Carolina Salkehatchie, at the University of South Carolina Aiken.

And my wife and I have funded and endowed a professorship at the University of South Carolina School of Law, and my wife's portrait and my portrait both are -- I -- are on display at the new University of South Carolina School of law. And to the best of my knowledge, my wife is the only non-lawyer who, or non-judge, that has her portrait displayed at the law school.

But I've been very active. I've been a member of the Gamecock Club for something like 52 years and the alumni association for the same amount of time, I assume. And I have devoted a lot of my time and efforts towards serving the University of South Carolina and would appreciate the opportunity to serve an additional term on the USC board of trustees, and I'll be happy to answer any questions.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

Any questions or comments?

Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Loadholt?

MR. LOADHOLT: Loadholt.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Loadholt.

Mr. Loadholt, how long have you served on the board of trustees?

MR. LOADHOLT: Twenty -- almost 24 years.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Twenty-four years.

So recently you all made decisions on the president of the university.

MR. LOADHOLT: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: What or who influenced your decision, and how did you vote?

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, I -- a lot of things influenced my decision, but it -- how I voted was my decision.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And what --

MR. LOADHOLT: And the matter that we took a vote on was that we would continue the search committee.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Loadholt, I'm a type of person if I ask a question, I just like a direct answer. So I will repeat the question for you.

MR. LOADHOLT: Well --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And I would hope that you would answer --

MR. LOADHOLT: -- there were several votes taken.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Okay. Well, the vote that I'm speaking of or I would like to have an answer to, or the question that I would like to have an answer to, is what or who influenced your decision?

And I know there were probably a lot of things that influenced your decision, but I would like examples.

MR. LOADHOLT: It was the -- the persons that were presented as finalists to the board of trustees that I studied their backgrounds, interviews, and things of that nature, and that was the thing that influenced my decision.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Okay. My next question, if you heard me earlier, is I speak a lot about diversity. The University of South Carolina, in my opinion, falls very short when it comes to diversity. As a member of the General Assembly, as a member of the South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus, I've heard on numerous occasions of the disparities in reference to African Americans or people of color at the University of South Carolina.

I asked you earlier how long have you been on the board. You told me 24 years. Mr. Loadholt, how do you feel the University of South Carolina has progressed since your service on the board of trustees in reference to African-American enrollment, African Americans in administration, African Americans as faculty and staff, as well as the enrollment, which I feel are deplorable, when it comes to the number of African Americans in the law school there at the University of South Carolina? Can you answer those for me, please?

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, as far as the number of African Americans, I think the University of South Carolina does a reasonably good job.

We graduate more African Americans than any other school in the state. We graduate more than South Carolina State. We graduate twice the number of Clemson -- than Clemson does. And we also have increased the African-American percentage of -- I mean African-American graduations by, I believe, 50 percent over the last three years. So we're making progress.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And Mr. Chairman, this is my last question, slash, comment.

So I asked you several questions. I asked you questions about the influence that you encountered in reference to the decision on the president. I asked you about your service there and the number in reference to how -- when you started to now in reference to African Americans in the university system, be it students, employees, whatever.

And that is where I find issue, did you know, Mr. Loadholt, is that when you can sit here and tell me that you think it's fine and I know that it's not. That's when I have an issue.

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, I didn't say it was fine. I said we could do better.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Loadholt, and I'll just ask you a simple question. Did you vote for or against General Caslen to become the president of USC?

MR. LOADHOLT: Against.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Loadholt. I appreciate your service.

In looking at what transpired earlier -- or last year and then the subsequent SACS investigation of the university, what steps are you seeing that are being taken by the board to address the issues raised by SACS and to prevent this type of thing from occurring in the future?

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, this is the SACS report, and they -- the administration is --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Could he speak into the microphone?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes, please, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Please speak into the microphone, so we can...

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. LOADHOLT: -- formulating a plan on exactly what we're going to do to comply with the SACS --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I didn't ask you what the administration was doing. I was asking what you as a board member want to do to improve the situation because, at the end of the day, the board of trustees sets the policy.

And the recommendation that the administration might make might be one that's not acceptable to you. What do you envision doing? Because you've read that report, I assume.

MR. LOADHOLT: Yes, sir. We've had a -- establishing a committee on governance, and that is in the process of being done as we speak.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You've been a member of the board now for 24 years. What type of orientation and training did you receive when you came on the board, and what transpires now that enables you to be a good and effective board member?

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, we have a number of board retreats where we have -- it's very educational. The new members of the board go through a very intensive orientation.

When I was first elected to the board, we went on like a three-day orientation program, and so a very good orientation program exists for new members. And the education is -- is continuous through board seminars and retreats and things of that nature.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you for your willingness to serve, Mr. Loadholt.

I want to go back to a comment you made a minute ago. What is the total student population at USC? Undergraduate, because you mentioned y'all graduate more than South Carolina State.

MR. LOADHOLT: About 52,000 total.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. So if you -- so if you take the 52,000, and your enrollment of African Americans is 5.3, just your enrollment by itself is going to be more students than at South Carolina State College. Of course you should be graduating more African-American students than South Carolina State College.

There's a report called the Hechinger Report that talks about the many flagship schools that leave blacks and Latino students behind. If you have not seen the report, I would invite you to look at that report. It includes the flagship school of the University of Mississippi, University of South Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, and Delaware, and I would -- and I really hate to report it, but Mississippi had a better enrollment than we did in South Carolina, did you know, of ten percent. Our number was pretty close to what Delaware was at five percent.

I would simply say to you, I don't know what's going on with your intake system as it relates to enrollment, but your numbers really don't

look well. And so to be a flagship university, I would be expecting a little bit more than what I'm actually seeing.

And it's a lot of work, but you've been there 24 years, so you've had a chance to really take a look at the system and to understand the system probably a little bit better than some of your other colleagues that have been there for a while. So I don't know what your plans are to try to help improve that intake system, but I will say to you, it's broken. It's really broken.

And so to make an open statement like that I think is one that -- you know, I'd like to see you back with a little bit more facts than just say to a school that has about 2,200 kids and I've got 52,000 kids -- I mean, that's no comparison and a no-brainer.

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, I think the key to that is keeping college affordable.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well --

MR. LOADHOLT: And I think that's the key to it, and we've had so many cuts in -- that required some type of increase in tuition and things of that nature. But I think, you know, if we could get our state funding to where it was...

SENATOR SCOTT: When you came on 24 years ago, what was the cost of tuition at the university, if you can remember?

MR. LOADHOLT: I can't give you an accurate figure. I mean, I don't remember. You know, 24 years ago, I can't remember.

SENATOR SCOTT: It was probably 4- or \$5,000, compared to --

MR. LOADHOLT: Probably. For an in-state tuition now, it's right at \$15,000 a year.

SENATOR SCOTT: Some say 22 to 24 when you add up all the extra frills that go with it.

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, when you add up the meal plans and things of that nature...

SENATOR SCOTT: So I'm saying, a lot of it has been -- what tuition costs has been for other expansion programs on the -- on the campus other than the educational part, construction, and a lot of the other universities have done the same thing. And so we have to, outside of just saying, did you know, the General Assembly needs to do more, because we are giving more so that eventually you start freezing it.

What I do know is in 2001 when we did the lottery, we had just about enough money to send the kids to school. But it's now become a vehicle for colleges and universities to say, if you come here, we want you in the top 25 percent to get the lottery funding, and then the other 15,000 that you mentioned is what the kids actually pay. So we have to accept some responsibility at these institutions for increasing that funding.

On the diversity side again -- and that report, if you have not read it, please read it. It looks at how many of these students actually stay inside South Carolina, and that's been a real issue, keeping South Carolina students in South Carolina, and we've not done very well with that at all. And I think a part of that, when you look at the report, has been we're taking too many out-of-state students and using that as an ability to balance our budget, which creates some major problems in our institution.

And so I'm just saying, for someone who's been there that long, please take a look at financial stability and going forward because it may -- because the General Assembly is not going to restore what it doesn't have. And so --

MR. LOADHOLT: Right. Well, our number one -- our number one responsibility is educating the students, the qualified students, from the state of South Carolina. No question about that.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon and thank you for your service on the board. How do you feel or what's your thoughts on the student government president and/or -- and/or a faculty representative being on the board?

MR. LOADHOLT: I would support them being voting members of the board.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: You would support them being voting members?

MR. LOADHOLT: I would, yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. What is the average time from freshman to graduation? But before I leave that other question, why would you -- what is your thought process on having them serve as voting -- you would have them serve on the board as voting members of the board?

MR. LOADHOLT: Yes, I would. I -- because they participate in board meetings, and they give us a lot of information as to exactly what's going on with the faculty and the student body.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you, sir. Thank you for that follow-up.

MR. LOADHOLT: And they participate in the board meetings. They just don't vote.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. So how much is the average time from someone becoming a freshman to the time that they graduate at the

university? What percentage of those, do you -- or is that information you can get?

MR. LOADHOLT: I -- I don't --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Is it on the average?

MR. LOADHOLT: I don't have that information right in my head at this time. I can't -- I could guess at it, but I mean, I would -- I would just be guessing.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, if you could just maybe get that information and provide it to us --

MR. LOADHOLT: All right.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- I'd appreciate that.

How do you -- how do you rate -- you know, things are changing, and jobs, they're saying a lot today that maybe the jobs ten years from now don't even exist today. How is the university focusing on workforce or classes for individuals, for the students? I'm talking about students and getting that education to make sure that they're going to have the ability to have a job when they get out of -- and get their degree.

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, I'll just point you to our nursing program. We have the -- our nursing graduates have the highest average most anywhere of passing the nursing exam. And we've got to make sure that our law school graduates pass the bar exam, our medical graduates, and other students, yes.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Do you know what percentage of your law students pass the bar?

MR. LOADHOLT: I think it's in the -- around 90 percent, the first time around.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And since your last screening to now this period of time, how would you classify your attendance of board meetings?

MR. LOADHOLT: In 24 years -- well, you asked --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, but you can go ahead and go back 24 years because we were talking about --

MR. LOADHOLT: I probably -- I probably have missed a handful of meetings in 24 years. Now, I -- we do have a lot of them by telephone now. Okay. But I probably have missed five in 24 years. I mean I wasn't there or on the phone.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So am I hearing you that a lot of your board meetings are by teleconference rather than in board meetings -- in board

--

MR. LOADHOLT: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: What percentage of those would be teleconference versus --

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, we have committee meetings, you know, if you've just got one matter to take up, you know.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, how about regular board meetings, regular scheduled board meetings, do you have a lot that are calling from their home?

MR. LOADHOLT: We probably -- full board meetings, we probably have eight or nine a year, full board meetings. Now, we have plenty of committee meetings.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I understand. But of those board meetings, do y'all allow conference call in, people to conference call in on those meetings?

MR. LOADHOLT: Yes, yes. If somebody -- if somebody is out of town or if somebody is ill.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Is the majority of the board teleconferencing in, or are the majority of the board there?

MR. LOADHOLT: No, I mean it's -- it's maybe one.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Okay.

MR. LOADHOLT: Maybe one.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you, sir. I appreciate it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else?

Mr. Loadholt, a question on tuition. Out-of-state tuition at USC, the tuition abatement, you're familiar with that, right?

MR. LOADHOLT: Somewhat.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Who made the determination at USC to allow tuition abatement for out-of-state students upward of 50 percent? Did the board, or was that an administration --

MR. LOADHOLT: It was not a board -- it was not a board decision that I -- that I recall.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you think it should be?

MR. LOADHOLT: I don't recall voting on that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. You touched on voting members of the board, restructuring the board, and you said that you would be in favor of that, of a member of the faculty or the president of the university -- the student body president to have a voting -- be a voting member of the board.

MR. LOADHOLT: I would support that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you support further restructuring of the board?

MR. LOADHOLT: I'm sure I would. Yeah, I would have to see definitely what it was, but, yes, I sure would.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: There's three bills before us now, S.798 and S.878 and House Bill 4752. Are you familiar with those bills that are pending?

MR. LOADHOLT: Yes, I am.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you have an opinion on those?

MR. LOADHOLT: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you care to share that?

MR. LOADHOLT: I would be not in favor of those, and I can tell you why. I just don't think that all of our trustees should come from Greenville, Richland, Lexington, and Charleston.

For instance, the -- what I represent -- I represent Aiken, Barnwell, and Bamberg County. Okay. We would not have a trustee if those bills would pass. So that would leave Aiken without a trustee. That would leave USC Salkehatchie, the two campuses, you know, without really a trustee, and possibly USC Beaufort.

And I think that, you know, if we have eight or nine campuses, I think they deserve representation on the board of trustees. I don't think all of the trustees need to come from the three or four largest counties.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I would --

MR. LOADHOLT: And I just think that, you know, when you have as many students as we do, it looks like -- for instance, the College of Charleston, as I understand it, has one campus, but yet they have 22 trustees.

So I just don't see why -- you know, you're talking about reducing the number of trustees and putting them all from the large -- from the metropolitan, larger counties. I don't think that is fair to the university system.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You're a trusted member of the bar. What's magic about a judicial circuit?

MR. LOADHOLT: What's magic about a judicial circuit?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes, sir.

MR. LOADHOLT: Nothing. I mean --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you think they're equally divided? Are they equally divided in population?

MR. LOADHOLT: I don't think they are.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you think they should be? I'm talking about the pool of candidates.

That's what I think we ought to have, is the congressional districts like -- almost all our higher education institutions, they come from congressional districts. I think USC is the only one that's limited to judicial circuits.

I just wonder what's -- what's magic about judicial circuits. It's not equal in population. I was just curious on your thoughts.

MR. LOADHOLT: Yeah, but --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You were talking about giving smaller counties a better shot. I think they'd have a --

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, we have a statewide system. I don't know that anybody else has a statewide system. We have 52,000 students, as I recall, and I think nine different campuses.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What does that have to do with judicial circuits?

MR. LOADHOLT: Well, it gives you trustees that are from a smaller county that has a University of South Carolina campus.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Is there such a thing as having too many attorneys on a board?

MR. LOADHOLT: I have no control over who serves on that board. That's the responsibility of the Governor and the legislature. I -- so if they want to put the attorneys on the board or if they want to put whatever, I have no control over that, who serve -- who serves on our board.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Like this committee has no control of the candidates that offer also. And I thank you for offering.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. President?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator from Laurens, Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You would advocate for faculty/staff or student or both, voting representation on the board?

MR. LOADHOLT: I would.

SENATOR VERDIN: I've never been to one of the meetings. I'm chagrined to say that. I wish I had attended a trustee meeting. I was invited one time by one of your former trustees.

But how many participate? How many faculty/staff and students participate in a board meeting? You said they participated, but they don't vote now. How many are we talking about?

MR. LOADHOLT: One faculty representative and one student body president.

SENATOR VERDIN: Okay. So you would just advocate for the one and one, the one to represent the entire faculty and staff and the one to represent the entire 52,000 students?

MR. LOADHOLT: That's correct, yes.

SENATOR VERDIN: No more? Certainly no more, or should we consider more?

MR. LOADHOLT: No, no more.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What's the desire of the committee?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman, I move unfavorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I move for unfavorable.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Second, with -- pending additional information.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is seconded, favorable report.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, I'm sorry. You said --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I said unfavorable.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: He said unfavorable.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Unfavorable? No. I'm sorry. Okay. I don't second that. I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Correction. The motion is unfavorable. Is there a second to that?

SENATOR SCOTT: I'll second it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion?

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, it's not a debatable motion, but I'm going to --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Use a microphone.

SENATOR VERDIN: Yeah, sorry.

I know it's not a debatable motion, but short of a failure of the motion, would either the Representative who made the motion or the Senator that seconded it, would you consider other motions?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you withhold that motion for further discussion?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I will respect the Senator and give him that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We can have further discussion on the motion.

Senator Verdin, however you want --

SENATOR VERDIN: I move we withdraw the motion temporarily.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I temporarily withhold, and seconded.

Now, Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would just ask do you contemplate -- do you contemplate a wider candidacy at some point going forward in 2020? Is that what you would anticipate?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I didn't hear you.

SENATOR VERDIN: Would you be thinking that we would be looking to reopen?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Yes. Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Chairman, I think we've had these discussions over the last few weeks about the fact of the qualifications for being a trustee at the various colleges and universities that we screen.

And given the way the system is established, you know, to simply find someone unqualified is extremely difficult, and while I respect my good friend and colleague, Representative King, and Senator Scott and understand some of their questions and concerns, unless someone has some sort of criminal or financial issues, then it's very difficult not to present them to the full General Assembly.

And please keep in mind that there are ample opportunities for candidates to file. We have a process in place to do so, and I think that rather than this committee, given the criteria that are very little criteria that we consider in screening candidates, that it would be, to me, up to the will of the General Assembly whether or not a candidate is rejected. Even unopposed, that can happen.

So with that being said, Mr. Chairman, that -- I can't think of anything else that we could do in that regard that would not reflect poorly on this committee from the standpoint of we just don't have criteria that's established like Judicial Merit Selection and committees like that, PSC. So I think we need to be very careful in doing that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir. A point well taken. I couldn't have said it better.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman, may I speak on it?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And while I respect Judge Clary, I believe that we have an obligation as committee members to vote our convictions. If -- while I understand where Judge Clary's coming from, I make the argument that if we are just going to bring people in and ask a couple questions, I believe staff can actually screen people, if they don't have a criminal background or if they don't have issues, and just send them straight to the General Assembly as well. So I take my job very serious. I'm not saying that

none of you all do not. I just believe that we are not a rubber stamp of just hearing people and voting them out.

And I will not just vote people out just to vote them out. I'm here for the best interests of the university as well as the citizens of South Carolina. And so it's nothing personal with any of the candidates, but it's what I believe as I represent 40,000 people that I have an obligation not only to those people in District 49, but for all citizens of this state.

And so, Mr. Chair, while Judge Clary has given his explanation, I believe that we are not just a rubber stamp committee. I believe that people have to take us serious. And if that is what is going to happen, I believe that people would just apply, be found qualified, and sometimes be the only person in the pool, and we'd do a disservice to the school as well as to the citizens of this state to just go along to get along, and that is my opinion.

So I still leave my motion up as an unfavorable, and, you know, I will respect the decision of this committee.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King renews his motion of unfavorable.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Would he withhold it for a just a -- I would like to at least speak.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

And I concur in the remarks by the judge, Representative Clary, but I also want to say that I do believe that all of us that are here are doing what we think is in the best interests of those that we serve and the state of South Carolina and U of SC from that standpoint. So I don't want us to leave thinking that some of us are not doing that, even though we may have a difference of opinion from that standpoint.

And I do think that we are limited to -- and have done on many occasions the job of this -- under the leadership of Chairman Peeler, a great job of doing our due diligence and taking this job and responsibility to its utmost from that standpoint, and we have acted accordingly based on the criteria that we have before us. So I will be voting against the motion.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It's a real shame we've come to this. I can't -- I've been on this committee for at least ten years. I don't ever remember us having to go through something like this before for a board trustees.

You could have avoided this many months ago if you had made a decision on the president and stuck with it instead of backing out on this, and then you got all this negative press. Now you've got all these other issues.

I'm going to have to vote to abstain. Nothing against you personally, Mr. Loadholt, but I may vote to abstain on all of them because it's a black eye to our state, in my opinion.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary, do you have Ms. Davis's proxy?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

Am I pleased with the actions of the board of USC in the past year, let's say? No. Could they have handled the president's search better? Absolutely. Did they ultimately make the right decision by hiring their new president? I agree with what you did ultimately, but not how you did it. I've always said that there's no wrong way to do the right thing. Well, the board of trustees at USC proved me wrong in that.

I disagree with Mr. Loadholt on his idea of restructuring. I think we need to restructure the board. The board of trustees' candidates should come from congressional districts and not judicial circuits. It's unfair the way it's divided now. Is there is room for compromising on any of these bills? Yes.

But you heard the term micromanage. It's not up to this committee to micromanage the University of South Carolina board of trustees. To express our concerns, yes. To ask questions and make recommendations, yes.

But if our charge on this commission -- on this committee is to find the candidates qualified or unqualified, there's nothing that I've heard today that would prove to me that Mr. Loadholt is unqualified to be a member of the board of trustees at the University of South Carolina. He's been for 24 years qualified. Why all of a sudden is he not qualified? So I would vote that he is qualified when the time comes.

Anyone else like to make a comment? Hearing none, Representative King renews his motion of unfavorable, seconded by the Senator --

SENATOR SCOTT: I think he withdrew the motion, so it's open for a new motion.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: No, he just --

SENATOR SCOTT: He made a -- he renewed it?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: He's renewed it.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And I'll second it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion? We'll take it to a vote. All in favor of the motion of unqualified, raise your hand. That's two.

All opposed to the motion, raise your hand. That's four.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I abstain.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And one abstain.

Is --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And I have Ms. Davis's proxy.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: How would she vote?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: She would vote aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Aye in favor of the motion?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: No, she would vote against that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Against the motion.

So the vote will be two to five. The motion fails.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I would move that we find him qualified.

SENATOR VERDIN: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Ms. Davis...

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Same vote with the proxy.

All opposed, raise your right hand. Two are not, and one abstains.

Thank you, sir.

MR. LOADHOLT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And that's -- that's, Mr. Loadholt, with the understanding you're going to bring the information to staff.

MR. LOADHOLT: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And my motion so notes that, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: 14th Judicial Circuit, Tab J, Rose Newton from Bluffton.

Good afternoon, ma'am.

MS. NEWTON: Good afternoon.

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

MS. NEWTON: Rose Buyck Newton.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. NEWTON: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

Chairman Peeler, distinguished members of the committee, it's my honor and privilege to have the opportunity to come before you today. I am Rose Buyck Newton, originally from Manning, South Carolina. I currently reside in Bluffton.

I am currently serving the 14th Judicial Circuit Seat, filling an unexpired term left open in 2018. I currently serve on the academic affairs committee and chair of audit and compliance. I'm seeking election to this board again because I believe I can bring a unique and diverse perspective to this board and help move the University of South Carolina forward.

I look forward to your questions.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good afternoon, Ms. Newton.

MS. NEWTON: Good afternoon.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Being a relatively new member of the board, tell me what type of orientation, training you received when you became a member of the board.

MS. NEWTON: I received -- I had a full day orientation in the president's office, going through each committee, what the university does. I think I left after four or five hours thinking I had it all under wraps, and then you get into a board meeting and realize you're drinking from a fire hose.

So I do think that we do have a good orientation system, but if I were to make recommendations to change, I think there are probably things that we can do ongoing. I think that continued training, whether it's through AGB or on our own -- I know in audit and compliance, each time we have a committee meeting, we have some type of training in that committee meeting.

But overall trustee training I think could help, to be a part of some kind of ongoing orientation, because it is -- there are lots of things going on at the university, and it's not easy staying on top of every single thing going on with eight system campuses throughout the state.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And moving back to a question that I asked Mr. Loadholt a few minutes ago, the SACS report that was received by your board, and I understand that the administration is working on some sort of a proposal.

As a board member, what steps do you envision being taken to ensure that the issues addressed by SACS are not repeated in the future?

MS. NEWTON: Well, there are a couple of different things. I think I relate it to -- I'm a banker by trade. We're examined by the FDIC and the State Board of Financial Institutions. So when they come in and do a review, we might not be in love with what they say, but it's the law, and our job is to answer any questions that they have and put together a plan to address those issues.

From the board's perspective, I think, looking at the -- our bylaws, making committee changes, restructuring our committees, our code of conduct, our -- the addition to some ethics in our bylaws are good first steps to make sure that we are doing our fiduciary -- doing our fiduciary duty to the citizens of South Carolina.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: As you can tell from us sitting around this table here, I think that disagreement is a very positive thing. That's part of the process that we engage in on a regular basis.

Insofar as the -- your short experience with the board --

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- how do you view the system that you have in place there for governance? I know you have a committee system that makes reports to the full board, and you talk about how -- what a large area of responsibility you have and the volume of information that you have to digest.

Tell me how you view governance with this board and with the size of this board.

MS. NEWTON: I personally believe that we do need to have substantial changes to encourage our board members and to really understand what our role is, that we are a policy body, and to really just reiterate what our responsibilities are.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you talk about, in answers to the questions that were presented to you in your questionnaire, ways to attract students. Growth has been controlled and predictable, but that growth is limited by infrastructure needs.

Talk to me a little bit about your infrastructure needs that you've seen since you came on the board.

MS. NEWTON: Well, one infrastructure need that we've been currently working on is student housing, and that's one issue that we have going forward, building a new housing area on part of the campus.

Another issue that we look at is deferred maintenance of all the buildings that we do have, and that's an area that needs a little more work. I think the -- in our last board meeting, 14 years is the threshold, and we're at 16, and so we're looking to work on that.

But clearly, in terms of enrollment, I think all the data shows all universities in the next five to ten years are going to be squeezed just based on the number of students that are out there within the -- within our universe. So we're going to have to be really smart about what we do and what we spend money on.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: A couple more questions --

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- and then I'll be through.

The biggest weakness of U of SC is the ability to make quick decisions and make changes that are quickly implemented, and communication.

From an outsider's view, it looks like when you need to make a quick decision, you can't. But if you don't need to, then that glacial system of what we call a university sets in. So how do you change that?

MS. NEWTON: I think that's a -- I think that's a pretty valid point. There probably are things that can move quickly, but overall, the slug of

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REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And I'm not casting a stone at you because I feel the same way around here.

MS. NEWTON: No, and I think you -- you disguise it: oh, it's government; it's red tape. But I think it just comes back to making sure your priorities are in the right place and helping encourage those priorities to -- that we can move when we need to.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: My last question is -- you have a new president.

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: What sort of strategic planning is going on now for -- you talk about the competition that there's going to be for a shrinking pool of students.

And we've got a very large system of colleges and universities in this state, and I don't think many people realize how that market is going to be driven and how it's going to contract. So what sort of strategic planning are you doing, without giving away any trade secrets?

MS. NEWTON: I think, from a 30,000-foot view, we're really trying to look at demographic numbers, understanding what pressures there will be, so that we can put procedures in place to protect ourselves when those numbers come to fruition.

At the moment, we tend to continue to have enrollment that's bigger than the year before, and the numbers at the moment look even bigger than last year. So making sure that we continue to have a 30,000-foot view, that we don't get trapped by, oh, we have all this enrollment now, understanding that the day is coming.

But -- and in terms of strategic initiatives, I do think the president is doing a good job of taking a deep dive, of saying where are we and where do we want to go and being cognizant of what does that mean in terms of facilities, in terms of faculty, in terms of programs. Are we -- are we offering what we need to offer? Is it -- the new budget model that we're working on, making sure that we, as board members, understand what's profitable and what's not profitable and that we're allocating resources appropriately.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, ma'am.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome, Ms. Newton.

MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: A couple of questions.

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I'm reading in your answers where it says, Address the issue of diversity on campus. The Columbia campus enrolls more minorities than any other college.

Is that correct? I didn't know that.

MS. NEWTON: Oh, I think I -- if I misspoke, I'm sorry. I think I meant within the state that we are -- graduate --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: With all the colleges, like Winthrop -- is that more than Winthrop? And I don't want to put you on the spot.

MS. NEWTON: No, no. I -- if I misspoke, again, I'm sorry. I thought that -- or my data showed that we graduate more African Americans than many other colleges within the state.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, maybe some, but I'm not sure that's correct.

MS. NEWTON: Well, I'll be more than happy to go back and check that if I misspoke.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. And the other is -- I'm going to ask this question of each candidate --

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- and that is, did you vote for or against General Caslen to become the president of the University of -- U of SC?

MS. NEWTON: In our July meeting, I did vote against the president, but specifically in -- I was against the procedure and how it went about.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you.

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Representative Whitmire asked one of my questions.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Sorry about that.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: But how do you think the process and the appointment of the university president went, and if you could change the process, what would you do to change it?

MS. NEWTON: If I could change the process, I think I would have -- I would have continued on the path that we originally took, which was appointing an interim. I do think that --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: You've answered my question.

MS. NEWTON: I'm sorry?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: You've answered my question.

MS. NEWTON: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon.

MS. NEWTON: Good afternoon.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Good to have you back with us.

MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I've got a couple of questions. I want to follow up on the one that I, again, did as well about sitting on the board

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MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- as far as the student government president and/or a faculty representative, your position on that.

MS. NEWTON: My position is that I do believe that faculty -- we should have faculty and student government representation on the board, but that they not be a voting member.

And specifically what's come back from when we looked into some of that from the Association of Governing Boards, I think there are only maybe 10 or 15 percent of colleges that have their faculty or a student government rep vote. And the argument is that they'd have to recuse themselves so often because most everything that's voted on affects them.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And since joining the board, describe for me your attendance as a board member.

MS. NEWTON: I'm pretty sure I have a 100-percent attendance record.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Is that in person for board meetings, or is that joining by teleconference.

MS. NEWTON: I have joined by teleconference -- called meetings that, you know, we --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Right. Sure. Not a normal -- a regularly scheduled meeting. I understand.

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir. And I do know that I've called in at least one -- I think it was a board meeting. Sometimes it may be a committee meeting.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: It's a rarity is what I'm hearing.

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir. I'm there.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And I want to, if I could, one more question, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: You're talking about the university can approve. Can you speak to me where it says, I believe, that -- that every day is a day to get better; I believe that as a board we're working collectively to promote advancement throughout the entire university system.

That would be one. But then it says, If you're looking for an area that I'm working on to advance, I'd really like to hear -- to improve in conflict of interest policy and implementation of proper procedures around conflicts of interest system wide.

Can you speak to me on where those conflicts of interest are?

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir. This is an issue that falls in audit and compliance.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Which you have good experience from being an executive with a bank.

MS. NEWTON: I hope so.

We have -- we are working to strengthen our conflicts of interest policy throughout the university and also strengthen the management plans that go along with those conflicts of interest. So if you have a faculty member that is working on a grant and there may be some conflict of interest, you know, they're disclosing it, but we need to make sure that we have a management plan that manages those conflicts of interest.

And that's just an area that we, as audit and compliance, are really working to strengthen. And -- and --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

MS. NEWTON: Does that answer your question?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: That does.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else?

What do you do with the bank? What's your position?

MS. NEWTON: I'm the chairman of the board. And --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: How long have you been chairman of the board?

MS. NEWTON: I've been chairman of the board for three years. Before that, I was the marketing and advertising VP.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you feel comfortable with your bank board if it operated like the USC board?

MS. NEWTON: I will say I've learned a lot from my experience at the University of South Carolina board.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You're not an attorney, but you're a pretty good witness.

Restructuring the board, are you familiar with the bills dealing with the restructuring of the USC board?

MS. NEWTON: I can't say that I could quote them to you verbatim, but I'm --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: But you're familiar with them.

MS. NEWTON: I'm relatively familiar with them, yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You serve within a judicial circuit. Are you -- with the residency clause within a judicial circuit. That's unique in the state.

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I think it should be congressional districts. The majority of the higher education institutions' governance comes from congressional districts because, with each Census, they're equally divided. Judicial circuits are not equally divided.

The gentleman before you said it would skew the large counties from the smaller counties. I think just the opposite. I think you get -- that's me, because I'm authoring one of the bills.

But with restructuring of the board, if one of these bills passed and we did a do-over, would you run again?

MS. NEWTON: I would run again. I do think that, based on my judicial -- I mean my congressional district, I may not -- I may not come out victorious because I'm in Charleston's judicial district and I'm from Bluffton.

I believe -- and not that you've asked me this question, but I'm going to tell you. I believe it's the General Assembly's purview. If you believe that we need to be restructured, then that's, you know, your responsibility and your ability to do.

I would if -- again, if you asked me, I would say, as someone from Manning, South Carolina, half of my graduating class went to USC Sumter. I am very involved with USCB in Beaufort and Bluffton and the Hilton Head campus.

I would ask that you consider the rural parts of South Carolina, making sure that the system campuses are represented appropriately. How that looks, again, that's not really up to me, but I would ask or recommend that we just make sure that we don't -- we have good representation from all over South Carolina for that -- for the campus system as a whole, because it is different.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And I appreciate that. And any discussion -- and speaking of compromise, some of the feedback I've gotten is maybe seven congressional -- one per each congressional district may be too small. What do you think of maybe two per congressional district? That would be 14.

MS. NEWTON: One recommendation that I had heard was, if you had two, making sure that they didn't both come from the same county. Maybe that was a way to...

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Right.

MS. NEWTON: The other -- in one of the bills -- again, you didn't ask me this question, but I'll give you my feedback. I think in one of the bills that we're required -- that maybe the alumni association president or that representation -- representative had to live in the state of South Carolina.

With our system, we have 300,000 alumni. Some are doing amazing things across the country. I do believe that we might be shortsighted by not having someone who -- a great opportunity for someone to serve who doesn't live in the state. One of Ohio State's board members -- of course it is Ohio, Ohio State -- lives in Hilton Head and is on the board of rep - - board of trustees for Ohio State.

So there -- that would just be another area that I would recommend looking at.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: One last quick question from me. Out-of-state tuition --

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- the out-of-state abatement. I call it a kickback.

MS. NEWTON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Were y'all -- were you part of that decision, or was the board -- who made that decision to award the abatement for out-of-state tuition?

MS. NEWTON: I've not really been in discussion about abatement other than trying to figure out exactly where we have abatement, where we don't, how it works. So I think those decisions were made before.

I do think we have to balance -- balance the budget and figure out a way. But ultimately, we do -- our mission is to educate South Carolina citizens, and we need to make sure that we do that.

I'm proud of -- I think 97 percent of all students are accepted at the University of South Carolina that apply, and I think that's a -- that says a lot. I'd like to work with Molly Spearman on figuring out how we can get that other three percent qualified to come to the university.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well, I can appreciate your comments about the satellite campuses. We don't talk about those enough. It seems like all we're talking about is right here in Columbia. I appreciate you bringing that up.

MS. NEWTON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable report.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor of a favorable report, raise your right hand.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Plus Ms. Davis.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Plus Ms. Davis. Unanimous.

Thank you, ma'am.

MS. NEWTON: Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, the 8th Judicial Circuit, Tab K, Brian Harlan from Laurens.

MR. HARLAN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir. For the record, if you would, give us your full name.

MR. HARLAN: Brian Christopher Harlan.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. HARLAN: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If you'd like to take a seat, and make a brief statement if you desire.

MR. HARLAN: Yes, sir, and I will be mindful of your time. I know what your schedule's been like today, but I am appreciative of you giving me time to speak.

I am Brian Harlan. I reside in Laurens County. I am a graduate of the University of South Carolina. It is my desire to offer my services to the

8th Judicial Circuit, and I believe in the mission of USC to educate our state's citizens through teaching and creative activity.

In my profession, we make access affordable to all. We serve a diverse population, diversity in age, race, and gender. We are for all. And, again, it'd be my honor and privilege to serve while utilizing my talents, my experiences, and my leadership skills.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Thank you.

Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I appreciate your willingness to serve. I have a question for you. I have been interested in application fees that the institutions charge here in South Carolina, and they vary from \$95 all the way down to zero. There's only one institution in the state that is state-supported that does not charge an application fee.

Would you be in favor of a zero application fee for South Carolina students, or South Carolinians as a whole?

MR. HARLAN: For the residents of South Carolina?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: For the residents of South Carolina.

MR. HARLAN: I think we need to make it affordable and accessible for our residents to apply for any of the universities in the state, so, sure, I would -- I would recommend that or suggest that or support it.

My daughter recently transferred in, and she transferred to the University of South Carolina at Union, and she was not charged a fee.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon.

MR. HARLAN: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you for being here with us.

I wanted to circle around on a couple of these themes that I've been talking about and just wanted to get your position on -- about the student government president and/or a faculty representative serving as a member of -- a voting member of the board.

MR. HARLAN: Sir, I appreciate your question, and I think it is very important that you hear all the details if you're serving on a board, you hear all the matters brought forth before you make a decision. Having

the student body president and a faculty member present I think is a valuable resource.

At this time, I probably would not suggest them being a voting member of the board because they might be changing out. We don't know what the attrition might be, how long the student body president serves or how long the faculty member might be there.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: You mentioned, too, in your -- as far as biggest weakness is improve the facilities, and I believe your position as -- with the YMCA there, you probably have to deal with facilities. Are there something specific that you're talking about in improving facilities, or is there a lack of facilities?

MR. HARLAN: No, sir. I think, as we want to encourage more persons and more students to apply, we have to continuously make improvements to our facilities and make it attractive.

There's always a need for improvements. And, yes, sir, at the YMCA, we always have to improve facilities. We have a lot of persons coming in and out, and our funds are limited as well.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So as far as focus, my concern about making sure that the students not just at U of SC, but of -- all our higher education institutions are preparing our students for marketability and for the workforce, do you see a particular need, or would you have any thoughts on what needs to be addressed from that standpoint as a board member?

MR. HARLAN: Well, I understand we have one of the largest systems in the state, and we should be very proud of that.

And I think -- I think Ms. Newton just alluded, our satellite campuses need representation as well, and that's why today I was proud to say my daughter goes to USC Union at Laurens. She is a transfer student from Presbyterian College and just started this semester. So I think marketing those to students is a statewide effort.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So let me -- help me understand. So it's University of South Carolina at Union.

MR. HARLAN: I'll -- it is a University of South Carolina Union --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Right, but give me the --

MR. HARLAN: -- class, but they have -- offer classes in Laurens.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: In Laurens.

MR. HARLAN: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Could you --

MR. HARLAN: They offer them at a Laurens campus.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Where they --

MR. HARLAN: Part of Union.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Where they rent facilities, or are they complimentary facilities?

MR. HARLAN: I'm not certain about the facilities. Maybe Senator Verdin can help with that. But some of the classes are instructor-led in Laurens, and some are online classes as well, and some are Skyped in.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And then the last question I've got, Mr. Chairman, is in your role, your position, would there be anything that would preclude you from being an active member of the board and attending meetings in person?

MR. HARLAN: No, sir. Prior to submitting my letter of intent in November, I had a conversation with my volunteer board of directors at the Lakelands YMCA, and they understand my desire to serve, and they understand that my role, if elected and approved by you and the General Assembly, will require me being away some.

I also am prepared to take time off, PTO, for that time just -- I'm taking PTO today to be here.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR VERDIN: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator from Laurens, Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, just as a follow-up to that question, Mr. Chairman, from the Senator from Oconee, I would just say that Mr. Harlan is indefatigable. He's ubiquitous. And if he wants -- if wanted my job, I would just go ahead and give him the key. I appreciate his willingness to serve us.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: He made the best choice.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well, I don't know lately.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Harlan, for your willingness to serve. How long have you been at the YMCA?

MR. HARLAN: I've been there 15 years.

SENATOR SCOTT: Tell me of any changes that you've seen since at the YMCA in terms of the collective community coming together.

MR. HARLAN: Yes, sir. I was very fortunate to be hired to serve and lead the family YMCA of greater Laurens. We had some tough decisions to make in Laurens as we inherited a YMCA that financially may have been struggling. We had to make some tough decisions.

Not everyone was favorable, but not everyone wanted to make donations to retain our indoor pool. So we were probably the first

YMCA that took the walls and the roof off, and now we have an outdoor pool, saving us more than \$80,000 a year.

So that is some changes. But going forward, we have grown our association. Earlier I mentioned the Lakelands YMCA. That is -- as of January 1, 2019, we are now the Lakelands Region YMCA of South Carolina, which encompasses Gray Court, Laurens, Greenwood, Abbeville. All that service area is under our association.

SENATOR SCOTT: Have you seen a change in the community as a whole coming together, using the association in the 15 years you've been there?

MR. HARLAN: Yes, sir. In Laurens, we have approximately 4,000 members. That would be about 1,800 member units.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. HARLAN: We are sitting inside the city limits of Laurens and with a population of less than 10,000, so we feel pretty confident there.

We also are serving outside -- outside the county as well, and now that we have -- Greenwood and Laurens are one, we have -- you can go to either Y -- you can go to -- if you're a member of the Y right now, any of you, we have nationwide reciprocity. You can go to any YMCA in this state and the United States.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, the reason why I asked that, because with your broad experience in the Y and working with all families and all type of different cultures of families coming to the Y, you become a real asset to the university, especially with recruiting very diverse kids who come from different backgrounds and different socioeconomic families. And a lot of them, after 15 years, know you quite well.

MR. HARLAN: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: And to be able to answer questions, if your outreach has been good to them and the level of comfort is there.

MR. HARLAN: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: And if -- what you've just indicated, that you've had the opportunity to take a small Y and make a very good regional Y, says that people in that community really care about you and have helped you to grow that Y.

MR. HARLAN: I've been very fortunate to have a good group of volunteers, volunteer board members as well as program volunteers.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Harlan, thank you very much for being here and for offering to serve. With the experience that you would bring to this board and

realizing the issues that have presented themselves to the board in the last couple of years, what do you bring that's going to change the culture there?

MR. HARLAN: I think I bring a different perspective to the board. I know my profession is very unique compared to the current board members on the board. And as Senator Scott mentioned, I think I'm bringing in a different voice. I think I have opportunity at the YMCA to -- and in the communities that we're serving -- to bring a different voice to it.

I did want to mention this. Our YMCA association is serving 53 percent Caucasian and 47 percent minorities and other. So we are getting to hear from different persons, and there's a lot of different programs that we offer to meet the needs of all of our participants.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Going back to that SACS report, have you read that?

MR. HARLAN: I have not been privileged to that report.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I have one last thing.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I just want to say thank you. You are probably one of the first, if not only, persons that, since I've been here, that have come and talked about diversity without me having to ask that question. So thank you.

MR. HARLAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR VERDIN: Favorable report.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'll second it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin moves favorable. Seconded by Senator Scott. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. And with Ms. Davis, it'll be unanimous.

Thank you, sir.

MR. HARLAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I appreciate your willingness to serve. Please don't run against Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Yeah, please. That was really a joke.

MR. HARLAN: Okay. I like his -- I like his wife a lot.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well, everybody likes her. If you need some fun, I think a fund-raiser for the YMCA is to get the Senator from Laurens to do the Village People "YMCA" for you.

SENATOR VERDIN: Oh, I'll do the dunking booth.

MR. HARLAN: No, we -- he could serve as our Santa Claus downtown next year if he keeps letting that beard grow.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Don't let that cherub face fool you.

Okay. All right. Leah Moody from Rock Hill flew in from D.C., and her arms are so tired. And she's going to have to fly back.

Welcome.

So if there's no objection, we'll move to the 16th Judicial Circuit under Tab B, Leah Moody from Rock Hill.

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

MS. MOODY: Leah Moody.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. MOODY: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. MOODY: Good afternoon, and thank you for letting me come in. I did just come in from D.C. I had a scheduled conference that I went to on Saturday. I'm still there -- well, I'm not still there. I'm here, obviously, but I'll be going back to finish up that conference as well as a couple of meetings that I have later on this week.

So thank you for having me and thank you for allowing me to serve. It's good to see you all.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Questions?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chair, I have a question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Ms. Moody, I have a question for you. First, let me just start off by saying, how did you vote in reference to the selection of the president?

MS. MOODY: I voted no.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: How do you think the process was of the appointment of the university president?

MS. MOODY: So I voted no, the basis being because I wanted to follow the process that we had decided originally.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And what was the deviation of the process?

MS. MOODY: Well, it deviated after our -- we decided to go back to the drawing board, basically. And so it deviated at that point, and we came in and we voted. But up until that point, I felt like the process was going good. We had a little -- a little disruption for various reasons, but I felt like the process was going as good as the search process could go.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So why do you think the process changed?

MS. MOODY: Because we had to vote. That changed it. We had to come back and vote.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Now I'm lost.

MS. MOODY: Okay. So we had a process -- up until that point, we had a set schedule and --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I understand that part.

MS. MOODY: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Why did the process change? And I'm asking you to be honest.

MS. MOODY: I don't know why it changed. I mean, we -- we decided -- well, I'll just say it frankly. You know, there were some protests, and we had a discussion, and we decided to go back to the drawing board basically, and then there was a change, and that's when we were -- we had a meeting, and we were...

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So when you went back to start the process over, did you actually start the process over?

MS. MOODY: Well, we didn't --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Or you all went straight into voting?

MS. MOODY: No, we didn't go straight into the voting. There was a period of time where we were not -- we had -- it was a Friday we were meeting. We were going to vote. We decided not to vote, and we were going to, you know, go back to the drawing board basically.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: When you went back to the drawing board, how many --

MS. MOODY: We didn't get to get to that point. The Governor asked us to vote.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Okay. So now I'm confused.

MS. MOODY: I mean, at least that's what was in the paper. I mean, I'm not sure what you're trying to get to.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: What I'm trying to get to, how many candidates did you have to vote on? Because --

MS. MOODY: When we first came to the table and we presented to the campus, which there were campus interviews, we had four candidates.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And the four candidates, was the present person in the four?

MS. MOODY: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And so you voted on one of the four?

MS. MOODY: Not on that day.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: But eventually?

MS. MOODY: Well, he came out of that four, yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: What or who influenced your decision to vote no?

MS. MOODY: The process influenced my decision.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: The process did.

MS. MOODY: I wanted to follow the process.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: How -- so you are the only African American on the board; am I correct?

MS. MOODY: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: What do you do as the only African American on the board to assure that African-American students across this state -- or citizens, I should say, across this state have an opportunity to attend the University of South Carolina, not only just the University of South Carolina, but your professional schools?

MS. MOODY: Well, I think we all -- because no one person acts on their own, I think we all work together to have a diversity plan. We've taken steps to put in place our diversity plan, and that's not an easy task.

So, you know, we want to give all students the opportunity to have an education or receive an education from our flagship university. We want to have diverse students. So diversity doesn't just -- it's not just race. It's not just gender. So in everything we do, we look at diversity.

But I think in order for us to achieve it the way that -- what is apparent to everyone on the outside looking in, because, you know, perception is reality, we have to set goals and targets to make sure that we are at least paying attention to it and that we have metrics. And so that's something that we've strived to work on.

So we've received a lot of awards for our diversity efforts, and, you know, we -- I think we do pretty good. But in everything that we do, there's always room for improvement. When we have students that graduate, you know, the numbers are going to change. When we have to comply with federal, you know, reporting or what have you, the rules change there.

So one of the things that most people that don't know is that, you know, at one point in time we just reported, you know, based on students being -- they could be multiracial. So we might just report them as being African-American if they were African-American and Hispanic. But that has changed, and I think -- I've written an article on behalf of the university that appeared in The State newspaper that addressed that issue, but most people don't really pay attention to that.

So when you report to the federal government, they require you to report a certain way, and so that might dilute what some people perceive as being a high African-American number for diversity purposes. But it's really not necessarily so. It depends on the student and what they decide to -- what they elect as their race.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: What are you doing as a board member to make college attainable in reference to costs, as a board member, for all South Carolinians who are qualified to attend the University of South Carolina and graduating without having such high debt?

MS. MOODY: Sir, we try to pay attention to what our budget is. We pay attention to what the costs are. So like when a program comes before the board and you're talking about implementing a new program, we have to like study what is the cost, right? Just like much of what you guys do, and ladies do. You pay attention to the fiscal impact.

So we pay attention to that. So when a program comes before us, we know that there's a fiscal impact, fiscal implications. One of the things we're looking at now is looking at if you have scholarship money for students, does it cover the tuition?

When we deal with any kind of building that we're going to, you know, bring online, we pay attention to how much does it cost. Because some things that other schools don't necessarily do -- something I learned when I served on the CHE was that some people don't build in the -- you know, the deferred maintenance that's going to last for a building over the span of the building being online. So we pay attention to those kind of things.

So I think that we -- in everything we do, we pay attention to cost because we do not want students to have to pay exorbitant prices to come to school, taking out debt, loans. That's an issue that we've done presentations on in the student-trustee liaison committee -- but it's now -- now has a new name.

But we did that at one point in time because students were taking out loans and they were not aware of what that looks like on the other side of graduation. So -- we want students to graduate on time, so we pay attention to all of that in all of our committees that we have. I know most people think that we're not paying attention to that, but we do pay attention to that.

Rose Buyck Newton, who is a good friend of mine who went to Girls State with me, she has a student -- her daughter is a freshman. So we are definitely fully aware of how it impacts, you know, the parents because I talk to Rose a lot, and Rose might be fussing in my ear about it, but that's something that we pay attention to.

And then I have constituents who -- their parents call, and so we want to pay attention to how it impacts our citizens.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: This is my last question. In making college reachable and obtainable, sometimes it's not obtainable just from the very start or the beginning of it because -- you may not believe this - - because of application fees.

What do you think about South Carolina students or citizens not having to pay application fees to apply to colleges and universities that are state-supported schools?

MS. MOODY: That's a slippery slope.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: There are schools in South -- one school in South Carolina that is doing it.

MS. MOODY: I know, but that's still a slippery slope because we get so many applications. I think every year that I've been on the board, we've gone up in applications.

And so you have to have people who go through and process those applications, so that's manpower, right, to go through those applications. And then if you open it up and it's no application fee, the con to that is - - and this is just thinking about this -- the con to that is, you're going to have more applications than what we already have.

So then who's going to go through all those applications and go through and, you know, get those weighted scores and make sure that the students, you know, hitting the marks in terms of the criteria because we do have to balance out -- you know, when you're talking about diversity, you've still got to talk about, you know, having the SAT and making sure they have the academics there. So how do you balance that out, and then you have staffing?

So that's something that...

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

MS. MOODY: That would be a good thing, but that's something I would say you'd have to do it on case-by-case basis based on need because it would impact the staff that we have if you had -- say, for instance, our normal application level we have was 6,500, and then if we had -- if we opened it up and we had about 10,000 to 15,000 applications...

But if y'all told us to do what, we could do that, but I'm just saying.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I took that as an I'd rather not say.

MS. MOODY: I'd rather not say.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good to see you again, Ms. Moody.

MS. MOODY: Good to see you as well.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And thank you for your service.

A couple of questions. Number one, tell me about -- I see that you're the South Carolina director of community partnerships for Juul Labs. Tell me about that.

MS. MOODY: So it's changed now. I'm now the community director of partnerships for the region, so that's why I'm in D.C. sometimes and Texas and Oklahoma, Georgia, and Florida.

So what I do is, I'm not practicing law in the traditional sense as how I came in contact with you. I'm working with partners. We are going through a process. We've gone through reorganization, and we have to do a lot of education. Part of that is youth prevention.

At one point in time when I was just doing South Carolina, that was working on how we would engage with the state partners in terms of corporate -- social responsibility. That's not sales or anything like that. That would be in terms of putting in place measures that would be consistent with youth prevention as well as trying to carry out our mission.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And so it sounds like you travel a great deal in that job.

MS. MOODY: I have been lately.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And how does that impact your ability to continue to serve as a member of the board at U of SC?

MS. MOODY: Well, it hasn't. I think I've been doing more stuff for USC this year than anything. Since April, it's kind of like ticked up a lot. As well as being on the presidential search committee, I just -- well, I guess we're not finished, but I'm hoping we're getting to a finish on it, but we just went through the process of searching for a provost. And so I served on the provost search committee, as chair of the academic affairs committee.

I work remotely, which gives me the opportunity to work from home, so I'm able to come to Columbia much more frequently and be on campus, on the Columbia campus more so, or any other campus.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I'm a little confused. You say -- you said that the -- you referenced the presidential search and said that that was almost finished?

MS. MOODY: No, the provost search.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: The provost search. I'm sorry.

All right, now, you have read the SACS report?

MS. MOODY: I did, about a month ago, two months ago.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay. And of course when SACS gets involved in things, you normally just like those visits that they make over that cycle where they're coming in to -- much like a legislative oversight committee, what we do here for an agency.

But when you have done something that raises the ire, puts you on the radar of an organization like SACS, from reading that report, what do

you take away from it, and what do you suggest can be changed to improve that process in the future?

MS. MOODY: We ought to follow our processes. I think we're taking the steps. We had a hard look at ourselves.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, did you have a process in place that was that ironclad that you were supposed to follow?

MS. MOODY: We had a process in place. This is the first time I've ever -- that I recall that there was a public vote that we were -- that there was -- there was a lot of debate. I think it was healthy.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yeah, which is not a bad thing.

MS. MOODY: No, it's not. So that's the first time I've -- that I recall in the 11 years that I've been on the board that we've had a public -- you know, we've -- I've never voted differently.

Like, you can tell when you're not going to, like, be successful in something that you want. I can tell that. I can see the writing on the wall that I'm not going to win on this issue just by the discussion that we may have, whether it's an open session or just -- you just get a feel of how people are going to -- which way they're going by the questions they're asking.

We've never taken something to the -- we've never taken something to a vote where it was that divided. So that was interesting, but I think it was healthy because -- I think it was healthy.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And let me ask you this. You're the only African American on the board.

MS. MOODY: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: How many --

MS. MOODY: Females?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- other women besides you and Ms. Newton?

MS. MOODY: Superintendent Spearman.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

If I could briefly -- and good afternoon.

MS. MOODY: Good afternoon.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And, one, I want to commend you for keeping your commitment to being with us here this afternoon, from that standpoint of honoring that, and Judge Clary had mentioned about your attendance.

I wanted to hear your thoughts on should the students and faculty be represented on the board.

MS. MOODY: Well, they're on the board.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Right. But should they be voting members of the board?

MS. MOODY: No, because -- so I've thought about that. I think I've heard that question before, and I've heard them express their desire to have a vote.

But we have to go under ethics, and so our South Carolina Ethics Act requires us to -- as board members, we have to disclose any conflicts of interest, and I think it would be a conflict of interest for students and the faculty to be voting members because much of what we deal with deals with their ability -- like for faculty, salaries, you know, policy that may impact them. Students, tuition.

So a number of things, I think, that will come into conflict with their position. I think it's important for them to be there and hear the discussion that we may have, but I think that it would come into conflict with our ethics laws that we have for the state, and I think that it would probably put them in a situation where they're not necessarily advancing their views and giving us their full -- the full picture of what we need to be doing for the university versus, you know...

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. So under ways to improve the school, the university, budget transparency. Can you speak to me briefly on that?

MS. MOODY: Yes, sir. So we're in the process of changing our budget -- well, we've changed our budget model. So we had -- at one point in time, it was centralized, so now it's going to be a different kind of process where we can see it and it's much more understandable.

Based on the way it -- I'm not the finance person of the board, but based on what I've done in terms of my research, my understanding is it is going to be where the deans control kind of their budget coming from their college, and they will be able to align the objectives and the priorities of their college, and it's going to match with the budget.

And so hopefully the budget -- the dollars will match with the objectives of the budget, and everybody will know which targets we're going -- where we're going, and hopefully this will help us address, you know, whether we're -- well, it will cut out, in my opinion, the fat.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

One further question, if I could, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Referring back to the SACS report --

MS. MOODY: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- do you know how that review -- was that SACS report as a result of a normal process, or was that a special review by that agency?

MS. MOODY: What do you mean? So like --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: The SACS report, what generated them -- was that a normal -- you come up for SACS review every so often.

MS. MOODY: Oh, that was -- right. So it wasn't a normal review. This was based off of this situation.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And what brought that to their -- did y'all make a request for them to review?

MS. MOODY: No. I think there was like a complaint. I'd have to look back at my documents to see exactly what --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Facilitated it? Okay.

MS. MOODY: -- what brought it to their attention. I want to say, from my recollection, that it was the press, and then there was a complaint that was filed. And so that's not the normal process, if you're talking about the review that they would --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yes, ma'am.

MS. MOODY: -- normally have for, you know, accreditation.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: This was outside that normal review?

MS. MOODY: Yes.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate your answer to Senator Alexander a while ago about the students voting or not.

I just want to make a little statement here. In 2003, I was elected to the House of Representatives and assigned to the education committee.

MS. MOODY: What committee?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Education committee.

MS. MOODY: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: So I took my seat, and guess who was sitting next to me?

MS. MOODY: Who?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Bessie Moody.

MS. MOODY: Who is that?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Who is that?

I want to tell you, she was just a joy to serve with. She -- if every representative and every senator had as much commitment to public

education in this state as your mom did, we'd be a lot better off. So I just wanted to say that she was a wonderful lady and I miss her.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Amen.

You mentioned budgeting. As a board member, do you vote on tuition increases?

MS. MOODY: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You do.

Do you vote on out-of-state tuition increases?

MS. MOODY: Yes.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you vote on the abatement of those out-of-state tuitions? Kickbacks, I call them.

MS. MOODY: Kickbacks?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Abatement.

MS. MOODY: Well, I know what it is. I have my little cheat sheet. I think I have it in my checkbook here.

It's the -- we have it -- there's a statute section for it, and I laminated it because that typically comes up with people asking about abatements.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: So you all do vote on it?

MS. MOODY: Well, we don't vote on it. There's a statute section. Do you want me to pull it out? Can I pull it out?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: No, that's okay.

MS. MOODY: Okay. So there's a statute section on it that talks about -- it breaks it down, how it works.

So there's different ones. There's one for the veterans. There's one for student athletes. There's one for -- like we have the border students. There's one -- there's another one -- I want to say if you are receiving a scholarship. So there are different ones, but it's under a statute section, so it's based on that. And so I have to look at that sheet to tell you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Am I correct in my recollection that one time over half of out-of-state tuition was abated at the University of South Carolina?

MS. MOODY: I do know what you're talking about. That's an issue that has come up, so I do know what you're talking about exactly. So that's why I laminated it, because the question came up.

And so I wanted to make sure that I understood it fully, and I -- at the time, we had a different person that was with our office in the finance department, and so I asked about that. And that made me laminate the card because there was so many different statute sections for it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else? What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And Ms. Davis.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And Ms. Davis.

And I'm assuming, Senator Verdin, you vote yes?

SENATOR VERDIN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Unanimous.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chair, I didn't know if I should vote for her or not since she lives in my district, but...

MS. MOODY: Well, maybe I should say the same thing when I'm there. I don't know whether I should vote.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Well, Mr. Chairman, I will tell you now, she does do a little mail-out for me every once in a while.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: It's going to take more than that.

Unanimous.

Thank you so much.

MS. MOODY: Thank you. Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And have a safe trip back.

MS. MOODY: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: All right. Now we'll go to 4th Judicial Circuit, Tab L, Eugene Warr from Lamar.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And this is a judicial circuit?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What did I say?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yeah, you did. I'm just...

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yeah. I wish it was a congressional district. Fourth Judicial Circuit, yes, sir, Eugene Warr.

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

MR. WARR: Eugene Preston Warr, Jr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good. Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. WARR: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. WARR: Yes, sir. Thank you, Senator Peeler.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

MR. WARR: I'm Gene Warr. I'm from the small town of Lamar in Darlington County. I have been on the board now for a little over 16 years. I attended the University of South Carolina and graduated in 1981 with an undergraduate degree from the business school.

I then went home and farmed with my father and uncle even though my father told me it was not a good idea. And after that, for a while I returned to the law school and graduated in 1985. I've practiced law in the -- primarily in Darlington County and Florence County, the Pee Dee area, since that time. I've also done some other business things besides practice law.

In my time on the board, a little over 16 years, I have served on, I think, every committee. I was the chairman of the board from 2012 to 2016. I have done my best to attend all meetings. If I've missed a meeting, it's only been one or two. I do my best to prepare for meetings and to participate in a meaningful way on everything that comes along, and I believe that I have done a good job as trustee. I've done it certainly to the best of my ability.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

Questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you. Yes, sir.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

During your tenure as chairman of the board -- and I think it was probably under your chairmanship when we really began to talk about growing diversity on the campus -- what was your viewpoint and what direction did you take the board in trying to improve your numbers from where the college was back at the time?

MR. WARR: Senator Scott, I think that our previous president, Harris Pastides, deserves credit on that for coming to the realization that, given the population of our state, we had to do more on that in making it more of a focus.

I know we look at the numbers, and there are various ways to look at numbers, statistics, percentages, this sort of thing. The bottom line is, the total number -- numbers have gotten better. They've gotten a lot better in the last three years particularly. And although there are certain statistics and certain percentages that look poor, I don't think those are really reflective of the whole story.

Ms. Moody just mentioned that there was a time, for some reason I don't really understand, that someone who maybe was mixed-race would be counted as a certain type of a minority or as an African American when really that was not entirely accurate. The federal government now requires us to report in certain more precise ways. So if you look at just African-American numbers, that would look lower. I think if you went back and viewed it apples to apples, it would look somewhat better.

But during that time, Senator Scott, we talked about it all the time. It's a constant issue. We realize that we don't do enough to look like the state of South Carolina.

Our president now, Bob Caslen, made a statement early on, actually in his interview, that stuck with me, and I think it well states how this needs to be viewed and how it needs to be dealt with. When he was a general in the Army serving in Iraq for a good many years, he stated that he knew that if the Army did not look like the people of this country, our military would lose the support and respect of the people of this country.

When he became the superintendent and the president of West Point, he realized when he got there that West Point did not look like this country, and he went to work in the years that he served as president at West Point to make it different, and he did. He made huge changes while he was there.

He's made that same commitment to us. He made that same commitment to us in his interview, and he has, I think, a real proven record in being able to do it.

One thing he also mentioned is that when he was at West Point, in those years there, he also had a goal of changing the faculty to where it looked more like this country. He felt like he still had progress to make on that, but I think he also views that as something to be tackled.

It's not something that can be dodged. I've lived, obviously, in this state my whole life. It comes up -- many people are rightly interested in it. We must be a university that educates the people of this state. Who are we? And if we don't do that, then there's obviously a problem with that.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, tell me how the other smaller extensions of the university numbers are so much better than the Columbia number?

So it can't be that much of a problem if that's the goal to make those changes. Beaufort, Spartanburg, others, and I know that it's a feeder. Those who can't get into one university end up going to the other. But when you transfer them to the other, you continue to bring the numbers down. So what's going on with that thought process, why their numbers are so much better than the Columbia numbers?

MR. WARR: Senator, I believe that a good bit of that is financial. It is much more affordable to be able to stay home or near your home and go to school. And for many people across this state, to be able to go to one of the regional campuses is a much more affordable option, and the cost of living is better for them because they're in home -- or at home. The tuition is less, and a lot of times for many people, it's a financial decision.

I think that a good many of those people that go to those regional campuses would qualify to come here, but they decide for other reasons

to stay closer to home. Now, that's certainly not all of them. I don't mean to imply that at all. But there is a good number of them like that.

As far as the Columbia campus goes, I believe that when we look at - that there's simply a -- there's a term for it, and it's -- we look awfully hard at SAT scores. There's, as you know, an ongoing debate about do we pay too much attention to SAT and LSAT and those kind of scores from people.

I'm one of those people that's long believed that that's the case. In my family, my older sister was certainly smarter than me, but I made somewhat better on the SAT than she did. I knew from then on -- I knew from that time, back when I was 16, 17 years old, that something was wrong somewhere.

And so I don't know that that's a -- we put a lot of emphasis on it, and until we come with a formula that better looks at the overall potential of someone, we'll have a problem with it. Now --

SENATOR SCOTT: Gene, how long is it going to take to do that? Because you're -- it's the same cost to go to the other outlying portions of the university, or is it cheaper for me to go to Beaufort or Spartanburg than to come to Columbia?

MR. WARR: I think, Senator, what we have is that -- like USC Sumter near me, not too far from where I live, is that most of those students are within a driving distance of USC Sumter, and I think that's true of a lot of our campuses, that they have the option to stay at home or near home and that saves a lot of money.

SENATOR SCOTT: But they're not -- but not -- and I don't mean to be confrontational, but you're telling me, looking at SAT scores, they are different than looking at the Columbia campus.

MR. WARR: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Then I think you've got your hand on the -- on the pulse or on the problem, is your numbers are not getting better because you've decided to lock in on your SAT scores, and that's just it.

And until you look at something other than SAT scores -- in many cases, it still doesn't make the determination whether a kid is going to make it or not because some kids develop a little slower than others do.

MR. WARR: I agree with what you're saying. I believe that there needs to be a shift of that formula. We've talked about that too. As you probably know, some schools in this country are starting to shift away from it.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'll say this to you. When I look at the region -- I used Mississippi, and I gave examples of Louisiana, Georgia. They're doing a lot better than we are. So there's something they're doing that -

- are doing right that we're not doing. And whatever that is, we need to kind of figure that out.

If SAT scores is the deal, given all the students that are applying to the Columbia campus and they send them out to these other schools, then something is wrong with that because I thought it was a large university system and not just a system that one school is so much more different than the other schools.

MR. WARR: Yes, sir. Senator, I agree with the general idea of what you're saying there. I agree with it. I would not -- I would not argue with that.

SENATOR SCOTT: So what does that mean in terms of -- in terms of -- you're the policy maker on the board and been on the board 17 years.

MR. WARR: Almost 17, yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: So when does the -- those who were put in charge to be policy makers actually -- actually make some real decisions as to how we get our numbers better?

MR. WARR: Well, I think that we have made those decisions. I think that we've done things, such as the Gamecock Guarantee program, which is addressed to first-generation students, and also financial help.

We -- it's my understanding that over the past three years we've increased our African-American enrollment by a substantial -- or numbers, substantial numbers. And so we're taking one step at a time, and I think those steps have had success to continue on.

SENATOR SCOTT: When you say "substantial numbers," what do you mean, because the university has grown so much too?

MR. WARR: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Your intake system is taking in more kids, so is that you've taken in a substantial number of students or you're taking in students in proportion to what your growth numbers have been or slightly under your growth numbers? Because in the past, your numbers were better, and your numbers now don't look like they looked, I guess, seven, eight years ago.

MR. WARR: Percentages were better then, but the total numbers are better now, and I do believe a good bit of the percentage is being less because the percentages are counted differently than they were eight to ten years ago.

SENATOR SCOTT: What do you mean by that? I don't quite understand that.

MR. WARR: Well, it's my understanding, Senator, and I'm certainly not an expert on this, but what I've read is that up until I think -- I want to say around six or seven years ago. That could be wrong. That -- that if a -- if a young person is applying and they are part African-American

and part some other race -- maybe they're whatever. It could be just multiple options. They would typically be counted as African-American.

But that is not the way it's counted now. Now it's a stricter, more -- more options to pick from. It's more precise. It's to just who -- what your background is. And so it's counted differently, and so those numbers look differently just based on that alone.

SENATOR SCOTT: So in essence before, the kids you were counting as African-American weren't truly African-American, so your numbers were inflated.

MR. WARR: Well, they were -- they were -- Senator, that was the way that, to my understanding, the government, the federal government, and other schools counted at that time too. So with comparison to other schools, it would have been true.

SENATOR SCOTT: So in essence you're saying that the numbers that are reflected now are really the true numbers --

MR. WARR: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and were really the true numbers back then. And if that's the case, it means that we've not put anything in place to be progressive.

MR. WARR: I think that -- what I mean, Senator, is the numbers now are accurate. The numbers back then were accurate as far as the way they were measured, the way that the divisions were made. And I think that -- I believe that I'm going by the way the federal government broke this down for us.

When the federal government made a decision to change that, we of course complied with that, which, again, means there are more options, more possibilities, and so when you look at the African-American percentages, it will be a lower number.

SENATOR SCOTT: So I think when I looked at your population, the number is 34,731. And if you're five percent of that, you're less than 16 -- you're less than 1,800 students in a five-percent population.

MR. WARR: Senator, we've graduated on average about 2,600 African Americans per year over the last five years. I think it is about 2,600 averaged over the last five years per year, which is somewhat more than other school in the state.

SENATOR SCOTT: That's minority students, not African-American students because your percentage is -- if it's five percent, you can't get 2,600 because that means you have a larger pool, or it simply means that those kids who came in stayed longer and that made your graduation numbers be larger. The class I actually came in, I didn't graduate in that

class because some of the work was five years, six years and makes my numbers look inflated for graduation.

And earlier someone had said, well, we graduate more students than South Carolina State, which I thought was not a good thing to say when you -- when they're at 2,200 and you're at 34,000.

MR. WARR: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: So I mean -- so that was kind of a ridiculous statement to say.

But I'm saying when you actually look at it and you actually look at those kids who actually came in that class, with that class, your number of 2,600 looks good on paper, but in reality, it's not -- it's not a number statistically that actually matches the four-year program. So what I'm saying is that sounds good, but until your intake system actually grows where you've got an actual number and they're actually graduating with their classes, then you didn't get it inflated on the back at 800 students.

Thank you.

MR. WARR: Yes, sir. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good afternoon, Mr. Warr, and thank you for your service on this board.

In looking at your 17 years of experience, you've seen a lot happen in that period of time, and I'm sure you've read the SACS report.

MR. WARR: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And after reading that SACS report and after going through what you and the other trustees have over the last -- let's just say year, year and a half, what is your takeaway from the way that you had been doing business and the way that governance is going to be in the future with your board?

MR. WARR: That we all need a better understanding of what's considered appropriate and inappropriate. We -- I believe that every member of the board was doing their best to operate as a trustee and ambassador to the school and do the right thing, respond to people, whoever they might be, with questions and problems.

But I think that we learned -- after a day and a half with the AGB folks back in January to address that report and the problems that came up in that report, we've learned that it's not the way we thought it was and that we must be more mindful of the walls that we have to keep around us. Sometimes that's going to result in frustrations with us and for us.

And I think that when you look at the rules that the universities and colleges in this country are expected to go by that we had gotten to the

point of trying to be effective and thought we were doing the right thing, but because we had not had occasion to run out of bounds, we were just running as hard as we could to do what we thought was the right thing.

I don't think anyone on our board ever had any ill intention or any idea that they would be doing something that wouldn't be considered appropriate by AGB or by SACS. But we learned a good bit from the missteps, and I do believe it will make us a lot better going forward.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You know, I -- that's a really good answer. You know, you used the word appropriate and inappropriate. It makes me hearken back to another episode that we've had with a board in this state where we talked about prudent and imprudent.

And, you know, we need a wake-up call in this state insofar as our boards of trustees are concerned. I think that we've seen it from -- from your board to Santee Cooper, PSC, and it's just that people just get used to doing things the same old way, and the reason I asked about discussion, because I think discussion and disagreement's a really good thing

And this idea of being a rubber stamp and just doing what you've done in the past or what feels good is not going to work anymore, and I think that's the reason that it's generated so many questions and so much discussion.

So let me ask you one question, and I haven't asked anyone else this. In your committee system, I assume you have a compensation committee that deals with compensation above a certain level at the university.

MR. WARR: We do not have a separate compensation committee. The executive committee typically handles that. But, yes, sir, above a certain number, we have to consider it and approve it.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And when your committees meet and report back to the full board, are all of those committees, their reports, are they acted on by the full board, or are some just received as information?

MR. WARR: Some are received as information.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Which ones would those be?

MR. WARR: Those are just the general, ongoing, routine things that maybe someone from the university comes up and makes a presentation about what's going on at your school, with a building, whatever, an update, and that would be as information.

But anything that has to be approved, voted on and approved by the board, would then go to a vote.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Chairman?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much.

MR. WARR: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I guess you know what my questions are as you've been here.

MR. WARR: Sure.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: How did you vote on the president?

MR. WARR: I voted for General Caslen as president.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

Were you influenced from the outside forces as to your decision, and if so, how, and if not, how it was not influenced?

MR. WARR: Representative King, I was not influenced by anyone. I made that decision that I supported him early on. I thought he was an outstanding candidate, and I think he will be an outstanding president, and no one influenced that decision. I made that decision myself.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Can you explain to me why the process changed? If you were so assured that he was the most qualified -- did you vote to change the process?

MR. WARR: No, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So can you explain to me how the process changed?

MR. WARR: I will do my best.

We were meeting on the last Friday in April of last year. We had the four candidates to consider. All four came before us and talked briefly. We thought we were going to take a vote that day, but we had a lot of debate, a lot of debate that day. And the general feeling apparently was that it would not be good at that time for us to move forward with that much disagreement, strong disagreement, about who the best candidate was.

At that time, we decided to go the route of making -- asking Brendan Kelly, the chancellor of USC Upstate, to serve as interim president, which he agreed to do. Along the way, last summer -- we go on through May, June discussing this, where are we. We go into July, and we have a vote. We have a meeting where a vote is taken.

It was my understanding at the time that General Caslen, who I believed all along was still the leading candidate -- I think it's fair to say he was still the leading candidate. I hope that's fair to say that. That he was strongly considering another job, and a decision was made that we needed to decide yes or no, do we want him as our president.

When we voted in July, I voted for him, as I would have in April.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Were you contacted by the Governor?

MR. WARR: I was.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I'll just say this, that I have constituents that contact me all the time about students there at USC that live or reside in my district, or I -- and I will reach out to the institution.

And it strikes me odd that sometimes I can't even get a phone call back as a sitting legislator for a constituent concern and I'm someone who can vote for you all to be on the board of trustees, versus the Governor calling, who has no vote in this, and you all move swiftly.

Thank you.

MR. WARR: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

And thank you for being here with us this afternoon.

I want to just turn to that consistency I've had about your board members and whether the student government president and/or a faculty representative should be a voting member. I understand they serve as ex officio at this point in time; is that correct?

MR. WARR: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So what is your position on that?

MR. WARR: That they should not have a vote. I believe they should be at the table with a voice, but I do not believe that they should have a vote because I think they have -- narrow is not the right word, but they have a focused interest.

When we're sitting there as a board, as trustees, we have many interests to think about, the overall best interests of the university, the wide, big picture as to what's best of how we vote. I just don't think they'd be able to do that.

And it's also my understanding, Senator, that AGB and SACS do not recommend that as a good policy. And I don't know exactly all the reasons. Perhaps it's what I just said. Maybe it's others. But those are my reasons.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir.

MR. WARR: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: One quick question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: I just want to pick up one quick question from Representative King. Did you campaign any of your board members?

MR. WARR: No, sir, I did not.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You know, you alluded to the fact that you had an interim president that was lined up. You had made that decision. You had picked an interim. Were there associated costs involved with that?

MR. WARR: He --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: As far as relocation and that type of thing, salary?

MR. WARR: I think that what was done was that we agreed we would -- while he served as interim, we would increase his salary. I'm sorry I don't remember the exact number. It was something to make up to him moving his family to Columbia.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yeah. I'm not asking for numbers. I'm just -- you know, I guess what I'm getting at is the fact, to follow up on a lot of these questions, the vote was abandoned basically, you were going to start a new search, and then all of a sudden, you wind up in April and you -- and you hire General Caslen, but yet you've already made arrangements for Chancellor Kelly to be the interim.

It would be interesting to know what the total associated cost was with that.

MR. WARR: I'd be glad to get that for you. I don't remember it being a high number, but there was certainly a cost with it.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, a high number to you and a high number to the people of this state, or a low number, might be totally different because when you're talking about money at the University of South Carolina and other institutions, you're dealing in big dollars, and the people of this state are dealing in small dollars.

Thank you, sir.

MR. WARR: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Warr, thank you so much for your service and your attendance here today.

You recently added -- and I say "you" -- the board recently added ethics to your bylaws. Did you not have them before, and what -- why did you add them now?

MR. WARR: We had -- we had ethical policies, Senator. We had written guidelines. I'm not sure what the proper term would be for them, but we certainly had that, and everyone understood that they were to review that and that you're responsible for understanding what those ethics were.

Primarily, they would be what you would think they would be: be honest, don't do things you shouldn't do, and don't be influenced the way you shouldn't be influenced, and do your best to, in a high-integrity way, be a trustee.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I was just curious why now, why all of a sudden.

MR. WARR: Why were they added recently?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes, sir.

MR. WARR: I mean, it's just part of -- from time to time, we update the bylaws. And since I've been on the board, it's been a pretty regular thing that we would go back and try to improve things, try to make them -- update them to make them a little better, make them a little tighter, make them a little plainer at times, and I think that was part of that process.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I was just curious. I didn't know if your consultant recommended that or not. I didn't know.

MR. WARR: Senator Peeler, it's possible. I don't remember that as being a recommendation, but it certainly could have been.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman, can I follow up?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So in the changing of those rules, bylaws, whatever, were there other changes other than adding the ethics to it?

MR. WARR: Yes, sir, Senator Alexander, there were. There were other minor changes that we've, from time to time, discussed, and -- but it was -- I would think that it would be fair to say there weren't any major changes.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Other than that.

MR. WARR: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What's the desire of the committee?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Move favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you, sir.

MR. WARR: Thank you, Senator Peeler.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, James C. Williamson from Cheraw.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Hello.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir. For the record, if you would, give us your full name.

DR. WILLIAMSON: James C. Williamson.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. WILLIAMSON: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

DR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, sir. Thank you, and I'm mindful of the time.

I'm joined with me today by my wife, who is also a proud USC graduate, and I am a candidate for the 4th Judicial Circuit. My proven result-focused leadership will ensure that the university will fulfill its mission to educate the state's citizens through teaching, research, creative activity, and community engagement.

I'm acutely aware of the high cost of higher education, and one of my priorities, if elected as a trustee, will be to address the escalating cost of a university degree. This has long been a focus of my career.

My lifelong commitment to higher education in South Carolina began with my undergraduate and master's degrees from Winthrop University and ultimately my Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina.

This commitment, combined with my experience as a former board member of Winthrop University and a former board of trustee member of the Chesterfield County School Board, my work as president of the South Carolina Technical College System, and my work as president of two technical colleges in the state, Williamsburg Tech and Northeastern Tech, is evidence of my understanding of and commitment to the advancement of education within our state.

While working within the technical college system, I worked hand in hand with Dr. Harris Pastides to forge a guaranteed transfer pathway for students from the technical college system into a university program. I understand and embrace the fiduciary responsibility that a board member possesses.

USC is at a critical juncture regarding accreditation, and we must be diligent by displaying that we not only accept but embrace the role that accreditation plays in the life of a university. I have a deep understanding of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' standards and principles. I have served as a member, a reviewer, and chair of a number of committees during my career.

I would say that if I had walked into this situation at the University of South Carolina as an evaluator, I think that this would have been a huge red flag. I know it would have been a red flag. And we would have taken the appropriate action, just as Southern Association did.

A strong board, one that understands its role as a policy body, is essential, and I have the knowledge and the requisite skills to be

successful. I've worked with college boards from the perspective as a president, as a system president, and as a board member.

My work in the private sector has also informed my decision making and leadership principles as I've witnessed firsthand the influence of higher education on our economy and specifically the healthcare sector. I've witnessed how education enables the private sector to remain competitive in an evolving economy.

I'm fortunate to work with a company that values education and provides necessary resources to enable our employees to grow professionally and personally. This commitment to education allows our company to remain solvent and thriving. We've worked collaboratively with both the USC College of Nursing as well as the College of Hospitality and Tourism to attract students from those programs, to hire them, and to put them to work in this economy.

I thank you for the opportunity to appear before this body, and I look forward to answering your questions and hope that I will be able to earn your support.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments?

Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Dr. Williamson --

DR. WILLIAMSON: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- for your willingness to serve, but just one question comes to mind. An undergraduate from Winthrop with a master's degree from Winthrop, and Winthrop itself -- you mentioned about tuition -- has a much higher tuition than USC. Why not Winthrop to try to fix that issue?

I'm looking at in-state at 30,324 versus out-of-state at USC on your paper at 34,690. Even after financial aid or financial aid assistance, 17,274. So why not try to help them first, which is a smaller institution, gain some knowledge and some experience and then come to a larger -- I mean, you -- I'm just interested in your thought pattern on that.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Certainly.

SENATOR SCOTT: I mean, you may go there and do an excellent job, but just your thought pattern on that.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Well, they are very aware of my position on their outrageous tuition. When I was a board member, I made myself very clear about that. I voted against tuition increases. And I continue to stay in touch with members of the board of trustees.

SENATOR SCOTT: How long did you serve on that board?

DR. WILLIAMSON: Two years.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. So in two years, you're leaving that board and coming to this board, but no results and changing and still the conversations about tuition coming to this board, and a board that's a much larger board, so I'm trying to figure out what pattern you're going to go in to try to convince this board that the cost of going -- and you may have some great ideas. I'm just interested in knowing what they are.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Well, I resigned from that board because I became president of the South Carolina Technical College System, and I couldn't serve in that capacity --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

DR. WILLIAMSON: -- which I see as a real way to help reduce or to reign in tuition costs in the state.

SENATOR SCOTT: But the two years that you were there, the impact of the two years you were there on a smaller board, and still yet the cost to go was very expensive, and --

DR. WILLIAMSON: It still is.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and I think -- I think that you just made a new president change up there too, at Winthrop too.

DR. WILLIAMSON: They have an interim.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

DR. WILLIAMSON: And they -- that interim will be there for two years as they start the search.

SENATOR SCOTT: So I'm still thinking -- I'm still listening for your ideas of how you think you're going get this larger board to get the tuition down. And you and I are on the same page. I just want some ideas of how you're going to convince them to bring tuition down.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Well, I think -- I think Dr. Pastides and I were onto some great things that needed to continue, and that was the -- certainly the Palmetto College, utilizing that, utilizing the branch campuses of the University of South Carolina, utilizing the technical college system.

You know, I think -- I'm fundamentally committed to education attainment in the state. I think that as a state we have to be committed to educational attainment at all levels. There is a need for associate degrees. There is a need for baccalaureate degrees, master's, and Ph.D.s.

And I think that anything that we can do -- and USC is in the position to be the flagship university and to be the standard-bearer to make that happen, and I think that I have a voice that could contribute to the overall mission of increasing the degree attainment in the state.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Briefly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Good afternoon.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Going first, I guess, to -- obviously the theme that I've kind of had part of the afternoon, or this afternoon, is dealing with the president of the student government and/or the faculty representative having voting rights.

And with your background and experience, it looks like you've saying what?

DR. WILLIAMSON: Yes. I do believe that they should have a vote, yes.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And tell me again, if you could, the president of LTC University?

DR. WILLIAMSON: That is an internal continuing ed program that we run for our company. It is not -- we are only focusing on our employees. We are involved in registered apprenticeship programs, continuing medical education credits, CEUs for social workers, and things of that nature.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Is there any potential for any conflict of interest --

DR. WILLIAMSON: No.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- with your duties and responsibilities if you are elected?

DR. WILLIAMSON: No. We are a nonprofit and serve only our company.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Is there any -- is there anything in your duties and responsibilities in that job that would preclude you from being able to attend regular --

DR. WILLIAMSON: No.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- scheduled meetings?

DR. WILLIAMSON: I'm in Columbia quite often.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And you would do that in person rather than teleconferencing?

DR. WILLIAMSON: Yes.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good afternoon, Dr. Williamson.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Good afternoon.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And once again, like everyone else, thank you for offering to serve in this position.

In looking at the SACS report -- have you had the opportunity to view that report?

DR. WILLIAMSON: I have read the -- I have not read the full report. I've read the narrative and saw that they were sanctioned by -- they were placed on a monitoring report.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I think there's going to be a --

DR. WILLIAMSON: A follow-up.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- a report in September --

DR. WILLIAMSON: Correct.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- of this year.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: From your experience with SACS, how unusual is that?

DR. WILLIAMSON: It is --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: On the issues that were raised.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Oh, on the issues that were raised.

I don't -- there were -- I am aware of a couple of institutions that have had issues with undue outside influence. It has been resolved. But never had I known of that in South Carolina.

Of course it is important to note that a SACS reviewer cannot review a college or university within their own state. You are assigned to states outside of your own state.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Right. And I would understand that. But you did have access to that report?

DR. WILLIAMSON: Yes, yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else?

A quick one. Earlier, it was stated about the student having voting rights on the board or faculty having voting rights on the board, and they mentioned conflict of interest. You don't think they would have a conflict?

DR. WILLIAMSON: I think that they all -- all board members take an oath of office, and they pledge to recuse themselves if a conflict does arise. And so I think that with the proper orientation, they would need - - they would know when they needed to recuse themselves.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You don't think that would be quite often?

DR. WILLIAMSON: Not that I'm -- no, I don't -- I don't --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You don't think so?

DR. WILLIAMSON: I don't think so.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Could I follow --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Could I follow up on that?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Certainly.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So do you not think that the impact that they're having as nonvote -- being present and having the ability to discuss and be nonvoting members is sufficient?

DR. WILLIAMSON: It certainly could be. You certainly have to have their input. But I do believe that there would be some issues that the student and the faculty representative, there would be value in having them vote.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: One other question, unless you want to finish your question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Just another question. Another question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yeah. You're recognized, Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: I want to go back for a minute to your work history for just a second.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Okay.

SENATOR SCOTT: You've worked at four technical school or four tech schools, and how many years were you involved in the tech system?

DR. WILLIAMSON: I was at USC Union prior to the Technical College System. I started at the tech system in '90...

I'll have to go back and look at my resume.

SENATOR SCOTT: I see Union, USC Union.

DR. WILLIAMSON: USC Union.

SENATOR SCOTT: That's in '87.

DR. WILLIAMSON: '87, and then '89 is when I went to Florence-Darlington. And I've progressively worked through lots of -- they were all promotions throughout the way.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. And I see you were elected to the Chesterfield County School Board, but then you ran for the Union School Board.

DR. WILLIAMSON: I did. I did.

SENATOR SCOTT: Just moving from place to place?

DR. WILLIAMSON: When I was in Union, I ran for the Union School Board, correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. I'm finished.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Unsuccessfully.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable and seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. It'll be unanimous, including Ms. Davis.

DR. WILLIAMSON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: All right. Next we have the 6th Judicial Circuit, Tab N, Hubert Mobley from Lancaster.

MR. MOBLEY: Hubert F. Mobley. I go by Hugh.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. MOBLEY: Yes, sir, I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement.

MR. MOBLEY: It'll be brief.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

MR. MOBLEY: Number one, I appreciate the opportunity to have served. I've been on the board since 2011. I'm at the point in my life where I'm afforded some freedom as far as work goes, and I can be down here a lot, and I have spent a lot of time down here in the last year and a half.

The other thing I'm proud of is the fact that -- Senator Peeler, you mentioned satellite campuses. We have a very good one in Lancaster, well served. We're able to educate people, and the local community supports it enormously. We're able to provide private scholarships, and average out-of-pocket cost is about \$300 per semester per student. Their motto is "Where futures begin."

So I think it's important that those satellite campuses continue to do well. As a matter of fact, if you look at the example of Purdue University, they've taken the opportunity to buy community colleges through a growth program, and Purdue is run by the former governor, I believe, of Illinois.

So I'd like the opportunity to continue to serve, and for the sake of time, I'll allow you to ask the questions, which I'm sure we're going to be familiar with.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We will.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I have a question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And Mr. Mobley, the same questions -- even though you are a good friend of mine, I'm still going to ask you the same questions.

MR. MOBLEY: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: How did you vote on the president?

MR. MOBLEY: Mr. King, I made the motion for the president, and I voted him affirmative.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Do you think had the outside forces not been involved, the process would have not changed?

MR. MOBLEY: I don't know the answer to that. I am disappointed we didn't vote in April because I thought we had the support then. I can't comment. I think, from talking to other board members, I don't think the outside forces had that much to do with it.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: My next question for you, as you have attended several of the Legislative Black Caucus meetings, and understanding the frustration that the caucus has with diversity, how do you look forward in changing the perception that many of us have in reference to diversity at the University of South Carolina?

MR. MOBLEY: Well, you can't change an organization unless you change the top, and I think you've heard in the past that we've got some six to eight positions open at what I call the C suite or administrative level. We've already seen one of them be hired as a person of color who is now a vice president and director of diversity for the university.

I anticipate that there will be others named, people of color, in those positions. So those will be people that will be in leadership positions that will start to institute policy throughout the system, and I believe that is the beginning of addressing some of the issues of disparity with the numbers, in Columbia especially.

I think you well -- I think you well know that the system campuses look a lot like South Carolina, the system and the two-year campuses. But Columbia does not.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chair?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yes, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Mobley, for your willingness to serve.

I'm looking at some data y'all sent -- it's in the back of your application -- that talks about time span for graduation.

MR. MOBLEY: Correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: But the data is eight years old, so I don't know why y'all sent data that old to us, 2012, for graduation time at each one of the different schools.

MR. MOBLEY: Are you referring to the 2012 or 2013?

SENATOR SCOTT: '12 or '13. Both of the data would be old.

MR. MOBLEY: Correct. But you have to --

SENATOR SCOTT: They would not --

MR. MOBLEY: You have to begin counting -- if you're going to count a four-year, you have to back up four years. If you're going to count six years, you have to back six.

SENATOR SCOTT: What do you mean? If you count '14 -- or '13, you're still at '17.

MR. MOBLEY: Right, but this is the data -- this was the data that was on file at the time your report was given to you.

SENATOR SCOTT: But you stamped it in December the 19th. I'm pretty sure you've got some more data that would tell me what your graduation rates are from eight years ago. Are you comparing 2012 to what? Because you gave it to me about each one of the -- each one of the schools. I've had to scan --

MR. MOBLEY: Okay.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and google to try to get the real updated data. So if I was trying to make the comparison --

MR. MOBLEY: Okay.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- it would be hard for me to do that.

MR. MOBLEY: Okay. Let's just talk about the four-year rate from -- the 2011 to '17 data was 58 percent. The 2012 to 2018 data was 62.5.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, I'm showing in your 2012, USC four-year was 62.4.

MR. MOBLEY: I've got 62.5. It could be a rounding error.

SENATOR SCOTT: Five, four, or whatever.

MR. MOBLEY: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'm just going off the data that you gave me.

MR. MOBLEY: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: And for USC Aiken, 20.3. And USC Beaufort, 18.8. And USC, 29.5, which brings us to the earlier discussion I had as relates to SAT scores and why -- and is that the rationale behind the higher SAT scores to the four-year period of graduation so that you've just kind of kept everybody in one school so those number are good?

MR. MOBLEY: I'm sure that has a lot to do with it.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. MOBLEY: And I can give you a personal example. I have four children. I call two high-score SATs and two non-high-score SATs.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. MOBLEY: My two non-score-higher SATs have actually done better over time than the two higher scored SATs, with one exception.

So I was not a great test taker, and I did not score well on the SAT. Personally, I think the SAT needs to be encompassed in a holistic review rather than the SAT on its own. But it seems like most of the colleges in the United States are using that SAT approach.

SENATOR SCOTT: Isn't the SAT approach simply because of the lottery scholarship money, the difference between paying about 84,000 -- I'm using 21,000 --

MR. MOBLEY: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- as a benchmark for -- to pay for an academic year, paying \$5,000, saving about 20,000, cutting that cut from 84,000 down to 64,000. Is that to keep those numbers in line with the cost to go to school?

MR. MOBLEY: That's the only reason I can think of because on the system campuses, the competition level for the -- the level of the SAT is not as high.

SENATOR SCOTT: I wonder if you -- if you use that as an example and you went to these other schools, in many cases if a kid doesn't get in that school, he'll try to get into one of the schools.

Rather than using top 25 or 15, whatever you're using in your intake system, if you rolled it back to, let's say, a thousand as an example and you go to the other schools, is that the numbers that that's making up, these other numbers, and keeping them in the line?

MR. MOBLEY: I don't know the answer to that.

SENATOR SCOTT: I suggest you may want to look at it.

MR. MOBLEY: Okay. That's -- that's a great question.

I will say this in regards to having a system. For instance, my two low-score students went to the University of South Carolina, and after a period of time, they did a campus transfer, at which time only their grades were under consideration, rather than their test scores.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right. And that's the point I'm making. If you're going to get the intake system up so you can get your numbers up of African Americans, maybe we need to consider looking at the data to see if the data actually supports it because the outlying areas is where these schools are with these kids who may have performed better in the four-year period of time, but we lost the opportunity to get our numbers up rather than stacking these other schools.

MR. MOBLEY: I don't -- I don't disagree with your argument at all.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, I'm just trying to give y'all something to work with because it appears, every time y'all come, you don't have any answers --

MR. MOBLEY: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- other than, you know, this is what we have and we're talking about it. So I mean, a little bit more research, a little bit more data, because y'all own the school of business.

MR. MOBLEY: I think one of the things in regards to your comment about increasing the number of African Americans is, A, mentoring programs in high schools and education programs about opportunities in higher ed in middle schools, which we are doing through the University of Possibilities.

And I believe there's a proviso that changes the need-based from 20 - I'm using round numbers -- from 25- to 50,000, which will open the door.

SENATOR SCOTT: But zero to two SAT scores that you're using as a vehicle -- because that means the kid could come in with a B average and an SAT score under the required to get the top lottery dollars, and the kids could shift it.

And the next year, grade-wise, that kid is doing better than the kid that you took in with a higher SAT score. I'm just simply saying take a look at the data because the data may show you something altogether different.

MR. MOBLEY: We do not mandate they are shifted. That's something that they can choose on their own. But I hear what you're saying. That's a valid point.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Thank you.

MR. MOBLEY: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good afternoon, Mr. Mobley, and thank you for your service on this board.

Tell me the different roles that you've had on the U of SC board of trustees.

MR. MOBLEY: I went on in 2011 at an unexpired term, and I served for a year as chair of health affairs and then subsequently vice chair, and then most recently, I served as chair of the search committee.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And chair of the search committee, that would be the search committee for the president?

MR. MOBLEY: For the president, yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you mentioned that you have spent a lot of time in Columbia over the last year and a half. I guess that coincides with all the work that you did associated with the search for the president.

MR. MOBLEY: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Now, you've heard the questions because you've been in here the entire time that we've been questioning the other members -- or prospective members of the board about the SACS report. You've read that?

MR. MOBLEY: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And in reading that, what -- do you acknowledge that there were problems associated with your board and the manner in which this issue was handled?

MR. MOBLEY: Actually, SACS wrote us a letter notifying us of monitoring, and AGB created the report, I think, that you're referring to.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, I thought someone had a SACS - - showed me a SACS report.

MR. MOBLEY: It was probably a letter --

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: A letter? Okay.

MR. MOBLEY: -- that they did.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And maybe that was the AGB report?

MR. MOBLEY: Right, right, correct.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Is that AGB report public, a public record?

MR. MOBLEY: I'm sure that it is.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So if I went to your website, I could find it?

MR. MOBLEY: I don't know if it's on the website, but it should be, if you want it. Or I'll send you a copy.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You know, the -- something that was mentioned is you said that you can't change, in response to Representative King's question --

MR. MOBLEY: Uh-huh.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- can't change the organization unless you change the top. Doesn't that beg the question that the top really, insofar as policy is concerned, is the board of trustees? Because you're going to be setting the policy --

MR. MOBLEY: Correct.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- that you expect the administration to play out.

MR. MOBLEY: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you've been on the board since 2011.

MR. MOBLEY: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Did it only occur recently that the idea should change, that you should have more people of color, more diversity, that kind of thing?

MR. MOBLEY: No, I think it's -- I think it's been known, and that's been discussed every time that I've been here. Somebody said earlier, We don't choose the people that offer to -- offer themselves for trustees, so -- and it does take a lot of time and commitment away from...

In regards to my deciding whether or not to pursue this at this term, I talked to every one of my legislative delegation in Lancaster and around and asked -- told them I was considering running and that I thought that -- I wanted to get their thoughts, and if they wanted to make a change, it was fine, or if that if they wanted somebody of diversity, that they would do it, that I would facilitate that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I believe you. Maybe I was inartful in the way that I asked the question.

I'm talking about when the university itself, policy that was in place from 2011 until within the last year that has changed the manner in which people are being hired for university positions. What precipitated that change? Could the board have not made the decision long before 2019 to say we're going to do a better job of hiring minorities?

MR. MOBLEY: Well, I -- I don't want to get confused because we've been talking about the AGB report, so are you talking about that? But in regards to HR and employment policies, that's built into the diversity plan.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yeah. I was going back to Representative King's question because you've talked about hiring VPs for diversity, inclusion, and so forth.

MR. MOBLEY: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And that should be a policy that would be established by the board if it's not already there, shouldn't it?

MR. MOBLEY: It is. It is.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay.

MR. MOBLEY: And that was what I was talking about. In human resources, the director manages that, and we always have in a search somebody that is the, you know -- I don't know what the term I'm using -- diversity officer that sits in to that, and then there's an intentional effort to try to include a pool.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So what you're telling me is this is not something that is new.

MR. MOBLEY: No.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: But there have just been more hires recently that reflect this policy.

MR. MOBLEY: I think that's accurate. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much.

MR. MOBLEY: Sorry, I didn't understand.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: No, once again, maybe I was inartful in the way that I phrased my question.

MR. MOBLEY: Yeah, sure.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon. I appreciate your willingness to continue to offer and for being with us this afternoon.

I wanted to go to that consistency of the question I've had, and I thought your -- I want to hear a little bit more about your answer on whether the student government president or a -- and/or a faculty representative should serve on the board.

MR. MOBLEY: I think the question boils down to the term called fiduciary, and as we learned during the AGB retreat that the board of trustees -- we knew this before, but the board of trustees members act as fiduciaries of an institution.

And I believe the reason that we act as fiduciaries is because we're elected by the General Assembly in that regard. So if the General Assembly decided that the student body president and the faculty representative could act as fiduciaries, then I think it's fine.

I do have a concern that there's a conflict of interest, especially in regard -- I know when my child was 21 years old, I had to keep up with her checking account. I worry about their ability to understand the financial regard for it. So I think the issue boils down to do we want to consider those people fiduciaries, and I think there's a lot of obstacles there that makes that difficult.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. So is that consistent with what you kind of submitted to us, or is that a little bit changed from --

MR. MOBLEY: No, no.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- your questionnaire?

MR. MOBLEY: I think it's --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Because your questionnaire, you said it was -- specifically you didn't -- you voiced just that it's up to the legislature, if I'm reading that correctly.

MR. MOBLEY: Well, because I believe the legislature owns the decision about the fiduciary in regards to the board member.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So that's -- that's -- so I understand that. So I guess the question --

MR. MOBLEY: If the board was in charge of making that decision, I would not be in favor of that.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

MR. MOBLEY: I hope that clarifies that.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yeah, that clarifies --

MR. MOBLEY: Okay.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- what I was looking for.

And then I think it's -- you mentioned here, as one of the ways to improve the school financial efficiencies, retention and graduation rates, and then increase South Carolinians attending.

What is that current makeup of --

MR. MOBLEY: Well, overall --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- and what should it be?

MR. MOBLEY: The overall university system is about two thirds. I think the freshman class was something like 51 percent. But --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: How about the senior class, and how about your flagship university?

MR. MOBLEY: Well, I was talking about mainly Columbia.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. I thought --

MR. MOBLEY: Now, if you get into the systems -- like in Lancaster, it's 97 percent.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay.

MR. MOBLEY: So --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Originally, I thought I heard you say system-wide and stuff, but...

MR. MOBLEY: I may -- I may have. I may have said that.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. I thought you were talking about the --

MR. MOBLEY: But ways that we need to do that is, number one -- I've learned this from my business experience. When things get a little slow in a certain area, you've got to get out and work it.

So I think what we've got to do is get into the high schools, get into the middle schools, and cultivate that. There are a lot of children out there now and students out there now, single parents who really don't know that higher education is an option for people. I mean, they think that high school is a dead-end street, and I think we've got to change that.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And what has your attendance been as a board member?

MR. MOBLEY: I've been at 100 percent of the meetings.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And are those all 100 percent in --

MR. MOBLEY: If the meetings are in Columbia, I am usually at those meetings physically. If it is a called meeting, for phone, if I'm in Columbia I go by there while they host, or either I'll participate by phone. But I have not missed a meeting.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: But certainly regular, scheduled meetings, you're --

MR. MOBLEY: Every one.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- present and accounted for in person.

MR. MOBLEY: Every one of them. Every one of them.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I promise you I won't go on long.

A question, Mr. Mobley. What are some of the benefits of being a board member, fringe benefits of being a board member? Do y'all get free tickets to the games, a suite? What are those things that you all get? I know, with us, we have to report everything. What is reportable?

MR. MOBLEY: We report that. As a matter of fact, I asked this morning where my -- where my report was so I could file my ethics report, and it's all on my ethics report.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Are those things that you all have to pay for?

MR. MOBLEY: Some we do. Some we do not. But they're noted on the ethics reporting form, and I think if you look at mine, attached to that it notes tickets and parking and whatnot.

I save the university a lot of money because I stay in my own condo here. They don't pay for my housing.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So when it comes to the games, out-of-state games, whatever, do you all -- do y'all -- how does that work?

MR. MOBLEY: Usually there's one game a year that's a trip to another school. It's usually an SEC school. And we couple that with touring their student life center or chemistry lab to learn a little bit more about that that we can put into place, you know, or get another opinion on.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I just didn't know. I was just asking. Thank you.

MR. MOBLEY: Yeah, yeah.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Mobley, how is the chairman of the board of trustees -- how is that person elected, and how often do you change?

MR. MOBLEY: Chair and vice chair serve for two-year terms, renewable one time, and that's elected by the board every other August at a reorganization meeting.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Is it normal that the vice chair becomes chair?

MR. MOBLEY: It has been.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Are you the vice chair now?
MR. MOBLEY: I am.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you think you'll be promoted to chair?
MR. MOBLEY: I don't know about that. It's up to the board. What I want is what's best for the university.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: When will that be determined?
MR. MOBLEY: August.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: This coming August?
MR. MOBLEY: Yes, sir.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For a two-year term.
MR. MOBLEY: Yes, sir. Unless the bylaws change.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What's the desire of the committee?
REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)
SENATOR ALEXANDER: Move favorable.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable. Is there any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous, including Ms. Davis.
Thank you, sir.
MR. MOBLEY: Thank you very much.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, under Tab O, Spiro Poulos from Chester.
Good afternoon, sir.
MR. POULOS: Good afternoon.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record, if you would, give us your full name.
MR. POULOS: Spiro Poulos.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?
MR. POULOS: I do.
CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?
MR. POULOS: Yes.
Mr. Chairman, members of the screening committee, my name is Spiro Poulos, and I am an attorney and candidate for the University of South Carolina board of trustees 6th Circuit seat.
I am originally from Chester County and continue to reside in Chester County with my wife and soon-to-be daughter that we will welcome into this world within the next few days. I hope it's not right now.
I currently practice law at the Poulos Law Firm in Chester along with my sister and law partner. After graduating from Chester High School

in 1998, I decided to attend the University of South Carolina here in Columbia, which ended up being one of the best decisions of my life.

While I was a student at USC, I was fortunate enough to be a page for three sessions, splitting time between the Honorable Greg Delleney in the House of Representatives as well as a Senate page for the Honorable Linda Short.

I graduated from the University of South Carolina in May of 2002 with a double major in finance and marketing, along with a minor in criminal justice. After I graduated college, I worked for a short time as an insurance adjuster, but I always had the dream of going to law school and becoming a successful attorney someday. I attended the Charleston School of Law and was part of the inaugural graduating class in 2007.

After graduating law school and passing the bar exam, I went to work at the Solicitor's Office in Lancaster, where I worked as a prosecutor. I tried several cases as a prosecutor against some of the best lawyers in the area during that time and gained valuable experience as well.

When I made the decision to leave the Solicitor's Office, I decided that I wanted to open my own office and be a sole practitioner until I could build the practice up enough to where my sister could join me as a law partner. I had tons of experience trying cases as a prosecutor, but I had zero experience in dealing with clients, defending clients, filing divorce paperwork, or even filing a civil suit. However, I was a quick learner, never was afraid to ask questions, and I always listen to people and listen to their opinions, even though I had to decide which opinions would better suit me or not suit me.

Opening a law office from scratch was definitely challenging, but I have always been the type of person who never backs down from a challenge and never gives up. I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that both grandparents on both sides of my family immigrated here from Greece. They came here with nothing, worked hard, and became successful people. So I was taught from a young age that, with hard work and determination, you can be successful.

I feel that not only my life experiences, but my legal experiences has prepared me to take on the challenge of being on the board of trustees for the University of South Carolina. I cannot sit here today and tell you that I know everything about how to run a university or that I know a lot about how to run a university. However, I can tell you that I am a fast learner, and I promise not to let anybody down if I am chosen to sit on the board of trustees.

I think it is an honor to sit on the board, and I will always treat it with the utmost respect that it deserves. I will strive to always make positive steps forward with the university and to always do the right thing, such

as helping USC continue to excel with diversity, and I know they may have some problems, but my goal is to continue to try to make forward steps with that, finding ways to help with tuition costs, and to make USC the ultimate in academic excellence.

I also believe in transparency. I believe it's an important element of our board. And I believe in following the proper procedure when it comes to making decisions, whether they're big or whether they're small, for our university. And I will also try to bring unity back to the board of trustees and make sure that every decision I make is in the best interest of the University of South Carolina and only the University of South Carolina.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions, comments?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just have a question for you about the G. Is that Gus?

MR. POULOS: It is.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: When you speak of diversity, what is your plan in reference to diversity at the -- what do you see as diversity at the University of South Carolina?

MR. POULOS: You mean what do I see it as now, or how do I see about possibly fixing it?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: How do you see fixing it?

MR. POULOS: The only thing I see is, is you have to get out there in these communities -- I'm from Chester. I believe you're from Chester originally.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Yes.

MR. POULOS: Places like Chester -- Lancaster used to be, I guess, considered small, but they're kind of big now. But places like Chester, Union County, those small places, that's where I was born and raised.

So you have to get in the schools, I think. You have to have some kind of an outreach program that basically goes to the schools and allows them to see what life is at the University of South Carolina.

Some of these low-income families -- like I said, I'm from Chester, so I'm aware of that. I don't -- I can't even remember -- I don't even think we had anybody come to our school when I was in high school. I just always wanted to go to USC, and everybody in Chester, as you know, wanted to go to Clemson. And I grew up on a farm, so the natural thing for me to do was go to Clemson, but --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Now, you know there's a lot of Clemson folk here, so be careful.

MR. POULOS: I do. I do. And I have a ton of Clemson friends, so...

But that's how I think, with some sort of outreach program, and just to get some people out in these small communities and schools to kind of promote the university, I believe, would be a great help. Lowering tuition rates for these people. Things like that.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

SENATOR VERDIN: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What kind of farming?

MR. POULOS: Cattle.

SENATOR VERDIN: Still have them?

MR. POULOS: And a hunting club. Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: I know you haven't had a lot of time because his tenure's been short, but as an alumnus, are you comfortable -- do you have a good feeling about the leadership at the university, specifically the office of the president?

MR. POULOS: From what I've read so far, I think the president is not a bad person. I think he was possibly thrown into a situation that involved whatever took place.

I'm a firm believer in the process. I feel like the process probably was not followed. Being an attorney, I mean, it's ingrained to us that there's a process. You can't get a piece of evidence in court unless you lay a foundation and you follow the process.

I just cannot see jumping steps to get somebody, whether they have another job lined or whatever. I personally would probably have looked at him and said, I'm sorry, but if it's more important to you, go somewhere else. But that's just the way I -- that's the way I was raised and the way I practice law at this time. I hope that answers your question.

SENATOR VERDIN: Yes, sir. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander -- well, I think Senator Scott is next.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you for willingness to serve.

The 6th Circuit Solicitor's Office, how large an office was that? How many folk are in that office?

MR. POULOS: At the time when I was there, we had the solicitor and about four assistant solicitors there.

SENATOR SCOTT: What about the 7th?

MR. POULOS: The 7th Solicitor's Office?

SENATOR SCOTT: Yes.

MR. POULOS: That was -- that had about 20, 25.

SENATOR SCOTT: Did either one of those offices have African Americans working in those offices? That should have been easy. It's yes or no.

MR. POULOS: I believe -- I believe Spartanburg had African Americans. I don't think Lancaster did.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. So comfort level in trying to deal with diversity issues at the university, I think a lot of comfort level comes with growing and having the opportunity to really see and understand culture differences and those things that become more diverse as you try to work through those issues.

I was hoping that you said in these two solicitor's offices you had a chance to work side by side, to really kind of understand some of that, so if you are on the board -- and maybe you have another experience --

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- or some experiences that you have been working in a diverse environment. Do you have any of that?

MR. POULOS: Well, Senator Scott, I -- as I was saying earlier, I went to Chester High School. I think it was probably about 60 percent white and 40 percent, 45 percent African-American when I was there.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. POULOS: I've practiced law there. I mean, it's -- it's -- I deal with diversity every day. I've dealt with it my whole life.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. POULOS: I was a product of the public schools. I had some small jobs here and there between college and being an insurance adjustor, and I did work side by side with some diverse background people.

And I've never had a problem getting along with anybody. My parents actually -- they kid me all the time. They say, I believe you could get along with the devil sometimes. And I just say, Well, I'd just watch him a little closer.

SENATOR SCOTT: And the reason why I asked, because I've had the opportunity in the past when I was in the Governor's Office of working in Union, Lancaster, York, and Chester, and I know how divided those communities were.

And I don't know whether or not any of that has changed over the years so there is an openness when you have to recruit for those communities, where you really understand the community, even the ones that you lived in, that you're able to pull people in because you

understand diversity, even if it's an administrative person, staff, a teacher, or someone of that nature.

So tell me a little bit about if you are on that board, given that USC is struggling with having a diversity plan, some of the things that you would actually do if you've had the opportunity to kind of study that.

MR. POULOS: You mean as far as --

SENATOR SCOTT: Diversity. They've got problems with numbers and trying to recruit African Americans to come to the school.

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: What would you -- what would you do?

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir. Well, I think --

SENATOR SCOTT: And I was trying to establish a groundwork that you've said, well, I've done this and this and this --

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- so it makes it easier for -- just like you said a minute ago, if you're going to get the evidence in, you've got to lay the groundwork.

MR. POULOS: That's right. That's right. I agree. I think --

SENATOR SCOTT: So I tried to lay it, but I didn't get what I thought I would get.

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir. I -- well, I -- and maybe I didn't get the right answer out there.

SENATOR SCOTT: That's okay.

MR. POULOS: As I was telling Representative King earlier, I was thinking of maybe an outreach -- some type of an outreach program to get into these schools.

I think if you target small communities like Chester and Union and some of the other small communities where there's a higher number of African Americans, I think that just by the fact of being visible there, I think that will help, along with -- along with tuition reductions.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, keep in mind, USC has probably one of the largest intake systems in the state, given the number of applicants they get in for the freshman class. I think I heard 15,000 applications came in, I think, to fill a 5,000 class slot, more or less.

And so getting them to come in to interview is not the issue. The issue is once they're there, how we try to make sure that they select our school as well as there's an open process to get them in because when we're looking at the other -- other portions of the university, they're going to those.

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: But for some reason, the intake system for the Columbia campus is broken, and they can't seem to get those students in.

MR. POULOS: Well, I'm not really sure about what's broken. I'm sure if I was --

SENATOR SCOTT: But I am. Trust me, I am.

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. I understand you know. If I was able to sit, I'd probably get to the bottom of it quicker than I can right now being on the outside looking in.

But I just feel like it -- maybe offer some kind of incentive, like waive the -- I heard they were talking about application fees earlier or something. Maybe say if you're from a small town and you're a minority, we'll waive your application fee, something to -- something to -- you know, to make it more appealable.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you. I appreciate it.

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon. I'll try to be real brief here.

It says where -- under your comments here, it says, I'd like to serve on the trustees to help bring unity to the trustees and to help bring USC to a higher level on all aspects.

Is unity on the board critical?

MR. POULOS: I think it is. I think -- I think if you even look at our old sayings, a house divided falls. I mean, I think when you're divided -- I think debate is good, but I think when you're divided for the wrong reasons, I feel like you can -- you can get nothing done.

And I think of the board of directors as spokes in a wheel. If all the spokes aren't working in synchrony and they cannot get along and they're divided for whatever reasons those reasons may be, I feel like that wheel cannot roll properly down the road.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So -- so when asked about why you wanted to serve, that is -- you've seen since or have seen a lack of unity on the board, then?

MR. POULOS: I feel as though I have, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Okay. And even under the biggest weakness, it looks like it's -- again, it's a consistent theme there, lack of unity, and you speak to the leadership at the top as divided. Can you speak to that division there and how it's impacting the school?

MR. POULOS: I think it's negatively impacting the school. I think it's giving a black eye to the school.

I think that part of the -- part of the reason they're divided and they've made decisions on hiring the president is why the SACS committee or whoever the committee was -- I think they corrected it -- came in and they're doing a report now and possibly looking at the accreditation issues.

I think that -- I think that a unified board is not going to skip procedure. I feel like a unified board will respect the other board members, and if I raise my hand and say I'm not going forward with this, this is not procedure, I feel like if you're unified, you're going to stand beside your fellow board member whether you agree with him or disagree with him, and we'll just debate it.

And I hope I answered what you're looking for.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, you did. So are you saying that there never should be a division on the board?

MR. POULOS: No, sir. No, sir. There should be division. I'm saying like when it's a -- when it's a division for the wrong reasons.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And I guess -- is that not in the eye of the beholder, as whether it's for the right -- how do you decide whether it's for the right reason or wrong reason?

MR. POULOS: Well, it could be -- I guess it could be in the eye of the beholder.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Or something -- I mean, just...

Could I have one last question, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Certainly.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And as far the -- well, two things, actually. As far as students or faculty being represented or being voting members on the board, would you speak to me, let me hear your comments on that, please?

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir. I believe I even answered this the same way as I've heard other people say. I think they need to have an input. I think they could sit on the board.

I don't think they -- just my opinion -- I don't think they need to have a vote because, as I heard others saying, we go through a screening process as today, and the wisdom of the General Assembly decides whether they want us to be that fiduciary or not.

I think when you have a president having a vote and the student -- or the faculty having a vote, that could change -- you know, presidents come and go right quick. I mean, he might be a president for one year and make a vote and then be gone the next year. I don't think he would be held as accountable as a normal board of trustees' member. That's just my opinion.

Now, if the General Assembly feels as though they should receive a vote, I would be -- I would be in favor of it. I wouldn't be against it. I just think that the way it is right now, I don't agree with it. But if the wisdom of the General Assembly says so --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So did I hear you say you would hate for them not to be -- have the opportunity that you're having of being before us today?

MR. POULOS: No, I'm not saying that. I'm just saying that our -- that we go through a background -- I mean, we've filled out paperwork. We've -- we're sitting here answering questions today. And, you know, I could -- if I was a student at USC, I could go run for the president and become the president, and then just all of a sudden, I've got a vote just like 18 or 19 other people have that are on the board -- or 16 basically.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And is there anything in your work that would preclude you from being a regular attendee at regularly scheduled board meetings?

MR. POULOS: No, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Poulos, for offering to serve. I have a couple of questions.

Have you served on any other boards?

MR. POULOS: I have not. I was approached to serve on a couple of other boards. The timing wasn't right, so I had to decline those.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And have you had the opportunity to see or review the AGB report that has been referred to here today?

MR. POULOS: I think I've seen the condensed version of it.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And you talk about tuition, that it's around \$27,000 a year. I guess that \$27,000 would be the total --

MR. POULOS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- cost of tuition, room --

MR. POULOS: Housing, meals, books, and supplies. That was the total.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Okay. And my final question, ways to improve the school, tuition, scholarships, facilities, housing. Sports teams?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Easy. Easy.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Favorable.

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable report. Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, raise your right hand.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And Ms. Davis.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Plus Ms. Davis. Unanimous.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MR. POULOS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, we have the 15th Judicial Circuit. We have two candidates. Members, let's take a quick break. Please, three minutes.

(A recess transpired.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We'll go ahead and get started. Back to order. 15th Judicial Circuit, under Tab Q, Egerton Burroughs from Conway.

How do you do, sir? I appreciate your patience for the day.

MR. BURROUGHS: Thank you.

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

MR. BURROUGHS: James Egerton Burroughs.

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

MR. BURROUGHS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to give us a brief statement?

MR. BURROUGHS: Thank y'all for what you're doing and the length of time you've been at it today. I appreciate the opportunity of being here before you.

My name is Egerton Burroughs, as I said. I'm from Conway, South Carolina, originally. I live in Myrtle Beach now. I attended the University of South Carolina graduate school after I left the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee, for my undergraduate work. When my father got ill in Conway, I left graduate school and went to work in the family business and basically have been there ever since. I started out at the Jerry Cox Company, a retail store, and went with Burroughs and Collins, Myrtle Beach Farms, and what's now Burroughs and Chapin Company.

I retired about seven years ago, and I'm in good health. My hearing is a little bad, and I wear hearing aids, but I am in good health, and I have the time to put into the job as a trustee.

I've been a trustee for 11 years, and the board -- the different committees that I've served on have been the housing committee -- building and grounds as we call it -- student liaison affairs, the medical

committee. The one committee I've stayed on the whole time and was chair of for four years was the audit committee, and I'm still on that committee today.

But that's kind of where we are, where my experience with the school is.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

Questions, comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Mr. Burroughs, thank you for enduring a long afternoon here and for your service.

I want to talk to you about -- you've been a member of this board for a period of time --

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: -- 12 years now, and you've seen a lot of things happen. But let's just go back within the last two years and the events that transpired that precipitated SACS becoming involved and then apparently the U of SC board determining that AGB needs to come in and conduct a session with you in a retreat.

Insofar as all of that is concerned, give me your view of where governance is at the university and the direction in which it should go.

MR. BURROUGHS: The governance procedures that I'm used to in a corporate environment would pertain to how the committees run, the board room runs, how it's organized, along with the ethics and different parts.

We have one committee on our board now that has a charter, a work matrix, that does self-evaluations. It functions very well. Hopefully, with our new committee that we formed, governance committee, we'll put that in effect for the other committees. Hopefully, in that process, we might reduce the total number of committees down.

But I think our board is serious about addressing governance and changing our procedures to be a more effective board. Each committee needs a work matrix, a charter, duties, and a system of covering the business of the university in an organized way. I think we're getting closer to that. I think what's going on now will be very helpful to the university.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I guess what's shocking to me is, you know, when I look at you and other members of that board of trustees and the background that you have, why did it take so long to recognize that there was a problem with governance?

MR. BURROUGHS: The board room procedures -- and as I call them - - have been there for a long time. It's just a system that was there.

And we are trying to change that now. Like I said, I put in the -- when I was chair of the committee, we put in a charter, the work matrix, and we tried to get other committees to do it, and I think they're going to do it now.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You point out that USC's biggest weaknesses -- and there are five of them: proper financial reporting, lack of board and administrative governance procedures, too much emphasis on the main campus, need to cut operating costs, and a lack of skill set diversity on the board.

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: That's a lot of -- that's a lot of stuff there to have weaknesses in.

MR. BURROUGHS: Well, I truthfully answered the -- and I feel that way.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: How do you fix it?

MR. BURROUGHS: Well, one thing we are working on is the governance procedures, and some of us have tried, and I think that will happen now. We had that two-day retreat, an open retreat, and we've got ourselves kicked around and knocked up and for a good reason. We deserved it. Hopefully that will help us do better with the governance part.

Somebody -- I forget who it is. I think Leah mentioned earlier and maybe Rose also. There's something called the new budget model, and there's been a group of us working for years to get that into effect. We are very close to getting that installed. It has been a painful process because it's something different.

And it will give us, for the first time, very clear, easily understood financials on each unit. In the university system, we call a unit -- if it's in the Columbia campus, it will be the law school, the athletic department, and then the satellite campuses are units.

But these new financial statements, the procedure, the new budget model will give each trustee a lot better understanding, quickly, on a regular basis as to the costs, the costs of operating the different units, the administrative costs, and where the income comes from. And I think it's very positive, but it's taken a while to get it there.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you for the promotion, Senator. Thank you for the promotion.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What did I say?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Senator.

SENATOR VERDIN: It's been a long day, Mr. President.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: He stands corrected.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yeah, I -- I take that back.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I have a question for you.

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: You said lack of skill --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I should have said Representative Hill.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Oh.

Lack of skill set diversity on the board.

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So I think that you are saying to this committee and to the House of Representatives that we need to start looking at the skill set and diversity -- the skill set diversity as we're selecting board members.

Am I reading that correctly?

MR. BURROUGHS: You're right on target, sir.

Can I offer a suggestion?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Yes, sir.

MR. BURROUGHS: Unless the procedures are changed on how the trustees are selected, even if there's a new district setup, I think the face of the trustees are going to be predominantly white old men because of the system that's out there.

I offer this suggestion. If we, as part of our governance system, have a governance committee, which every college and university hopefully has something like that, they would study the board makeup and the composition of the skill sets needed.

And when a vacancy was going to occur, they would recommend -- this committee, not the board of trustees -- to y'all, some committee or group in the House or Senate, however y'all did it, that -- let's say in the district I'm in, District 15, Burroughs is retiring, sick, dying, whatever, and we've looked at the skill sets; we need an engineer, an architect, a builder, whatever.

And y'all put out in that district that we need an engineer, whatever y'all decide on and pick, and people from the district could apply to y'all directly if they were an engineer or architect, whatever was needed. Then y'all would look at the folks and pick them out, and it would give people of all walks of life, all different professions, a chance to come up and see y'all and present yourself.

At the same time, it would fill that need on the board for a builder, architect, engineer, or whatever. It's just a suggestion that I have.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Okay. My last question, and I appreciate your candid and honest -- honesty. How did you vote on the presidential --

MR. BURROUGHS: I voted for Caslen. I looked at all the candidates. I studied them. I interviewed them. And what I thought we needed at that point in time for the university was somebody that can help tighten up the expense, the operating cost of the university, and I felt in my heart of hearts that that person would probably do that better than most.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Can I -- let me make one statement --

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- and make it very clear. My questioning today in reference to how a person or how a member of the board voted for the president is no reflection on saying that I disagree --

MR. BURROUGHS: I understand.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- with who is the president.

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I think my issue is the process.

MR. BURROUGHS: The process --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So I want to be -- and I just want to be very clear.

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir. The process did not go well. It was bumpy. It was -- it was not pleasant to be there when it happened. I know it was not pleasant on the outside. It was handled poorly, and this whole board is to blame for it.

We had the votes to get him in to start with, and it was very close, and I think had it been pushed and brought to a conclusion, none of this would have happened. But it turned out to be a mess.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Burroughs, for your willingness to serve. And as I look here at your resume, finance, banker, and real estate.

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Kind of similar to -- but you're just more expanded than mine. And a little background on me, by the time I was 21, I was in the real estate business.

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: At 26, I was a broker; 28, I owned a mortgage company, one of the few in the South, whole entire Southeast.

You of all understand the struggle of those industries. It was a long time, and now it's coming back to really hurt us in South Carolina, how long it took for us to work together in the real estate industry. So now

those -- because of that, our rural communities don't have the infrastructure that we could have put together --

MR. BURROUGHS: That's for sure. That's correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- during those bad times. And because there was not an open-door policy till '84, '86 with the filing of legislation forcing fair lending practices, it's come back to bite us.

And so I'm just concerned that some of what I'm watching at the university -- and you've got the experience, and you've seen it happen over and over again because of the industry. What are you doing to try to prevent it from hurting us as we continue to recruit some of the best students in this country so that at some point, because of our lack of diversity or inability to adapt, to make culture changes, and now simply because on the educational side, these young folk are going back home after we educate them, and so we've got a shortage of teachers, shortage of everything --

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and you're the flagship university who has the experience and knowledge and have seen this happen over and over again, and I'm pretty sure there are some things that, if you had to do over again, you would do it differently.

MR. BURROUGHS: Absolutely.

SENATOR SCOTT: And so what is there that you are offering with all that experience to help make some of those major changes to bring about that diversity? Because, listen, it's not about one segment of the population.

MR. BURROUGHS: No.

SENATOR SCOTT: It's about the state as a whole. And for some reason, they're not getting it. They just -- and from some of what I heard today on either side, they're not getting it, to understand if we don't do better in this state, we're going to watch the same thing that we've watched happen. These folk don't have to come here.

MR. BURROUGHS: That's correct.

SENATOR SCOTT: And at some point, they'll start going someplace else simply because we don't get it. You cannot be the flagship and not be the one that's moving in the right direction so that people feel comfortable, even those out-of-state people that come in, they train, they go back out when they really see what's going on.

So what's your long-term plan, as someone who's coming out of the business industry who's seen this thing over and over again, to try to help fix this problem with diversity?

MR. BURROUGHS: Well, one of the things that I do on the board is I don't mind voting no. I voted against a new campus because of the cost

of it, and I just don't think we need to be in that big, new dormitory campus if we don't operate things well. So I voted against it. So I don't mind saying what I think.

The university has got to work on cutting its cost of operations to try to get the tuition down, and that's just something we have to address and cut our costs just like y'all have to manage your homes, businesses, or whatever. We should be better stewards of how we spend the money. And I think these new financial statements will help us with that.

As far as the amount of students, minority students, and diversity of students in the Columbia campus, the systems that the flagship universities are rated under in U.S. News and World Report -- and a lot the colleges and universities pay a lot of attention to the ratings. A lot of the rating is based on your SAT scores of your incoming freshman class. That's why a lot of the universities have Bridge programs where they can come in and bring that student in the next semester that don't have those kind of grades.

So until we change that and say to ourselves do we want to lose some of the national rankings, to lower the SATs, it's going to be very hard to change things.

One way to change them could be trying to recruit the students that maybe wouldn't apply with the higher -- with some type of financial assistance. Now, that's something that came straight out of the mouth of President Caslen. And for what it's worth, as soon as he got here and started talking to the board, he's talked more about diversity with the students and the faculty and administration than anybody I've heard in a while, so I think he's on the right track.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

Thank you, Chairman.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. Just briefly.

And good afternoon, sir. I just want -- a couple of things here. Under here, does the -- does the university need to attract more students? You say, We need to cap our enrollment in Columbia.

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Is the current number -- or what number does that need to be?

MR. BURROUGHS: And I'm the odd person on the board. We keep building this campus up. I think we've got to attract more capital, human capital and money capital, in the satellite campuses. We've put a lot in here.

The other part of it is, in higher ed, there's going to be less students around this country coming to college over the next 10, 15 years. That's just a fact. And we need to size Columbia and take care of it and prepare for less people and build up the other campuses, and the only way to do it that I see is to cap it. And, again, that's me speaking.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So I've heard earlier testimony this afternoon, those that have said about restructuring -- you know, they point to the satellite campuses.

But yet I think I'm hearing you in your comments this afternoon that you're the lone person that's looking at those satellite campuses, that most of them are focusing on growth at the -- at the main campus here.

MR. BURROUGHS: I think most people's attention is caring for the whole system. But when you sit in there, Columbia is the flagship, and I'm just saying it's time to focus out on the satellites and to cap it because every time you bring in more students to Sumter or here, you've got to build more labs, more dormitories, more whatever to accommodate the increasing load.

And if you are used to the revenue coming in from the tuition and that thing cuts -- starts going down and you've got your bond indebtedness and everything geared up to a certain level, you get into trouble. It goes back to the cycles. I just think it's something we all need to look at very seriously not only with USC, but all schools will be facing the same thing.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir. And let me respond -- get you to respond as far as my consistency on sitting on the board, either the student government president or a faculty representative.

MR. BURROUGHS: All right, sir. I think that the student president -- and this year, we have Luke Rankin, and he's done a great job -- and the faculty person, they are sitting in the board room.

But when we go into executive session, they don't know what's said. And so they're sitting on a board that they don't understand everything that's going on, and I think sometimes because they don't understand what happens in executive session, it causes trouble, say, sometimes between the board and faculty or students. There's a misunderstanding.

I think had they been in the executive sessions when we went through the president struggles and all that, it might have been different. There would have been better understanding of what really went on.

So to answer the question, I think they should be in the executive sessions, and if that's something that they're required to be full voting members, then that's something the legislature's got to approve. But even if they don't vote, I think they should be in there so they hear what goes on.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir. And what is your -- what is your attendance record at regularly scheduled meetings?

MR. BURROUGHS: My attendance record is pretty good, and I think not the best --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Is that 80 -- is that 80 percent, 70 percent?

MR. BURROUGHS: Oh, I'd say it's 90-something.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: 90-something percent.

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir. In person?

MR. BURROUGHS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. Thank you, sir.

MR. BURROUGHS: And just to -- if we ever get our governance and nominating committee in, they should keep records and send to y'all on our attendance. That should go in to y'all directly from the university.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What's the desire of the committee?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Burroughs.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: As the proxy for Representative King, favorable.

MR. BURROUGHS: I want to -- I want to thank y'all so much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Morgan Martin has notified us that has withdrawn his name from consideration. Now our last candidate for the day, Jasper Ramsey from Myrtle Beach.

MR. RAMSEY: Thank you, Senator Peeler and members of the committee.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. For the record, give us your full name.

MR. RAMSEY: Jasper N. Ramsey, Jr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. RAMSEY: I do. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. RAMSEY: Yes, I would like to just speak briefly. I know it's very, very late. By the way, thank you all for bearing with me here.

I -- the University of South Carolina means everything to me and my family. I have observed the tremendous growth and improvement in the past ten years at the university under President Pastides' leadership within the quality of education provided to the students and in its role as a leading economic engine to the -- to the people of this state.

Events of the last year have shown me that I can no longer sit on the sidelines and watch this progress increasingly at risk. I want to state there is no other position on any state board that would be of interest to me whatsoever. My sole purpose is to give back to my alma mater so she may offer the same benefits to future students that she's provided to me and to my daughter, who just graduated in May magna cum laude from the university.

My background is a little bit different from most of the other people with whom you've spoken. I'm neither a banker nor a lawyer nor a trust fund baby. I'm a manager at a Chick-fil-a. I make \$35,000 a year. I have a background of owning and operating my own businesses. I operated hotels in Myrtle Beach, my own restaurant. I've spent time in professional baseball and in various and sundry sales positions.

So I come with a very different perspective than what most of the members and candidates of the board have. And in no way belittling what they bring to the table, but I do bring somewhat of a fresh perspective.

I joked that, to a few friends to whom I've mentioned my candidacy, that the legislature -- the General Assembly has a reputation of choosing old, white, wealthy males. I'm totally different. I'm an old, white, poor male. So a little bit different there. But I say that being facetious, but to make a point. I come from a different point of view.

The university -- I became a Gamecock at the age of seven years old listening to a man named Bob Fulton broadcast basketball games on the radio for teams coached by a man named Frank McGuire. And I fell in love with the university there. I went to Coach McGuire's camps in the early '70s.

Senator Scott and I had a brief conversation talking about SAT scores. Largely because of SAT scores, I managed somehow, despite mediocre grades in high school, to be offered -- to be named a Furman Scholar and a Wofford Scholar. I turned both of those down because there was no other place I could imagine going but to USC.

There, I met wonderful professors, made great friends. It's the centerpiece of my life. I was married at Rutledge Chapel on the Horseshoe. I raised my youngest daughter to be a Gamecock, and, again,

it prepared her wonderfully. She was editor of the -- editor in chief of The Daily Gamecock and is now off to a great start professionally.

Again, I know firsthand what the University of South Carolina can do for people in this state, and I really -- I want to make a point that I am in no way, shape, or form a protest candidate. I have a positive agenda that I wish to push forward to help breed a collegial atmosphere on the board of trustees. However, there's a point where you simply have to -- you simply have to step forward and do something.

I have nothing in the world against President Caslen. It seems he's a tremendously accomplished man. I've been pleased with what I've seen of what he's done as our president so far, and on the board I will certainly -- as long as he continues that, no one will be a bigger supporter than I.

Having said that, the process was simply horrible, as some of you have been kind enough to comment. The board of trustees set out a set of rules, it's my understanding, to the search committee for a new president, including, among other things, that that person hold a terminal degree.

At that point, again, if media reports are correct, although President Caslen was not on the final four list prepared -- I'm assuming simply because he lacked a terminal degree. He certainly seems very qualified in other areas. They placed him on the -- they insisted that he be placed on the -- on the final list.

After things became a mess, the uni -- the searchees, I think, made a very wise decision to bring in the chancellor from USC Spartanburg and basically start over. I think that was a great, great process. And then for some reason, things changed dramatically around the 1st of July, and we've all followed what was involved in that.

And now we're faced with a situation where the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools -- I guess they haven't placed us on -- probation wouldn't be the term, but we're in a very serious situation, and it shook the core of the university to its very, very foundation.

So that's simply just an update on where I stand and why I'm here today. I look forward to answering your questions. I hope you'll give me -- I know it's really late -- at least a brief opportunity to share some of my ideas for the university moving forward.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Ramsey, for your willingness to serve.

MR. RAMSEY: A pleasure.

SENATOR SCOTT: And I'm sorry the time didn't allow for me to listen to where you wanted to go with the SAT, but I said to you when we got in here, I did want to hear --

MR. RAMSEY: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- what your thought process with those SAT scores --

MR. RAMSEY: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- and all that so that we look at the shift. The students are there.

MR. RAMSEY: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: They're just in different locations. So some of your ideas about the SAT scores, I'm open to hear it.

MR. RAMSEY: Well, Senator Scott, let me preface by saying, as a proud Gamecock, I'm awfully proud that we were the first flagship university in the Southeast to integrate way back in 1877. Unfortunately, through the efforts of some folks, that didn't last.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. RAMSEY: I'm proud that when I was in school at Carolina from '77 to '81, we had by far the highest percentage of African-American students of any flagship university in the ACC/SEC area. And I'm proud that we're in the top three percent nationally in graduating African-American students.

That said -- and I'm proud that the number of African-American students at Carolina has increased. However, that said, given the increase in the university -- in the enrollment in other areas, the percentage has lowered dramatically. It's a concern to me. I know it was a concern to Dr. Pastides.

One of the -- and there are a number of areas that -- obviously, financial issues are one thing. I don't mean to generalize, but many minority students come from families like mine, families of limited means. That's certainly an issue there.

The idea of students starting out at the branch campuses or at the technical colleges and moving to the university are a great way to expand enrollment of limited financial means, be they African-American or otherwise. Absolutely all those things are important.

But the primary things I want to discuss with you -- number one is we all respond when we can see people like ourselves, and the ability for students to walk into the classroom, to attend board meetings, et cetera, and see people -- see a diverse group of people.

But as far as the SAT scores go, as I mentioned, I managed to get a Furman scholarship and a Wofford scholarship despite B grades because I scored great on the SAT. They're not perfect, and we all know that one of the big issues with them is they do tend to -- for whatever reasons, African Americans and minorities tend to score lower on SATs of similar academic achievement in high school.

One of the things I've heard here is the idea that, well, we know this is a problem, we need to do something about it, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I can't change this. I'm one person. It should be very much a part of our ongoing dialogue with our new provost.

But just let me mention some facts, okay, and this is a quick and dirty search of the Internet. There are a number of very prominent universities in this country -- New York University, Wake Forest, UT Austin, Arizona State, Cornell, the Ivy League, American University, George Washington, and many, many other fine schools, still a minority of schools -- that have eliminated the SAT/ACT altogether in their -- in their making their choices for students.

I mean, these are tremendous, quality universities ranging from Ivy League schools to small, to large colleges, to major flagship universities, and we need to have a dialogue about that. That's the thing I wanted to get with you in detail. The idea that this is some nebulous thing that might or might not work -- this is a trend in higher education, and it's time for the USC board to explore it in a serious manner. And, again, we wouldn't exactly be trailblazers.

Does that make sense?

SENATOR SCOTT: That makes sense.

MR. RAMSEY: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: So what would you do to -- outside of the SAT, the elimination of SATs, or even what you mentioned earlier, that these kids are going to the outlying campus -- but they're not coming back to the main campus.

MR. RAMSEY: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Very, very few, because once you establish yourself on a campus after your freshman year, you get involved in sororities, fraternities, and moving up to hold office, and you don't move.

MR. RAMSEY: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: And so that's a great thing to tell a student, you're going to move to these other campuses, but you're not. If you're in Spartanburg, you're not going to come back to Columbia. I mean, it's just too much of a change --

MR. RAMSEY: Sure.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- when you've already adapted.

So what do you -- what's your recommendation? These schools have the numbers.

MR. RAMSEY: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: But they've got the numbers spread out, and for some reason, one particular campus is the one we're protecting.

MR. RAMSEY: Well, again, I think in the interest of being completely open and not in any way attempting to tell you what I think you want to hear --

SENATOR SCOTT: Oh, no. Tell the truth.

MR. RAMSEY: -- part of the percentage change is based on -- it's my understanding that Dr. Pastides and the administration made a decision back in '07/'08 when the economic collapse occurred to keep the university up and going, to reach out to out-of-state students with good academic profiles who'd come in and pay a full load and help cover the tuition for in-state students, which I once was and my daughter was. So that skewed it over somewhat.

And the things that you're hearing about the change in the way the federal government decides what one's racial ethnicity is, I'm sure that's a fact. These are honest people. But the way it's always worked and the way it's going to continue to work is, when a student who happens to be a person of color visits the university, if that person sees other people who look like them, if that person sees other people who look like them dealing in pleasant social situations with people of other ethnicities -- Caucasian, Asian-American, it doesn't matter at all -- that factors in the decision.

When they walk in to visit a classroom and they see a professor who looks like them with a background perhaps somewhat like them, that's going to make a difference. And if for some reason they should ever wander over to the Pastides Alumni Center and walk into a board meeting -- that's highly unlikely, but nevertheless, those things make a difference.

I am reluctant to be critical of the administration. But when we're -- I know we send people out into the high schools in this state to recruit students. I would hope that we are sending people from a diverse background. There are certainly numerous people of -- of various ethnicities who love Carolina who are capable of going in and doing a great job selling the university.

So I don't want to say that we're not doing that already, but if we aren't, we should. Does that make sense?

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah, it does. You're doing that. Because the issue's at the intake.

MR. RAMSEY: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: It's not in recruiting. You're doing very well in recruiting. Like I said, I think you're probably recruiting three to one. But at the intake is where you're losing the students who can be progressive and can help you with those numbers.

MR. RAMSEY: Well, and I still think, too, you know, the tuition and the cost of -- the cost of attending college, which has of course expanded -- grown dramatically in the last 10 or 15 years in South Carolina, it affects all of us, but none more so than those of us of modest means, and it is simply a fact that our African-American population is somewhat of more modest means generally.

And going to a branch campus certainly is understandable. If you can stay at home or whatever, eat mama's cooking, it does make a difference.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, if you look at --

MR. RAMSEY: But that's not --

SENATOR SCOTT: But if you look at tuition --

MR. RAMSEY: That's the status quo.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- it's pretty well what most of the schools and somewhat in line -- most of these kids already know, when they get out, they've got bunch of debt, student loan debt.

MR. RAMSEY: I think it's -- the full cost of attendance is a little bit different, but I'm saying --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. RAMSEY: -- that simply is a fact. We have that. Again, when I was in school at Carolina, '77 to '81 -- I don't want to misspeak, but the African-American -- the percentage of African-American students on campus was 13, 14, 15 percent, by far the highest.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. RAMSEY: Again, I really think it goes back to people being comfortable. I talked -- in the little questionnaire that y'all gave us, I talked about the ability of people of various ethnicities at USC to be proud to be there and have their individual characteristics and needs addressed --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. RAMSEY: -- while at the same time feeling to be part of the total Carolina community. And part of that is, as I say, having mentors, people that they can see, teachers, leaders, et cetera, who look like them and come from a background like them.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you so much.

MR. RAMSEY: My pleasure.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be brief.

And thank you for being here and for your -- for being here for the majority of the day, the afternoon at least.

You say here that -- under this questionnaire you're referring to that the biggest weakness is the lack of recognition of economic value?

MR. RAMSEY: Well, yes, sir. I wasn't referring specifically to the board. I was talking about the university in general.

When I attended Carolina from '77 to '81, the legislature -- or the taxpayers of South Carolina, through the legislature and Governor Riley, provided about 65 percent of the university's operating income. It's my understanding in around '07 when the economic collapse occurred and everything changed, we were down to about 35 percent. And today, it's my understanding it's about 17 percent for the university altogether --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Is that a --

MR. RAMSEY: -- about 13 percent for the campus at USC.

That's what I was referring to. However, my solution isn't to come and browbeat you folks for more and more money, although we'll certainly take it. I was talking about we've got to find innovative ways to support the university and grow the university and keep tuition modest.

My daughter who just graduated from Carolina, she was a great high school student, Senator Alexander. She had multiple scholarships, and she maintained a 3.95 GPA at said USC and worked full-time, at least 30 hours a week, seven of her eight semesters. She still left with \$25,000 worth of student debt. And her mother and I -- we're divorced, but we still support her. I want to make that clear. We also have \$25,000 worth of debt, and many people have far, far, far more. We've got to get a handle on that.

And things like going after every research scholar that we can at USC, working to -- I guess we've become a member of the Association of American Universities, which opens up all kind of research opportunities. We've got to be looking under every stone in order to find a way to -- to better finance not just South Carolina, but Clemson, MUSC, and all of the other schools too.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay.

MR. RAMSEY: So that's what I was referring to.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you for that response.

MR. RAMSEY: My pleasure.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And then here it says that as far as the students and faculty being represented on the board, you're response to that is...

MR. RAMSEY: Yes, sir. I am 100 percent in favor of a student body representative and a faculty representative being members of the board and being full voting members of the board.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And have you --

MR. RAMSEY: And if I could have a few -- sorry -- to explain that, if I may. I know it's late.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Briefly.

MR. RAMSEY: While I feel that way.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Briefly, yes, sir.

MR. RAMSEY: Thank you.

When I went to school from '77 to '81, I -- I worked since I was 12 years old, and I saved up enough money to put gas in my car and buy beer. My mom wrote a check for \$500 each semester for me and paid my way through the university.

It's not like that anymore. I heard somebody say earlier today -- I don't mean to beat them up, but they made a comment in being negative towards students, a student representative, that when my daughter -- when his daughter was 21, she couldn't balance a checkbook. Okay.

Kids today are paying their way through the university. That's the world we live in. The day of mama and daddy writing the check or the taxpayers providing 65 percent of the university's budget as they did --
SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, I would clarify that with that -- I don't want to interrupt you -- that's not including scholarship money that's going through the South Carolina Lottery.

MR. RAMSEY: Oh, absolutely, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So let's clarify that.

MR. RAMSEY: And it's a tremendous -- and it's very, very important.

And by the way, to go back to Senator Scott real quick, if there's any parts of the criteria for scholarships for -- through the lottery, the lottery money, that's causing a negative impact on African-American students earning them who are good students, that's something I would -- I would ask y'all to address.

But to go back -- but to go back, it's simply a fact that that's the world we live in today. Students are paying their way through school, and they're paying the lion's share of -- of the university's budget. And, you know, it's taxation without representation, so to speak, and we fought -- we fought a war about that.

It's also not a unique -- again, it's not a unique concept. I've dug up an article that my daughter wrote last year when she was editor in chief of The Daily Gamecock, and she did some research. In the Southeastern Conference alone -- and these are all schools that are under the SACS governance -- LSU, the University of Florida, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Tennessee have voting student members on their board. East Carolina in the state of North Carolina have voting student members on their board.

Thirty-one of fifty states' flagship universities, according to this article -- and my daughter put a lot of research into it. I trust she's correct. Have voting student members. So it's not a radical concept.

And, again, the reason I am in favor of it is because these students who are in school are the stakeholders. They're -- this isn't just a question of coming on mama and daddy's dime. I mean, it is their -- they're leaving school with enormous -- they are engaged in a way that nobody else is. And, again, it's not a radical concept.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I got you. Thank you.

MR. RAMSEY: Those other schools manage to somehow get around any conflicts of interest or whatever, and as far as faculty goes, just real quick if I may -- you folks are all very progressive people. You know that the leading corporations today, public corporations, the cutting-edge corporations have put employees on their board in order to get their input. It's the direction that we're going, and there's a place for faculty members.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. Thank you for your --

MR. RAMSEY: Thank for the opportunity to express my thoughts.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Ramsey, I see you're a -- you manage a Chick-fil-a?

MR. RAMSEY: I'm a manager at Chick-fil-a. I'm not the manager. Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Some of the hardest working people in Gaffney are the people who work in Chick-fil-a.

MR. RAMSEY: It's our pleasure.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Are you on track to become an owner or an operator?

MR. RAMSEY: I don't think so, Senator Peeler. I've spent most of my life working for myself. As I said, I owned a hotel in Myrtle Beach and owned a restaurant myself for ten years. I would never -- I'm sure that Chick-fil-a, being a fine company, would certainly even give someone of my advanced age an opportunity, but frankly my goal is to get back into owning my own business.

But Chick-fil-a has been a wonderful, wonderful experience for me, and I don't want to cut off if there's a question coming, but it's helped me understand something that'll help me to be a better board member. May I share that?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yeah, go ahead.

MR. RAMSEY: Thank you.

One of the tenets of leadership at Chick-fil-a is what we call servant leadership, the idea that leaders are there to serve our employees and serve our customers. We aren't there to be catered to. And I'm sure there are many members of the USC board who embrace that. But we

need a board-wide embracing of that -- of that tenet. It's vital that we have it.

We need what's called an inverted pyramid. At the very top of that pyramid -- versus the traditional pyramid that works like this with the board at the top, then the administration, then the faculty, then the students, at the top are the students. They're at the top of this pyramid. This is how we do it at Chick-fil-a. After that come alumni, faculty, and then after that comes staff, then the administration, and finally at the bottom is the board of trustees.

It doesn't mean that we're not, as was mentioned earlier, governing the university from a 30,000-foot-high point of view. But we -- we need -- we all need to embrace that and live that every single day.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: So let me ask you --

MR. RAMSEY: If we do that, then what we've seen over the last year or so at South Carolina, it wouldn't have occurred.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Unless they meet on Sundays --

MR. RAMSEY: That's true.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- are you going to be able to get off work to go to meetings?

MR. RAMSEY: That's a great question, and I did speak with my operator about that, by the way, to let her know what I was doing. And even though she, like you, is a Clemson alum, she was fully supportive of it. Yes, absolutely.

That's a -- and I've put a great deal -- as I said, I wrestled really hard with taking this step to throw my hat into the ring. And I've had a conversation with one of your fellow senators -- and didn't ask him for an endorsement. Ms. Martha and Ms. Julie told me you don't do that till you -- till you -- you don't assume anything until you're through this meeting.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: They told you right.

MR. RAMSEY: But I asked a little friend, Luke Rankin, I told him, I said, Luke, I think I'm having a stroke. I'm considering running for the USC board. And I said, Will you please talk me out of it and tell me I'm crazy?

And he looked at me, and he said, Jasper -- he goes, Let me tell you this. Which would make you feel worse, would you feel worse -- and the reason I said it was because I've got to work 50 hours a week. I've got a lot going on. I'm a person of modest means. I think I've lost my mind.

He said, Jasper, which would make you feel worse, if you ran for the board and you lost or if you did not run for the board and things stayed the same?

And I said, Luke, I've known you my whole life. How dare you do that to me.

But I took that advice to heart, and that's why I showed up today.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Favorable.

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is a favorable report. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, sir.

MR. RAMSEY: Thank you all very, very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you so much for your willingness to serve.

MR. RAMSEY: It's a pleasure.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You'd make a good lawyer.

MR. RAMSEY: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: They get paid for their words.

MR. RAMSEY: I'm sorry. I -- there's a lot of passion, and thank you for bearing with me, especially at this late hour.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: That's all right.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'd like to call the meeting to order. This is a meeting of the College and University Trustees Screening Commission. Welcome, everyone. May God continue to bless us all.

You have an agenda before you. First, University of South Carolina, 10th Judicial Circuit. First up, Tab A, Chuck Allen. Good morning, sir.

MR. ALLEN: Good morning.

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

MR. ALLEN: My full name is Donald Leverette Allen.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. ALLEN: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning to you and other members of the committee or commission. I had previously, under the statute, submitted a written statement of proposed testimony that I submitted last week. Just reading the statute literally, it said that it had to be filed 48 hours prior to the hearing, so I, I did comply with that.

I'd like to read it this morning, Mr. Chairman, if that's okay.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

MR. ALLEN: It has been an honor and a privilege to serve on the board of trustees of the University of South Carolina, representing Anderson and Oconee County since 2008. Including my representation as a student athlete back in the day, I have now represented this university in some form or fashion for 16 years.

During this time, I have worked diligently and with steadfast commitment to the betterment of this university. I have faithfully attended board meetings, committee meetings, academic functions, administrative events, and commencement ceremonies in all parts of this state. As chairman of the Student and System Affairs Committee, I have also traveled with the president to regional campuses to demonstrate the importance of the mission of each institution and each campus. I have also – during my term of service, I have also served on the Athletics Committee during that time.

During my 12 years of service on the board, we have recently recorded the most secure financial position in recent history of the university. In fiscal year 2019, we recorded a net financial position, which I understand is tantamount to net worth, of one point – billion dollars, with assets of \$2.7 billion. The current bond rating is AA for the university and AA for our Athletic Department bonds. And we hope to reach a AAA rating at the next rating call.

Academically, we serve a diverse student body of 35,000 students at the Columbia campus and an additional 17,000 – maybe 17,500 – at the regional campuses. We now have – not by percentage, but by actual number – the most minority students on our campuses that we've had ever.

Currently, our in-state students compromise about 60 percent of the enrollment in Columbia and about 65 percent of the total enrollment in the system, including all eight campuses. However, in the fall – I would like to point out, in the fall of 2019, I am informed that 97 percent of all in-state applicants to Columbia were accepted as either a traditional freshman or a residential bridge program student.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that I have served with an earnest and independent commitment to the best interest of the university without regard to any personal agenda or inappropriate external influences. Of course, I would hope to continue to serve my alma mater in this same spirit.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Any questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

Thank you, Chuck, for your willingness to serve. I want to go back to some of the statistics that you gave just a minute ago, and I see that in all the campuses, you're able to get it right in terms of influx of African-American students, with the exception of the Columbia campus. And I knew you were in the room yesterday; a lot of conversation about SAT scores and which students y'all will allow in the Columbia campus and those who you send to the other campuses.

I've heard all kinds of answers to that problem, with the exception of a broken intake system, and that's why you're 5.3 in terms of African-American participation on your campus; at least that's what Google show for y'all.

MR. ALLEN: I want to make sure –

SENATOR SCOTT: In the tracking system in our Columbia campus. Overall –

MR. ALLEN: Columbia campus.

SENATOR SCOTT: Overall.

MR. ALLEN: Yeah.

SENATOR SCOTT: I'm not concerned about the other campus. Those are just feeder systems. The answer's been that, Well, they'll go to this campus and then transfer, which we know that that doesn't happen. Once you become familiar with a campus, you don't really – that's where you end up staying for your four years.

So, let's talk a little bit about the Columbia campus and what you see that you think that y'all can do to improve percentage of African American – yes, you've expanded. You've got about 34,731 students overall. But your Columbia campus, for some reason – something is going on with that.

I even tracked, you know, the lottery, SAT scores, and the GPAs, and so I know at some of the other campuses, I'm pretty sure that you've got students out there as well that would qualify to come on this campus but have chosen not to. So what do you think is – what do you think is wrong?

MR. ALLEN: Well – and you heard some of this yesterday. I do think, under the new reporting requirements that have been required by the federal government, as far as the number of races a student reports, I do think that skews it a little bit. I know that's not – that's not the whole picture, but I do think that skews the numbers a little bit.

As far as remedy, to do better, and we need to do better. We need to do better. And the figure I see – the most recent figure I saw for the Columbia campus was about 9 percent.

SENATOR SCOTT: That's not 9 percent. That's minority students.

MR. ALLEN: Well –

SENATOR SCOTT: African-American students.

MR. ALLEN: Well, the one – I saw African American, but I, I won't quibble over that.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah.

MR. ALLEN: But we need to do better, and I think we – I think the emphasis and the effort got better under Harris Pastides. He created the – you know, our former president. He created the position of chief diversity officer. That was four or five years ago. That was John Dozier, who, unfortunately, recently left, or is leaving for MIT.

The new president, I think, is doing even better because – with that position because under Harris, or President Pastides, the diversity officer reported to the provost and kind of was down in the chain of command a little bit. Under President Caslen, he has already altered the organizational structure of the administration at the top level of the university and elevated this position. And we've just hired a new candidate for that job. He's coming in on June the 1st, I believe it is.

But that has been elevated to a vice presidential position. So what that means, in terms of emphasis and commitment, is that he will – when he arrives, he will report directly to the president. And the president is very interested, as you heard yesterday, that President Caslen had a very –

SENATOR SCOTT: What is the – Chuck, what is the board interest? I'm hearing about administration. What is the board interest in getting these things moved?

MR. ALLEN: Well –

SENATOR SCOTT: Because if your numbers were not where they needed to be the last five or six years we've been talking about that, and it appears that it's been the administration who has made it the number-one priority, and not the board.

MR. ALLEN: Well –

SENATOR SCOTT: So where's the board interest in making this a number-one priority?

MR. ALLEN: Well, of course, we aren't – you know, we aren't day-to-day operators, and –

SENATOR SCOTT: But you get percentages at your meeting.

MR. ALLEN: I understand.

SENATOR SCOTT: And it becomes a question – and it becomes what direction the board wants to go in if it's a board priority. And let me say this. You cannot continue to recruit some of the number-one companies in the country and not be able to demonstrate where the state is in terms of minority participation. The behavior of the college and university

would also help us to curve how well we get along also back in these communities.

And so it's just more than the students coming to our campus and administrators and staff. It's the culture of the state. So unless it's a board priority, to push it back down on the administration – administrations come and go, but board is policy. What's the board policy?

MR. ALLEN: Well, I agree. I agree. It is a matter of policy, and I said earlier, it's a matter of commitment, and it's kind of a matter of culture. You know, there's 20 people on this board of trustees as it's currently constituted, and I can only speak for one.

SENATOR SCOTT: Do you think 20 is too many?

MR. ALLEN: No, no, no. No, not – that issue, I have indicated previously to the Chair. I think I wrote you back in the fall when the bill came up, that's a legislative prerogative. What the Legislature, the General Assembly, the governor – what it chooses to do as far as how we're comprised, what districts we come from, the numbers, and so on, that is a legislative priority. That is – that is not – I am not qualified to make that determination. You gentlemen and ladies are qualified to make that determination.

But I can only speak for one, as I was about to say. And my personal commitment, just by way of example, we appoint – as board members, we appoint members to the Board of Visitors. And this is just an example to address your question. I've had three appointments to the Board of Visitors. I've appointed one female out of those three, and the first African-American male to ever be appointed in the Anderson-Oconee district. That was Moe Brown. You've probably heard of him. He was a student athlete here, and he's from Anderson.

And so that was my personal commitment. I've got a somewhat – a little bit of a record of public service going back to a term in the General Assembly a long time ago, and I think that record would demonstrate a personal commitment to –

SENATOR SCOTT: All I'm saying is that moving forward, and you've got a new president, and it appears from all the comments that I've gotten from other candidates who are running, actually, for this board, he has a commitment. I just want to make sure that same commitment that the president, the board has the same commitment in support of the president and the direction the president wants to go to get it right.

Because I think the numbers are coming in, as demonstrated in the other campuses. There's just one campus – for some reason, you've got a policy, and that policy's prohibiting you to have good numbers for your campus. Thank you.

Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: You're welcome. I would – let me – can I just say one more quick thing?

SENATOR SCOTT: Yes, please.

MR. ALLEN: I do think – and the president has shared this with us. I do think that cost – I think we have accepted a number of African-American applicants at the Columbia campus, and they don't end up coming here. And he tells us, in his brief experience so far, that cost is an issue in some of those cases.

And I – and we'll, you know – we're going to work to relieve the pressure on tuition. Of course, we would solicit assistance from the General Assembly in that regard, but –

SENATOR SCOTT: Didn't we provide some abatement for out-of-state students to come here?

MR. ALLEN: Well, that's kind of an administrative matter as well.

SENATOR SCOTT: So is the cost to get these kids in here.

MR. ALLEN: Got you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you so much.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. King.

I have a few questions for you. You know – let me see. Let me start off by asking you, how did you vote on the president, the present president?

MR. ALLEN: Could I – I voted no. I voted in the – with the minority. I voted no in the ultimate vote. But I would – could I comment on that?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I think with my next question, you may be able to.

MR. ALLEN: Got it.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Tell me, what did you think about the process? And I want you to be very honest and candid with us. What do you think about the process?

MR. ALLEN: Well, I'm under oath.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Yes, sir.

MR. ALLEN: When, we finally voted in July, you know, the – originally, it was – the intention was to vote in April. And about – I think it was eight to ten weeks passed between that designated date in April and when we did vote in July. But that was the reason, and, in fact, I issued a press release before we voted in July that I was very pleased with General Caslen and was impressed with him in April and was prepared to vote for him that day.

I was not on the Search Committee. I didn't chair the Search Committee. I was not a member of the Search Committee. So all I could do was cast a vote. And, again, I'm one of 20 people. And I appeared for that meeting in April prepared to cast the vote for General Caslen. That did not happen, as we all – as you all well know. And by the time we voted in July – and, like I say, I issued a press release that would corroborate any and all of this. But we – the process had basically degenerated into a really difficult situation.

And my abiding commitment to the university anytime I cast a vote – and I said this on the record the day we did vote. I said that it was the most difficult vote I had cast in about 11 years on the board, but my allegiance and my fidelity was to the best interest of this university. And at that time, for whatever reason – there were a number of reasons. I mean, we, we were – it was donors, alumni, and we have a lot of constituencies that we've got to balance, and sometimes, there's cross-currents, and that almost turned into a vortex.

But at that point in time, using the standard of the best interest of the university, the process had degenerated to the point – was the reason I voted no and the only reason I voted no that day. If that answers your question.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And my last question to you, Senator Scott spoke with you a little bit about minority participation, minorities being at the school.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And since I've been on this committee, we hear the same thing over and over and over again in reference to, Oh, well, we understand.

But I guess my question to you is, what are you doing about it? This is not something new that you all have heard, that there is a lack of African-American presence in your enrollment there. You all hear this, not only through screening, but from us all the time. I'm not asking what the president has done, not asking what other board members have done. I'm asking what you will do and what you have done.

MR. ALLEN: Well, once again, I've, I've advocated, you know, that point of view – really, I'm 60 years old – my entire lifetime, and I do have a record out there, a public record, you know, that demonstrates, like I – and I said earlier, confirms, you know, that commitment.

As far as the future, I would – I would pledge and commit to work with President Caslen in whatever capacity I could assist him in formulating more policy, taking more action, and doing what I can to assist him because I do believe – and he's got a record, you know. When he was the superintendent at West Point, I mean, he made a substantial

difference in some of the measurables of that issue. And I pledge to work with him, and I've told him that as much. I told him that I – and even in the system affairs process, I've told him that, you know – and we deal with – and there – the numbers are better on the regional campuses. But I'm committed to assist him.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being here, Mr. Allen, and your service to the U of SC board. You were here yesterday afternoon and heard questions that we asked, responses that your fellow board members made, and one thing that struck me in thinking about it overnight was the fact that one of your board members described U of SC board as dysfunctional, that didn't know the difference between what was appropriate and inappropriate. And SACS came in, is coming back in.

You had a retreat where AGB came in and conducted a training session for your board. Tell me, what do you see has resulted already from the AGB report – and I preface all this, assuming that you've read that report – of what you view has happened already and what you envision happening in the future with your board?

MR. ALLEN: I've read – I read, of course, the SACS report, I mean, out of a matter of responsibility and duty.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, but from what I understand, SACS was basically a letter.

MR. ALLEN: It was brief.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And AGB was, was –

MR. ALLEN: Was comprehensive.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: – was comprehensive.

MR. ALLEN: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Yes, sir.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, it was. What has been done at this point is that we have now implemented – and again, I can't speak for everyone, all 20 – the other 19, but we have already implemented – we did it relatively quickly after that meeting. We have already implemented policy and a code of – it's called a code of conduct. I would – I would probably have rather it said code of commitment or something else, other than – because it's really more about – it really highlights a couple of things.

And what SACS really was – based on their report to us, was bothered by, and AGB kind of confirmed it with more detail – as you said, the AGB report and our conference with them was very comprehensive –

were a couple of things. And again, and SACS, in particular – and that was independence.

And they talk about independence explicitly, that board members, the current board members, on the whole, were – did not demonstrate and did not utilize, in their fiduciary responsibility, preserve the independence that must be preserved in order to carry out your duties faithfully and with fidelity to the university. That was – that was the primary point that SACS made.

So rolling over to AGB, when they did their – and that was done at the recommendation of President Caslen, and we all agreed – they took a more comprehensive approach, as I said, and they had the same concern. And they went a little bit – a little bit further with the standard, realizing emphasizing that the standard, in executing your fiduciary responsibility, was, what's in the best interest of the institution?

So those two things and the policy and the code are explicitly addressed. I mean, it talks voluminously about independence and about best interest. Now, quite frankly, if I can – again, I'm under oath. If I can be candid –

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I'd like for you to be.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. And I say this with great humility. I didn't – I didn't really – I didn't need that because every vote I've ever cast as a trustee of this university and this institution that I love so much, I have done out of the best interest – what I considered the best interest of the university, and I've done it in the spirit of independence. And you can't – you know, you – we have to be mindful that we have constituents because, of course, we do.

But ultimately, it's a – and it's kind of a fine line, but ultimately, you have to exercise those duties with the requisite amount of independence that you can preserve, protect, and promote the best interest of the university. And like I say, I say that with great humility, but I didn't – I didn't – I didn't need somebody – I didn't need a third party to tell me that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, maybe you didn't, but maybe the other 19 did, and I certainly respect someone that has a streak of independence. That's something that I've always prided myself in.

I also want to move to something else that you said. You talked about two things that got my attention because in the short time that I've been on this joint committee, it's come up, and I've questioned board members about it, about who speaks for the board. And, you know, it's always, Well, the chairman speaks for the board. And you say that you issued a press release detailing your decision.

And, listen, I'm not casting any stones about that because I disagree with people around here all the time. And that's our system. But I do think that in being a member of board, that, while you can have your opinion, I think that there's a proper way in which to do it. And whether or not a press release is the proper way, you know, I'm not saying one way or the other.

But I thought it was interesting when you said that. Did any other members of the board of trustees issue a press release?

MR. ALLEN: There was – there were other board members that commented publicly. And, you know, we had a – we had a lawsuit. And there were other board members that talked to television, that talked to other form of media. And one of the – one of the reasons I did that – and I did it. I discussed it with the chair, and I told him. But I kind of – I kind of saw this coming a little bit. A little bit.

And I just wanted, in some form or fashion – I wanted to have it on the record so six to eight to ten months later, when I would explain how I – the thought process I went through and the deliberation I went through, I wanted to be able to not just sound self-serving and say, Well, hey, by the way, I didn't – I had a different point of view than some of the others. And that was the only way I knew to do it.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, and I also respect the fact that when people come in here and say, you know, If the vote had been held in April, I would have voted this way, but when the vote was hurriedly arranged in July, after there was a process that had been established for reopening that search, in essence –

MR. ALLEN: Correct.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: – hiring an interim president –

MR. ALLEN: Correct.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: That had already been done.

MR. ALLEN: Correct.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I think that it is a legitimate complaint or reason to say that you disagreed with the process because if the process is not being followed at this level, then we've got a huge problem. And we've seen, throughout state government, not just in the college and universities – we've seen problems in the process. And we've got huge issues that are confronting us right now because of that failure to follow process.

My last question: You mentioned – you alluded to abatements.

MR. ALLEN: Senator Scott, yeah, actually did that.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Senator Scott had talked about that. And you said that's an administrative issue. Is that not an issue that

comes before the board to set the policy on what abatements are going to be and then the administration carries out that policy?

MR. ALLEN: It has not been. It has not been. And I think that's about to get corrected. We have – to my recollection, we have never addressed that. I'm not saying that we shouldn't have been. But we have never addressed that as a matter of policy per se.

The way I think it could be approached is, of course, we vote on a budget annually. And it's relatively specific. But I have never seen – and when we're talking about tuition, out-of-state students, in-state students, regional campuses, and so on and so on – I have never seen that line-itemed in our budget. But I, I – at this point, I believe that we should, at least through the budgetary process – that that needs to be addressed.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And Mr. Allen, please understand, this is a question that I've asked other colleges and universities, other board members, so I'm not trying to specifically pick on you or U of SC.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Two or three brief questions – and good morning.

MR. ALLEN: Good morning.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you for being here, Mr. Allen. So following up on Judge Clary, if I understood you to say, you've never had even a report from the administration on abatements?

MR. ALLEN: We have not. To my recollection and to my knowledge, I have not seen a written report. I have asked –

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well how about a verbal report?

MR. ALLEN: Well, I've questions. I've asked questions about it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: You have asked questions?

MR. ALLEN: I have, yes, sir. I have. I have. And the last –

SENATOR ALEXANDER: What kind of questions have you asked?

MR. ALLEN: Well, like, What's going on with that?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And what kind of response did you get to that?

MR. ALLEN: Well, that it was – it was not – the financial impact was not as great as it had – was reported to be.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Did they give you a number for that?

MR. ALLEN: A number as far as –

SENATOR ALEXANDER: The dollars, or, I mean, you – I mean, what's, what's small to you may be large to somebody else.

MR. ALLEN: Hey, and I'm a – (indistinct)

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, just get to the answer, yes, sir.

MR. ALLEN: I'm not rich.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I understand. I understand you're laughing about that, but that's okay. So they didn't give you a number.

MR. ALLEN: It was a couple of years ago, and I, frankly, don't – I can't – I can't recall. I just can't recall.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Do y'all set tuition?

MR. ALLEN: Do we set tuition?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Does the board set tuition?

MR. ALLEN: Of course.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So is that not a part of, of that process?

MR. ALLEN: It would – as I said to Representative Clary, it has not been. And it – and it – at this point, I would take the position that it should be.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I've been consistent in asking all the candidate about who should be sitting on the board as far as student government president and a faculty representative. And what is your position or thoughts on that?

MR. ALLEN: I think I indicated on my – the materials I submitted –

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yes, sir, I've read that.

MR. ALLEN: Yeah, yeah.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I just wanted you to respond. So –

MR. ALLEN: Well, I, I – if you would, please. I indicated in the materials that I submitted that I thought both should have the – both – as you well know, as the committee's heard numerous times, they both are at the table for trustee meetings, the faculty representative and the student body president. It's been that way since I've been on the board.

And I indicated in materials that I thought both should have voting rights as far as being members of the board. I would like to amend that at this point in time and, and, and – in the sense that I would – I would – I did further research after that application or those materials were submitted, and I changed my mind on the faculty representative. I do not, after hearing from AGB with the comprehensive work they did for us and I became more educated on it, you might say –

SENATOR ALEXANDER: When –

MR. ALLEN: – I would not – I would not advocate that, for the faculty to vote – representative to vote. However, I would maintain that the student body president should.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: When did they issue that report?

MR. ALLEN: About a month ago.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: What is your attendance – talk to me about your attendance as a board member.

MR. ALLEN: As far as I can recall, I've missed one normal meeting because I was on a family vacation. And a couple of years, I drove back. I was at Hilton Head, and I would drive back for the meetings. And about two years ago, I couldn't – I couldn't do it. So as far as I know, one.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: You – and does any of that include call-in by teleconference?

MR. ALLEN: No, that –

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Or just in-person?

MR. ALLEN: That comment was limited to, yeah, physically being there on regularly scheduled meetings.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay.

MR. ALLEN: Call meetings by telephone, I've, I've –

SENATOR ALEXANDER: That's fine.

MR. ALLEN: Yeah.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I just wanted to make sure that when you were saying that, that wasn't inclusive of teleconference and that was physical, physical presence.

MR. ALLEN: Correct. But I've missed a few – I've missed a few teleconferences.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. But that's –

MR. ALLEN: Because my schedule, you know. They get scheduled on three or four days' notice, and I may have a court appearance or something that I've got to attend to.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir. Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you for your service.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome, Mr. Allen.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: The 10th Judicial Circuit trustee seat is the last one we've heard. We've heard from numerous others, as you well know, yesterday.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And I have to admit, there were a lot of questions that were asked by our panel that I did not feel were answered properly. I felt some of them were very evasive, some of them didn't seem to know, and I – this whole process has garnered such

negative publicity for the university; and, of course, the SACS issue. If you could go back before April, first vote, how would you have preferred that the president search and eventual naming of a president be made?

MR. ALLEN: Well, after the decision was made to name an interim president – because that was part of my consideration, too – I think we should have gone forward with that. Because if we had named an interim president – I mean, that was a public, clear, you know –

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: But going back before that, we were told yesterday by one trustee candidate that the votes were there in April to elect General Caslen and the vote was not taken. Am I – did I hear that right?

MR. ALLEN: That – it was a close vote. It was a close vote. There was no vote taken, of course, because we just – we couldn't do that.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What – who made the decision not to vote in April? I guess that's my question.

MR. ALLEN: This is my recollection of that. The – there – you know, there are several members on the board that have, like, 30 and 40 years' seniority. And those senior members – I remember – I do remember this explicitly – said that this board is too divided. One member – one senior member said, I've never seen this board so divided, and we can't proceed like this.

And I think the deference in the room to the seniority, although hindsight might show it as erroneous judgement – but the deference in the room – or there was deference in the room to defer to that because of their experience. They had been through presidential search processes before. I'd never been through one, and, and, and so I think that's what – I think that's what tipped the balance that day, was when –

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: It really created a bigger mess, that's for sure.

MR. ALLEN: It got messy. It sure did, yes, sir. I agree. It got messy, and it, it – and it's been very regretful.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well –

MR. ALLEN: But I would add – I would add, must me personally – again, I can only speak for this trustee. But the activities outside the boardroom that day had nothing to do with my deliberations; none, whatsoever.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All right. My last question, and you might have answered this earlier. You said you would have voted for General Caslen in April, correct?

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir. And I think I said as much. When we had – when we –

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And, and exactly why did you change your vote the second time around?

MR. ALLEN: Because after ten weeks had elapsed, the process – I – the process had gotten so messy and so difficult that at that point in time, because of everything that you have to consider as a trustee, all the constituent groups, it was so messy and so detrimental that I could not say it was the best – in the best interest of the university at that time. And I said that. I said that in the record.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: So I assume that if he had not been voted in, the process would have been opened back up again; is that correct?

MR. ALLEN: Well, that would be kind of – that would be kind of hypothetical since he got elected.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Right.

MR. ALLEN: But if I would venture, we, we – yeah, we would have had to continue because we would have had an interim president only, but that interim was prepared to work for, I think, up to a year. He was not on a contract, per se, but he was prepared to work for a while.

But so, yeah, I mean, that – necessity would have required that.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

SENATOR SCOTT: One other question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Unfortunately, yesterday afternoon, I was not in committee and so I missed the entire discussion about the accreditation issue. So would you tell me what the status of the accreditation at the college is?

MR. ALLEN: The way I – thank you, ma'am. The way I understand it is, there were no penalties assessed as such. However, SACS will remain engaged with us through whatever their process is. I think it's a minimal process. They will remain engaged with us to continue to monitor us to see what type of adjustments and what type of discharge of duties that occurs with the board, you know, from this point forward, up until – probably a year would be my –

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: So from what I have read, I believe the accreditation board cited undue political influence; is that correct?

MR. ALLEN: That's my – that's my – yes, ma'am.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Do you believe that there is undue political influence on the board?

MR. ALLEN: Well, again, it's hard to speak for everybody else, and we – there's a lot of constituent groups, as I mentioned earlier, that have to be – that we have to be mindful of, including the General Assembly.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: But do you believe that there's undue political influence?

MR. ALLEN: By whom? Can I ask that?

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: I mean, I don't know. From what I read about – from the accreditation board, I don't believe the accreditation board cited particular – a particular person or entity that was causing undue influence. So I read that to be general undue influence.

MR. ALLEN: Well, there were text messages and emails that were FOI'd – you know, requested under the Freedom of Information Act – and I think some of those – and I produced all of mine. I didn't have many, but I produced all of mine. But I think some of those probably were direct evidence of some of that.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay. So I'm believing that the board has put into place some sort of action plan to address that particular concern of the accreditation board; is that correct?

MR. ALLEN: Yeah.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Has the board put into place some action plan to take –

MR. ALLEN: It, it –

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: – to ensure that there is no undue political influence?

MR. ALLEN: There, there – as I mentioned earlier, there's a code, and then there was a policy section added to our by-laws. Also – I failed to mention this, and which I had kind of worked on this personally for several years. There's an oath of office now that we didn't have, and I thought – I thought, just, that we needed that.

I've thought that for a long time. And not something complicated, but just something that, you're pledging fidelity and allegiance to the best interest of the university. But that's what we have – and also; excuse me.

Also, there was an ad hoc governance committee formed recently, and it will – its charge is to look at committee structure, other policy adjustments, you know, in order to, again, enumerate and state explicitly some of the fiduciary responsibilities of the board. And that's probably – I understand – I'm not on that committee either. I understand that's probably about a six- to nine-month undertaking, that they will continue to work on that. So that also will be done.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay. So I'm assuming that you would agree with me that as a state, we want to ensure that we do not put the accreditation of our universities at risk.

MR. ALLEN: Absolutely. And that – and I – and that, once again, when I issued that statement, I cited that. I cited in that statement before that vote, I said, We've got accreditation issues on the line. And when the accreditation is in jeopardy, I can't jeopardize that and say I'm exercising my duties in the best interest of the university.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: That's right. I agree. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Anyone else?

Mr. Allen, you're a straight shooter, and that's what I like about you.

MR. ALLEN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The board struggled on hiring the president, but the real struggle is who is going to be the next chairman of the board. Is that a true statement?

MR. ALLEN: Well, with all due respect and due regard, given that I've got vigorous opposition for this seat and in the General Assembly at this time, I – it would probably be presumptuous for me to comment. I may not be there. But as I see it – as I see it now –

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: My next question was going to be, What's so important to be chairman of the board of trustees of the University of South Carolina to make the board go through this kind of turmoil if that was true?

MR. ALLEN: If that was true – that's a good question because I don't share – I don't share that sentiment because I just – I don't – and like I say, I may – I may be – you know, I may be in a real minority. I just, some of that – some of that sentiment I don't share.

And I do believe with great passion, you might say, that it gets in the way, the, the, the, the agendas and the – because that's kind of personal. Sometimes, that can become personal agenda and, you know, that's not in the best interest of the university. And I just don't – I don't engage in it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. What's the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable. Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. It's unanimous.

Thank you, sir.

MR. ALLEN: Yes, sir. Thank you and other committee members.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, under Tab B, Emma Morris, Walhalla.

Good morning, ma'am.

MS. MORRIS: Good morning.

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

MS. MORRIS: Emma Wyatt Morris.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. MORRIS: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. MORRIS: Sure.

I'm not sure exactly how much information you want about my background, but just so you kind of get a feel for who I am, I'm born and raised in Oconee County. My mother was an educator for 36 years. My grandmother was an educator for 40 years. My husband is an educator/student, grad student. I have a college student. My daughter is a junior at Furman University. I have two sons, a tenth grader and an eighth grader. They both go to Walhalla Middle School and High School.

I am a 199 graduate of the university. My major was finance from the business school. And then I attended the Cumberland School of Law at the – at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama.

I practice law in Seneca. I have two partners; oh, excuse me, one partner and a junior associate. My practice is real estate, probate, business-type law.

I've not been very involved since graduation with the university because I've been raising three children and working, but I've always had an interest in the university. I feel like I'm in a place in my life now where I could dedicate the time that I need to to serve on this board of trustees. I probably have maybe an untainted view of what's going on with the board, other than the negative publicity that I've seen, you know, with the hiring of the new president. And so I think I could bring a fresh perspective.

I'm a fairly quiet person. I'm more analytical, I guess. I like to collect facts, collect information, and reserve, reserve my opinion until I can give a good opinion.

And so I appreciate you all having me here today. I don't – that's, that's my history. I'm not sure what else to tell you about that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I appreciate you offering it.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander?

Senator Scott, I –

SENATOR SCOTT: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

Good morning, and thank you for your willingness to serve. In your capacities with your work, would there be any, any inability for you to attend meetings on a regular basis that are, that are scheduled?

MS. MORRIS: No, sir. I'm very rarely in court with, with the kind of law that I practice. It's mostly office appointments, and even my court schedule is pretty flexible, so.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And one question that I've asked all of the candidates across the board. As far as someone sitting on the board that's either the student government president or a faculty representative, do you have particular thoughts on that?

MS. MORRIS: Well, I think there were – those are two huge groups that need some form of representation on the board. They're, they're the heart and soul of what's going on on the campus on the university, whereas, you know, as a, as a board member, you're not there every day, all day, every week, over the weekend.

And so certainly, I think that they should be represented. Some careful consideration about the ability to vote, but definitely insight from those folks I think would be invaluable.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. President.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Ms. Morris, for your willingness to serve. You're – I see you're a 1992 graduate of the university, and you said you've not been involved in – very much in it since you left. So how do you kind of catch up to speed with all the stuff that's going on at the university? But you did say you spend a lot of time doing some in-depth studying. So you want to share with us what you, what you have collected and what you think is going on and what you think –

MS. MORRIS: Sure.

SENATOR SCOTT: – you could do to make the situation better as a contributing member if you become a member of this board?

MS. MORRIS: Sure. I think one thing that I've, I've looked a lot at is something that you brought up earlier –

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MS. MORRIS: – with minorities as a whole but specifically African American. I mean, I – like, I’m analytical, so like I said, as a board member, I would – I would want to go back to the beginning of the process. What do – what does the application pool look like versus what is the incoming class look like?

SENATOR SCOTT: Intake system.

MS. MORRIS: How does that compare? You know, is, is there a breakdown between the university and, and the high schools, getting information out, getting on those campuses? I know, having a child and children in high school, they have days where, where universities are on the campus, recruiting, so to speak, offering free application times. So, you know, is the problem that the applications are not coming in, or is the problem that the applications are not being accepted, and, and why? That, that would be where I want to start, is all the way back at the beginning of that.

And to tie in with that, I was – I was very shocked to see – I think the number I pulled, and I think it came off of the diversity inclusion part of the web page – it showed 44 percent out-of-state students.

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MS. MORRIS: I was shocked and, and kind of hurt because this is our – the University of South Carolina, and we need to be having our own students from our own high schools.

SENATOR SCOTT: I’ve read also – I think it was some up-to-date data for this incoming freshman class – there were 14,730 applicants which they should increase by 1700 – 1750 additional minority students, taking the total count to 5100. And I’m seeing all of a sudden in the year that these folk have got to come before us, the intake system now decides to intake these students. And they also indicated that they had a three point – a thousand on the SAT when before, it was all about 1100. So it’s right at the intake system, what the Columbia campus has decided it wants to be – the intake numbers coming in. So I don’t think it’s recruitment back at the schools.

MS. MORRIS: And I –

SENATOR SCOTT: I think the applicant – I think the application pool is there. It’s just going through the pool and pulling the information up. But I think you’re right on target in looking at that intake system.

MS. MORRIS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome, Ms. Morris.

MS. MORRIS: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Following up on what you said about the number of out-of-state students, this is a huge concern of mine and I think of a lot of other members on the committee. If you were chosen to be on the board, what would you do to change that dynamic to bring more in-state students into the university?

MS. MORRIS: Well, from what I read, part of that has to do with money. Because if you bring somebody in from out of state, that's almost double the tuition. So I tried to find what was happening with the bill – 238, I think, is the number – and what are the ideas. And I may not have the best information, but looking on the website, it looked like that came out of the Senate. So certainly, I think if there is more funding to balance out, that, that would help. And certainly –

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What do you feel about abatements for out-of-state students? We've asked that question quite a number of times.

MS. MORRIS: I just feel like our students deserve priority, and there needs to be some way to, to give them the priority to – that they deserve.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good morning, Ms. Morris.

MS. MORRIS: Good morning.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: – and thank you for being here. Thank you for offering to serve. When I look at your information and you say you haven't been involved at the university, what other types of things have you been involved in in so far as board memberships, organizations

–

MS. MORRIS: Sure.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: – things like that in your local area because I'm not seeing anything that jumps out at me, and maybe there's something that you haven't mentioned.

MS. MORRIS: Sure. I'm currently on the board of a charitable organization called Grace's Closet; excuse me. This is an organization that has a true closet in every school in our district that provides clothes, shoes, food, personal hygiene items, so I'm the attorney/board member for that board. I help with all that fund-raising. We've just turned that to – the director is now a paid position, so it's a pretty decent-sized organization, being in 19 schools.

I served on the Crime Stoppers board in Oconee County. I've served on the Voc Rehab board for Anderson and Oconee County. I've served on various committees at my church, from personnel to finance; employee search committees.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: In the last couple of days, we've learned a lot about the dysfunction that existed with the board at U of SC. And we've alluded to the fact that SACS has been involved, that the university, to their credit, involved AGB, a national organization, to come in and conduct a seminar. Have you read that AGB report?

MS. MORRIS: No, sir, I have not.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What is the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Is there any discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you, ma'am.

MS. MORRIS: Thank you.

Thank you very much for your time this morning.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Phillip Owens from Easley.

Good morning, sir.

MR. OWENS: Good morning.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You don't need to give us your full name, but for the record, if you would.

MR. OWENS: Yes, sir. Phillip Drayton Owens.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. OWENS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Why don't you sit down and make a brief statement.

MR. OWENS: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee. It's a pleasure to come before you this morning and to offer for this trustee position at the University of South Carolina. I am a resident of Easley and the – at this time, the 10th Judicial Circuit. I spent some time down here in this institution a while back. And I am a local businessman.

I started and created a few businesses in the Pickens County area and Union County and some other places, and I have also been an advocate

for my flagship university. I – as I replied in my statement, I feel that the university provided me with the necessary skills and abilities to move forward in my life cycle beyond graduation, and for that I’m quite grateful.

And also, that allows – would allow me an opportunity to return some gifts that I may have to the university in helping direct it forward in the mission that we want it to accomplish.

So once again, thank you for being here.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Good morning, Mr. Owens. Good to see you again.

MR. OWENS: Good morning.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And thank you very much for offering to serve. When I look at the information that you provided, you talk about ways to attract students, and there are several needs in there: affordable price; students should reflect high standards of academia; controlled growth needed; need effective marketing. How about expanding on that a little bit.

Controlled growth; I mean, everything that I’ve heard in the last couple of days is that the main campus here is just about tapped out. So what do you do in so far as continuing some sort of growth, and then how do you effectively market that?

MR. OWENS: Well, thank you, Representative Clary, for that question. I think that part of the responsibility of the board is to help develop and, and follow the vision of the university after receiving input from the General Assembly and those outside; from the students; from the citizens of South Carolina. That once we identify that, that we move forward.

As far as – and I think I said in my statement, with the input from the students and faculty, administration, and staff. That’s how we would look at doing that.

Now, growth, whether it is in a university or whether it’s in a business or whether it’s elsewhere, in order to be effective, in my opinion, it has to be looked at from, What are the facilities that are available, and, as you alluded to, Representative Clary, what is the land that is available?

Where are we? I know other institutions have – and some of the presidents and some of the boards have made public statements that they would like to increase their student enrollment from X-number to X-number, and that’s a large number. And that has an impact, not only on

the university but the town that that university resides in and so forth and so on.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I hear you.

MR. OWENS: So I think that, looking at all of those factors, that's why I said that it has to be controlled. I don't – I don't think that a university wants to get to a point where they say they're full and I don't want any more students because the university serves a purpose of providing skills to the – to the citizens of South Carolina and those that they allow from outside. So I think that they have to look at, what do they have? What are they able to expand and build, and how do they serve, first, the South Carolinians that wish there and then the others that they bring in?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I would assume that you kept up with the issues that confronted the board of trustees at U of SC over the last year or so and the hiring of the new president, the intervention by SACS. And once again, to the university's credit, they acknowledged that they had issues, and they brought in AGB for training. Have you read that AGB report?

MR. OWENS: I have not, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: All right.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Mr. Owens.

MR. OWENS: Good morning, Senator.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Good to see you today.

MR. OWENS: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Is there anything that, in your current capacity, would preclude you from being active and attending meetings of the board?

MR. OWENS: No, sir. I'm retired.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And as far as about someone sitting on the board, the student government president or a faculty representative – and I read, as I had already read some of the other ones, but I wanted you – but I wanted them to comment – your thought on that, and you said you'd leave it to the General Assembly to decide.

And I guess my question would be, if you were a member of the General Assembly at this time, what would your position be from that standpoint?

MR. OWENS: Thank you, Senator, for that question. If I might expand or clarify just a minute. I do think that the – for – alumni and the faculty

should be – have a seat on the board. I think the General Assembly should decide whether it is a voting seat or not.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Good morning, Mr. Owens. It's been a while.

MR. OWENS: Yeah. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: We've, you know, had trustees, candidates, from numerous colleges and universities throughout the state over the last three months. Most of them seem to have a lot more in-state students than U of SC. I'm really concerned that I don't feel like we are, you know, dedicating our flagship university to our own in the state. How do you feel about that?

MR. OWENS: I agree with you, Representative Whitmire, and during my previous tenure, we dealt with that quite, quite often, as you're aware, in that there – there's always trying to be balance between – of course, out-of-state students bring in double the revenue to the university than in-state students.

But as I responded, in my opinion, we always have to favor our South Carolina in-state students above the out-of-state students. If you go to some universities, you will notice that in certain areas, you have a disproportionate number of out-of-state and sometimes out-of-the-country participants and graduates if you attend those ceremonies.

And we always have to serve South Carolinians first, and then afterwards, if we have that controlled growth, we can add the others.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What concerns me the most is that most of the out-of-state students, whether it's U of SC or Clemson, wherever, they don't stay in state once they graduate. Most of the students who come from the state do stay. So I feel like we're spending all of our state money educating someone who might not stay around. And so that's always been a concern. I know that it has been of yours, too, so –

MR. OWENS: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All right. Thank you, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Rep Owens, Mr. Owens, whatever the new name you've taken in your retirement years.

MR. OWENS: Grandpa.

SENATOR SCOTT: Grandpa. That's a good name. That's better than all of them.

You've had, first-hand, the opportunity to see – before leaving in 2014 – a number of issues through the higher ed community. I think you served as a chair of the education committee –

MR. OWENS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: – if I'm not mistaken. What was your position when you were there as relates to the growing number of out-of-state students and always using that same, I guess, excuse that the General Assembly doesn't fund us at the same level, as well as your input and ideology when you were here as relates to diversities on these campuses since we have allowed the growth of out-of-state students create a bigger divide?

When you listen to USC, that's a campus you want to go and work on. Grew 40 percent out-of-state students, which simply means that it blocks the door for all in-state students coming in when out-of-state is growing faster than the in-state.

What was your take at the time, and what would you do different as a member of that board of trustees to try to slow this down so we can get some, I guess, some parity, or at least we get South Carolina students coming back to South Carolina schools? Because when you don't have schools for them, they go someplace else.

MR. OWENS: Well, I think we have to go beyond statistics, and we have to monitor results. If we are promoting diversity, either through introduction of out-of-state students or from our own students/citizens here in South Carolina, we need to go beyond saying, We have this program and we have that program and we're this and that.

We need to monitor and review and say, Well, I know we have these three programs that focus on this particular method to solve some of the problems that you put forward, Senator Scott, but where's the accountability? Where are the numbers that say these programs are working? I think someone alluded earlier, you know, that we, you know, for six or seven years – it may have been you, Senator Scott – we've talked about these things.

I think we, we have got to take better control of saying, you know, This particular program or this particular control or this particular monitor on it – out-of-state students coming in – gives us these results, but we don't do anything with the results, and we follow forward with the program. So we've got to be results-oriented rather than just making reports every year.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

((Motion is seconded.))

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you, sir.

MR. OWENS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Last candidate, Blair Stoudemire from Seneca.

Sir, for the record, if you would, give us your full name.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Certainly. Blair Lowry Stoudemire.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Would you like to make a brief statement?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Yes. Thank you. Again, I, like everyone except Mr. Allen, have not been on this board, so I'll just give you a little bit of background about myself. My name is Blair Stoudemire. While I was born on an Air Force base in Florida, in Panama City, while my dad was serving in the Air Force, I have lived the entirety of my life in Oconee County, South Carolina.

I went to Walhalla High School. Attended and graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1990. Probably should have been a semester early, but as my dad liked to say, I spent one semester majoring in fraternity, and for that, I was –

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Only one?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Only one. Working at a textile mill during the summer will change your viewpoint on life.

But after graduation, I attended and graduated from St. Thomas University School of Law in Miami. Came back to Oconee County to practice. I practiced with my father for a number of years and then went on to the Oconee County Solicitor's Office, where I've worked since 2006.

I've got a wife, Patty, and two daughters, Kathryn and Nicole. Kathryn graduated in May from the University of South Carolina and is now scaring me to death on a daily basis living in New York City. And I have my younger daughter, Nicole, who is scheduled to graduate from Clemson University in May, which breaks my heart just a little.

I think that's it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Welcome, Mr. Stoudemire, and it's good to see you. I've known your dad for a long time. For no one that – or anyone that has not had the opportunity to try a murder trial in Walhalla with Julian Stoudemire, they're missing an absolute treat, I'll tell you that.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Well, try growing up with him.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: All I can say is, I'm surprised you're as normal as you are.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: As far as you know.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: As far as I know.

In looking at your background, tell me about your involvement with the university –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: – over the years.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Over the years, I've been a member of the alumni association, the Gamecock Club, things like that, and for most of us, I think that's really kind of what you're limited to unless you go and serve on a board of trustees seat or really live a little bit more locally and can be more – be more involved.

So that's my involvement to this point, that and being the – being the parent of a graduate, certainly, I've been down here more in the past four years than I – than I have been outside of football games in a long time.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You cite the biggest weakness is not realizing what we have. What do you mean by that?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yeah. We – what I saw when, when Kathryn was going through the graduation process, is, we're the flagship university of the state of South Carolina. We have the largest alumni network of any university in this state. I don't think we use it to its fullest ability.

Now, with the building of the new alumni center and things of that nature, I think we're doing a much better job than we did, say, many years ago when I was here. But we've got graduates all over the place in various businesses and various industries, and I still see students today that are graduating, struggling to get interviews with top firms from various fields that they're trying to go into where those firms have people from the university working there and sometimes in a position that would be able to help hire. And it's just – it's not being utilized for whatever reason.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And, of course, you've heard all the discussion about the issues that have gone on over the last months –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: – into last year, the SACS intervention

–

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: – at the university, the AGB report. Have you read that report?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: I have not had an opportunity to read that report, no sir.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: All right.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Is that microphone on? It that working?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll lean over here towards Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: That's fine.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: I see in your responses that you're an out-of-the-box-type thinker.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: I try to be, yes, ma'am.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: And so that really appeals to me because I believe that there are some undiscovered collaborations that we could identify in higher education to help our students have more successful careers and have jobs waiting for them.

We've worked very hard in the state of South Carolina to bring industry and jobs into the state.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes, ma'am.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: And one of our jobs here as legislators and – is to ensure that our students are getting the education they need in order to take these jobs. So I kind of have a feeling, by reading your responses, that you might have some ideas along those lines. You mentioned that you are an out-of-the-box thinker. You also mentioned that some of the schools at the business need to possibly communicate better. So is any of that – does any of that –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: – tie together in your mind?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes. I –

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Talk about – talk about some of your ideas, if you would.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Again, just to give you an example, and I know I keep falling back on this, but having a recent graduate, that's what I know to fall back on.

Kathryn was a journalism major, and within the journalism school, you've got various schools in there with regard to broadcast journalism, with regard to advertising, and even library science is involved in there. For instance, with – when she was looking for a job, none of those – none of those schools communicated with each other at all.

She could have – she could sit there and be very good friends and associate with some professors and have them helping her out, but as a whole, there may be other professors within the same college that would have absolutely no idea what one of their own schools was doing with regard to helping students get jobs.

And I think it's the same thing within the business administration school. You've got a multitude of majors that fall within there between advertising, marketing, finance, accounting, things like that, and some of those schools work well together and there's really kind of a dovetail between these schools, so naturally, they work together.

But I think that we need to try to go beyond the natural fit and almost put a square peg in a round hole or put a round peg in a square hole a little bit, just to see if we can jam it in there and maybe help somebody get that initial job out of college because I think the studies have shown, once they get the initial job out of college, that's really the hard part for these graduates.

Where they go from there is going to be up to them, their work ethic, and what they're able to do on their own from that standpoint, for the most part. But I feel like these schools could be working together in just some alternative ways that they haven't before.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Well, just in follow-up, as a member of the board, would you be willing to take on that challenge to work and put something in place so that those schools are communicating with each other and perhaps even put a direct line of communication between those schools and industries and jobs so that our students can have those opportunities?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay. All right, thank you.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes, ma'am.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anybody else?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

Good morning. Good to see you.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Good morning, Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Appreciate you being here. Just again, to consistency there, with your work at the Solicitor's Office, is there

anything that would preclude you from being able to attend regularly scheduled meetings if you were a member of the board?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: That's – and you're coming from the same area I do, so I – so I know you know – and Senator – and Representative Whitmire know how far it is for us to come down here. So accommodations have to be made. I'm very fortunate, and I've spoken with the deputy solicitor who's in charge of our office and also our elected solicitor. In addition to that, I've spoken with some of the judges that I regularly appear before, and I will not have a problem being able to come to any meetings.

Fortunately, we've got a really good office, and if I'm missing court, then I've got somebody who can – who can run back up for me and attend a court session. With regard to trial, I can – those are usually scheduled weeks, if not months, out. So that's not a concern at all.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. And would you briefly say your position on either the student government president and/or a faculty representative sitting on the board and/or with voting rights?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes. I, I would echo what Ms. Morris said on that. Those are two of the groups that are really most affected by everything that the board of trustees does and the university administration does on a day-to-day basis.

With regard to the student representative, I know that there's been some concern and some talk about, Well, what if the student body president, who – let's just say, for example, the student body president were to be the representative to serve on the board. What happens if the student body president is somebody from out-of-state? Or what happens if you have a faculty member who, you know, comes, comes from out-of-state that really has not spent a great deal of time here?

So I think those are – those are things that need to be taken, maybe, into consideration, but the bottom line is, is I think if you put a student on the board, student body president, say, and you put a – you put a faculty member, a tenured faculty member on the board, certainly, they're going to have the university's best interest at heart, and I think they'll be valuable additions to the board.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. President.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Stoudemire – mire or mare –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Whatever you want to call me.

SENATOR SCOTT: – depending on which part of the country you're from.

The Solicitor's Office; I see you've been there 14 years.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes, sir. It will be 14 years this September.

SENATOR SCOTT: How many staff is in the Solicitor's Office?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: In our particular office, we have – we have five lawyers and then staff beyond that. I think we're totaling about 15, 16 people.

SENATOR SCOTT: Are there any minority lawyers in there?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: There are no minority lawyers in our particular office. However, in the Circuit, we do – we do have some in the Anderson office, yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: How many? How many in the Anderson office?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Two.

SENATOR SCOTT: Two. And how big is that Anderson office?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Anderson office has – I'd have to go back and check, but I want to say they've got somewhere in the neighborhood of 10 lawyers in that office.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. And I see you were a history major, so you're –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: I was a history major and I changed. I wasn't going to make any money, so I changed.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yeah, I sympathize with that.

SENATOR SCOTT: All I could do was teach – yeah. I could teach, and that's about it, or do research. Well, listen, my question to you is diversity –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: – as relates to the university. I've been trying to get some kind of feel for you as an individual, your feeling on diversity, and it's easy to understand diversity a little bit better if you're working with a very diverse population –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: I agree.

SENATOR SCOTT: — that's around you –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: I agree.

SENATOR SCOTT: – outside of just representing them in court or either put them in jail in court. So share with me your insight as it relates to diversity. Now you're not on the side of the law where you're defending the state or the county, but you're now looking at students in an intake system that's broken and how we educate the young African Americans and other minority students in the state. So it's some of the same concern you indicated a minute ago about your daughter getting a job.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Right.

SENATOR SCOTT: It's wide open because they were USC graduates regardless of race who are on those jobs who could help bridge that gap that you talked about.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes. With regard to diversity, I think that we – we've made some headways, and you talked about it with, with Mr. Allen earlier, about things that have been set up – certainly under Mr. Dozier and the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs – that have been started, I think we need to continue the work that's been started there.

Going back and looking, I think, when, you know, every year, students start looking at going to college and thinking about higher education earlier and earlier. When I was – I never thought about it that much until I was in high school and, to be honest, until I was a junior and you start thinking about applying.

Now, kids are thinking about that in middle school. So I think that what we need to start doing is, instead – it's great that we're going out to various high schools across the state and trying to get kids in high school to become interested in the University of South Carolina. I think we need to go beyond that. I think we need to go out to middle schools.

And I also think we need to go out in some areas that we may not have identified as essentially feeders for the university to this point. We need to focus more on some rural areas, maybe a few poorer areas, and look at some kids who may be, All right, this kid's really interested in going to college, but neither of his parents, nobody in his family's ever been to college.

We need to – we need to try to get that kid into college because then, what we're doing is, we're not just continuing a cycle of people just dealing with lower education. We're going and we're really lifting people up at that point.

Now, some of that deals with minorities. Some of that deals purely with financial barriers. But sometimes, I think that goes hand in hand. With regard to minorities in particular, and in particular, African-American students, I think we need to do a much better job than what we've been doing. I think we do need to be targeting high school and middle schools that are predominantly African American and getting those kids interested in coming to the University of South Carolina.

And beyond that, maybe we need to start looking at giving them some sort of financial incentive to come. If you're a – if you're a first-time – if you're the first member of your family to go to college, you know, maybe there's a scholarship waiting for you. Maybe, maybe –

SENATOR SCOTT: Would you move outside of the targeting of counties with large African-American populations, even in counties with large majority Caucasian, white population –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: – to be able to get those students to go – and those students coming back, giving back to your community, also help bridge a lot of that culture gap –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: I agree.

SENATOR SCOTT: – that exists? People continue to ignore the gap that's out there.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: I agree.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you so much.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just have a comment/question. Would you realize or believe that some students who would like to go to any of the institutions here in South Carolina, not just USC, are sometime prohibited because they cannot pay for the application fee? And they may be applying to multiple colleges –

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: – and so they have to prioritize. And so do you – would you believe that some of those students that would like to apply to multiple colleges are unable to because of the application?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes. That would not surprise me. Application fees are one of those things that – let's face it, it's just a money generator. You know, years ago, I think it was – when I applied to University of South Carolina, I want to say it was \$10 to apply to the university.

Harvard – they didn't know me obviously – sent me an application, and their fee was \$50. I didn't waste my \$50 because I wasn't going to Harvard. But now, I cannot imagine – I cannot imagine what the fees are, and what we do is, we put these kids having to come up with this fee before they even think of doing anything else, before they think about scholarships or anything like that.

And a lot of times, you've got application deadlines, and, you know, Mom and Dad are having to make the decision between whether or not we're going to get groceries this week or whether or not Junior's going to apply for – apply for multiple colleges or just put all his eggs in one basket.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander. Motion to – Mr. Whitmire has a question. I’m sorry.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Hold that thought, Mr. Alexander.

Welcome, Mr. Stoudemire.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I noticed on your ways to improve school, you said build on the alumni base. Would you care to expand on that a little bit?

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Yes. I, I, I think I talked about that a little bit with Representative Davis.

Again, we’ve got the largest alumni base in my opinion. I think we’ve got the largest alumni base of any school in the state simply because U of SC is the largest school in the state. You got to bring people back into the fold. It’s not enough – like, I’ve, I’ve been getting barraged lately with, Update your information from the University of South Carolina, which means, basically, they want me to call, and they want me to give some money.

Which is fine. I understand that, and I understand that the university – there’s always going to be a need for money. Whether or not they really want my address or not, who knows? But we’ve got to bring people back into the fold.

When I talk with graduates from Carolina, to a person, man or woman, they, you know – they can look back and come up with 10 memories off the top of their head of the great time they had at Carolina. So you always bring people back for homecoming and things like that. We need to bring people back into the fold in new and different ways, not just during football season, you know, which is – let’s face it – almost a religion in the South, if not a religion.

But in addition to just having people come back in, have people recognize that the business leaders of tomorrow and the education leaders of tomorrow and the legal and medical leaders of tomorrow come from this university. So we need to do a better job with, with putting our self out there to everyone, statewide, if not nationally, to let people know that we are the – among the best of the best. I mean, we’ve got several colleges that are ranked number one or at – or near number one in the country, and outside of the state of South Carolina, people don’t know it sometimes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You know, you and Emma make me feel awfully old. I remember both of you in middle school, and now you’ve got college kids and graduates.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: I’m sure that’s partly our fault.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I didn't think I was that old, but I believe I am. And your grandmother was my fifth-grade teacher. I don't know if you knew that or not.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Well, that makes me feel old too.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, that's true, so anyway, thank you very much.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander moves for a favorable report. Second?

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MR. STOUDEMIRE: Thank you, sir.

WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Now we move to Winthrop University. We'll go to 2nd Congressional District, Seat 2, John Brazell, Columbia.

MR. BRAZELL: Hello.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If you would, give us your full name for the record.

MR. BRAZELL: John Edward Brazell.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. BRAZELL: So help me God, yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. BRAZELL: Sorry, I could barely hear you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I said, would you like to make a brief statement on why you would like to serve on the Winthrop board?

MR. BRAZELL: Well, I graduated from Winthrop back in '93. When I initially attended, starting in '88, there was -- Winthrop was very small, the city of Rock Hill was very small, and over that -- over a period of time, it's grown tremendously, and there are some great things that are going on there.

I think they've had a couple of different presidents that have done a great job to push the campus forward. It's well diversified as far as the, you know, the population there at the school. And athletics, they've increased over the years.

So I just want to give -- an opportunity to give back to what Winthrop did for me all those years ago to help me be successful and give me a great foundation. So when this opportunity came up, I thought it was a great chance for me to get involved and, like I said, give back to Winthrop.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Questions or comments?

Mr. King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

You said Brazell?

MR. BRAZELL: Brazell, yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Brazell, what type of relationship do you think Winthrop or any institution should have with the local legislative delegation from that community?

MR. BRAZELL: I think it's important to be close with the community there. You've got to be able to communicate --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: No, no, no, no. The local legislative delegation, the members of the General Assembly that serve that community in which Winthrop resides.

What type of relationship should you have, not the board, but the entire institution with the members who represent York County, where Winthrop is, with their local legislative delegation? What type of relationship do you think they should have?

MR. BRAZELL: Honestly, you're asking me a question -- I've never had any kind of question like that before. I've not dealt with -- in politics before, so I would assume that they would need to work together closely to understand the needs of the area. You know --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Would you be surprised that Winthrop is in my district and that I have no relationship, not on my -- not because of my not willing to work with Winthrop, but knocking on their doors and asking to be a part of that institution, and year after year, they have ignored me? Would you be surprised about that?

MR. BRAZELL: I would. I mean, do you know a reason why? I mean, was --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I don't know a reason why. Maybe you can tell me that once you become a board member.

But Winthrop resides in my district, and I've reached out on several occasions to be a part of their community, and they have not been very favorable to me. So if you are elected, I would ask that you work to bridge that gap there.

MR. BRAZELL: Yeah. That's unfortunate, and I would think that anyone that has, you know, insight and that has ideas that could help Winthrop succeed and do better, why would you keep them out versus

bringing them in and at least hearing what they have to say and build a relationship.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And I appreciate you listening to me.

MR. BRAZELL: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And I asked that question because it seems as if you may be the next member, new member on the board, and while I've made that known to other members, it has fallen on deaf ears, and so maybe you will bridge that gap for me.

MR. BRAZELL: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

MR. BRAZELL: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In your -- Mr. Brazell, in your information that you provided, Winthrop's biggest weakness, low graduation rate. Tell me a little bit about how low it is and what kind of steps you think you as a board member could take to improve that.

MR. BRAZELL: Well, I was very surprised as I did some research just to look at the updated numbers. Winthrop was in, I believe, the 52 percentile on graduation, and they also had people -- it was taking people longer to graduate, maybe around six years.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: But would it surprise you to know that most of our -- well, not most -- our colleges and universities in this state and throughout the nation do work on a six-year model?

MR. BRAZELL: Well, I personally worked on a six-year model myself -- actually five years.

But it just surprised me that -- and from what I understand, the longer you're in school, the more debt you're probably taking on. So I would say all institutions probably need to do a better job there, but -- and find out, really, the reason why we're not graduating folks, why they're leaving early, and also find out what's taking them a long time.

I worked through college, so I know that that extended my stay there, but it was -- I still got the education, and I got the diploma. But I also left with some debt that needed to be taken care of.

But I really feel like you just have to -- you have to find out why they're not graduating and address those issues to see if you can get that percentage up because it's -- it's important not to have someone walk away from a school that they've got a ton of debt and they never -- they didn't end up with an education. So...

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: I certainly don't disagree with that, and also I think that it comes down to a standpoint sometimes -- and maybe you'll figure out if Winthrop has this situation in that classes are not

always offered on the schedule that those students are in line to take them in their course of study.

So those are things that I would suggest that you take into consideration when you -- when you become a member of that board. Thank you, sir.

MR. BRAZELL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Move favorable.

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable. Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, sir.

MR. BRAZELL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I appreciate your willingness to serve.

Now pending, Winthrop University, 6th Congressional District, Seat 4, Ashlye Wilkerson.

MS. WILKERSON: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record, give us your full name.

MS. WILKERSON: Ashlye Victoria Wilkerson.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. WILKERSON: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes. I would like to thank you all for electing me to serve on Winthrop University for the past seven years. It's my alma mater, and so it's an honor for me to serve the institution that poured so much into me. I graduated from Winthrop University in 2005, and it has prepared me for my life journey thus far.

I've had the opportunity to serve alongside my peers on the board. I represent voices that aren't often heard around the table. I'm the most recent graduate on the board. I'm the youngest trustee on the board and the only woman of color on the board. So I bring diversity of thought, and I work really hard to bridge the gap between families, students, and board members.

Thank you so much for having me.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Ms. Wilkerson...

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: When will you finish this Ph.D.? Is it May? I think I felt a turmoil.

MS. WILKERSON: Yeah. So --

SENATOR SCOTT: Most of the questions have been -- I see you -- Hampton, 2007, and in 2020, you should finish this Ph.D. program.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir. My husband and I experienced an unforeseen instance when we were carrying our daughter. I almost lost our daughter. I was pre-labor, and I was placed on mandatory medical leave, and I had to take a break from school. And so that delayed my graduation.

And unfortunately when I returned from my mandatory medical break, my advisor was no longer with the university. So not only did my advisor change, my committee changed, and then my committee changed my topic twice. So it delayed the program for me, and I'm finally getting ready to get out of the University of South Carolina with a Ph.D. in teaching and learning.

SENATOR SCOTT: Also -- also, there were some questions as to the financial situation. I know you've sent us some documents.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Do you want to explain --

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: -- exactly what these documents are?

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir. So the University of South Carolina had my original anticipated graduation date in the system, and it did not update in the system, so they stopped reporting me as a student in the department to my loan service provider.

So that put my loans into active status at \$3,200 a month, and so I had to submit documentation that shows that I am still a student working on my dissertation. And I also had to submit my pay stub that shows that I'm a part-time employee of the university. That pay is roughly \$300 a month for that placement of employment in the College of Education.

So they did update my student loan system. One of the student loans go back into payment status April 5th, 2020, and the other one is September 21st, 2020.

SENATOR SCOTT: Also, there were some questions, 2-28, sales usage of \$706.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir. It was actually more than that. So our business, they -- it's a painting studio, and they thought we sold wine on

the premise, and we do not. It's a bring-your-own studio, so people can bring their beverages in and participate in a paint session.

So they did send an auditor to the site to look at the studio, and I did submit five years' worth of monthly sales, monthly bank statements, and tax payments. The auditor went through every single document, and they showed that we did not sell wine, and we do not owe sales taxes for wine.

They did find, however, that because of one of the vendors that we order from was based in North Carolina, we did have to pay an additional tax outside of the North Carolina tax. So that was squared away on January the 27th. It has been put in good standing, and we pay \$260 a month for that particular tax payment.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Wilkerson...

MS. WILKERSON: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you for your service on the board at Winthrop.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: The same question I asked your soon new colleague, what type of relationship do you feel that Winthrop should have the local legislative delegation?

MS. WILKERSON: I think it's very important for us to have a strong relationship, especially for the delegation where our university resides.

I have expressed that concern to my fellow board members, as well as the sitting president, for us to further develop and enhance those relationships, to reach across the aisle a little more frequently, to extend more invitations, and to make you all welcome -- feel welcome more so on our campus and through activities.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And I think you and I have had that conversation --

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- ever since you have been elected.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: My next question is -- and I've had this conversation with you before as well. What are you doing on the board to -- while Winthrop is known for the number of students of color --

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- at their school -- I believe you all have one of the highest numbers in --

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir, and our current freshman class, it's the first time it's 51 percent. Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And with that being said, as you know, I live in Rock Hill and live in the community and am very active in my community. When I speak with Winthrop students that are black, I ask them in reference to their instructors, and I find that some have never experienced one African-American instructor or one at most out of their four years there.

What are you all doing to increase the number of African-American instructors on campus, and what are you doing for the African-American instructors that you all have there as adjunct instructors to have them move into full -- full-time status as full instructors on campus? What are you doing in your work as a board member?

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir. So I took notice of that when I first entered the board position seven years ago, and over the course of that time, we've developed several different layers to address that issue.

First and foremost, we made it a part of the evaluation of the president. And so at the end of the day, the board sets the policy, the governing policy for the university, and if we don't have a way to evaluate that the president is actually addressing that concern, then it's hard to implement that.

So we made that a part of the evaluation, and in that, we have increased diversity in staffing and hiring practices. We have senior-level members of color now, which was not there before. We have an African-American woman vice president. We did not have any members on the senior team that was of color.

And then we've also increased employment, and we started by announcing vacancies in areas of diversity and so utilizing magazine subscriptions where that's the -- the base of consumers is where we put those postings now so that we have a diverse reach and that our audience is diverse when they receive the information.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Ms. Wilkerson, now that you've been on the board for the period of time that you have, could you tell me what kind of training you have received from your earliest days as a member of the board of trustees up through the present time?

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir. We have received in-house training, retreats, orientations, informational sessions. We've also received a membership to the Trusteeship magazine, and with that, each trustee

receives that magazine, and we're able to stay abreast on national trends and issues in higher ed.

We also receive invitations to attend conferences. Me personally, I would like to see more support in that regard for trustees to be able to attend conferences. As of now, there isn't a mechanism that supports trustees going out of their own university to receive training.

Me personally, I've done a lot of research because of my trade and finishing a research Ph.D. I've done a lot of research, and I've purchased books and magazines to help further prepare me. But I would like to see more of that for the board as a whole.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: And insofar as board decisions, as they are made, do you have any perspective that you can offer from the standpoint of discussion, disagreement when these policy decisions are made, how that -- how you're able to articulate that, and what view do you -- how do you view the board and its relationship with the administration?

MS. WILKERSON: So the board has had a series of changes and what I refer to as growing pains.

When I first entered the position seven years ago, we were transitioning from having a president that was there for 20-plus years. And so in that, the board has changed a little bit with retirement of trustees, the transition of new trustees, as well as the changes of hiring three different presidents for the university.

So because of that, we've had to learn how to navigate the terrain together. And we've been very vocal. We're also very welcoming to hearing everyone's input and ideas. Even though we do have a chair and a vice chair of the board, we also have an executive team of the board. All members of the board are informed and notified and are invited to participate in discussions on a committee level as well as a full board level.

And then in addition to that, our committee representative reports to the full board with a -- with a recap of what took place in their committee so that the full board is aware and knowledgeable of what's taken place in every facet of the board.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: So my final question to you would be is the board merely a rubber stamp of what the chairman and/or the president wishes to be the direction of the university?

MS. WILKERSON: It is not.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you, ma'am.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And it's good to see you this afternoon.

MS. WILKERSON: Good to see you too.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I appreciate your service.

What has been the greatest experience for you being on the Winthrop board --

MS. WILKERSON: You know --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- and serving as a board member?

MS. WILKERSON: The fact that it's an extension for me. When I was a student there, I served as a university ambassador, and it was an honor to be able to guide parents for their first, initial contact with the university.

And I've had that opportunity to do that same thing as a trustee. Just recently I ran into someone, and they said, Thank you, thank you, thank you; it's because of you that my son decided to go to Winthrop University, and he is thoroughly enjoying his first year there.

And so with that, I have the opportunity to speak directly to future students and students and their parents. Just this past Friday, I served as the speaker for the multicultural prospective students' luncheon, and I shared an invitation for them to join our community of learners too. I imparted on them that our motto is to leave the world a better place. I invited them to come and help make Winthrop even better so that we can continue to leave our mark on the state and beyond.

And so those opportunities -- also bridging the gap while on the board. I worked with the Council of Student Leaders to develop Winthrop Day at the State House. That was not done prior to me getting on the board, so I was able to be instrumental in that process as well.

And then I've also continued to work with the Winthrop alumni admissions volunteers, which is something that the board was not aware that the university had. So I've been able to kind of bridge that gap and inform the board of ways that they can get involved as recruiters officially, bringing students to Winthrop University and growing our community.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Good. Just one other thing.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

So I heard the discussion with the Senator from Richland here, Senator Scott, and I commend you for getting your other degree -- working on your other degree, and I certainly understand health issues. So are all of those things outlined that we have -- are they in good standing now --

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- or where -- where are the -- there's -- have you been notified by the agencies that everything is --

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- satisfied?

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir, I have, and I did -- I do have proof of notification. They're all in good standing, yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And "in good standing," does that mean they're current, or does that mean they've been satisfied completely, or what does that mean?

MS. WILKERSON: Some are satisfied completely, and others are current.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And I think you say that on the -- on your business --

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: -- that you all have that you don't sell alcohol. So you don't have an alcohol license?

MS. WILKERSON: We don't need one because -- well --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Because it's --

MS. WILKERSON: But they thought we needed one, essentially, is what the issue was. They thought that we needed an alcohol license because the name of the company has the word wine in it, so they thought we sold wine, and so they thought we needed an alcohol license.

And once they sent an auditor on-site, they were able to get the confirmation that they needed.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And when did they send the auditor on-site? Has that been recently?

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir -- well, it was right before the Christmas holiday, and then I met with -- the last meeting with the Department of Revenue was on January the 27th, and they were able to close the file.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So does that close the file on sales and use tax, or is that a different issue?

MS. WILKERSON: Well, they were able to close the file that we do not need the sales and use tax because we don't sell wine or alcoholic beverages.

And they were able to identify that the only thing that was old on the account was for the merchandise or the supplies that were purchased from a North Carolina vendor. They said that even though it was purchased in North Carolina, you still have to pay the difference or an additional tax for South Carolina. And so they were able to give me that total amount, and then that was the decision for that.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And so that was January when?

MS. WILKERSON: 27th, 2020.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I have --

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: So let's revisit your finances here. Four outstanding liens unsatisfied as of January 31st, 2020. Is that -- those four and then two more, 2-28-19 and 12-31-18, sales and use tax, is that what you're talking about, the line --

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir, and it's right here. And I have the date for January 27th, and they have that we owe \$216 a month, and we made our first payment in January, the 27th.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Now let's get to your credit reports and student loans. You have a loan of \$115,095; is that correct?

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And according to our records, the student loans were sent to a collection account. It said the loans are in default. You say they're not now?

MS. WILKERSON: No, sir. I have a statement right here that has the past-due balance of zero dollars and that my student loan date is 4-5-2020, is when it comes -- when it has to be -- start paying on it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you have an additional loan for your Ph.D. program at USC? Is that something different?

MS. WILKERSON: So it's all combined. So they did it in two separate categories. They have one category for student loans for undergraduate and graduate. Then they have another category for Ph.D. work.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: So are you borrowing money to go to that program or not?

MS. WILKERSON: Not anymore, no, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Not anymore. And your student loans are now up-to-date?

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And you have a payment program?

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir. Well, it doesn't start until 4-5-2020. Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Are you okay with that much debt?

MS. WILKERSON: Do I want that much debt?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: No. Are you going to be able to carry it?

MS. WILKERSON: No, I do not. Yes, sir, I will. So the average -- once I -- once I finish my degree, the average income for Ph.D.-ers are 65- to 72,000 a year.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: One last question. Rent, where do you rent -- what's your address? What's your current address?

MS. WILKERSON: I have a permanent address, which is 705 Sunset Drive, and then a renter's address is 30 -- 3501 Lyles. Both of them are in Richland County. Both of them are in Congressional District 6.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You're okay with your finances?

MS. WILKERSON: I am, yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You're going to be able to stay afloat?

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions? What's the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you for your willingness to serve and getting to work out there and pay off those loans.

MS. WILKERSON: I know. I'm so ready to graduate. You'll get an invitation.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll suggest Representative King be the keynote speaker.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: And in the middle of all that, are you working on another children's book? I know you and your husband write children's books.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir, we write --

SENATOR SCOTT: They spend their time giving back to our community.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir, we both -- this is my husband. He came for moral support. We both write children's books. I'm working on my fifth one. He's working on his fourth one. And we've done extensive work within the state of South Carolina with early childhood literacy.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you so much.

MS. WILKERSON: Yes, sir.

Thank you all.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We'll crank back up. Winthrop University, Tab S, Randall Imler from Tega Cay.

MR. IMLER: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seat 9. For the record, if you would, give us your full name.

MR. IMLER: James Randall Imler.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. IMLER: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. IMLER: I would. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to come here today. I have served as a Winthrop trustee since 2014 and have chaired the committee on finance since 2016. I've also had the opportunity to serve on six of the seven board committees.

In doing so, I've learned much about the institution and the competitive landscape of higher ed in South Carolina. And hopefully, I've been able to help the university throughout my first term.

I believe the university has made progress over the past six years, without unrestricted net position increasing by over a hundred percent to \$22 million when you take out the state's unfunded pension and OPEB liabilities. We've also retired over \$40 million in institutional debt during that time.

The budget process has been transformed and is more transparent, and stakeholders and the board of trustees are able to assess and evaluate all components of our financial statements and our statement of net position.

Much work remains, however, in two key areas, and that would be enrollment growth and deferred building maintenance. The area of the state in which Winthrop is fortunate to be located has experienced dynamic population growth, and one of the opportunities for Winthrop is to capture its share of graduating high school seniors from high-growth counties around the region.

Winthrop's online graduate education programs are growing rapidly as well. These online programs are augmenting our residential masters programs, and according to the 2019 South Carolina Commission on Higher Ed -- of Higher Education Statistical Abstract, Winthrop has the highest number of masters students of any comprehensive teaching institution in the state.

Winthrop certainly appreciates the steps that the Legislature and the governor are taking to support higher education through the budget and through the allocation of additional financial resources. With that support, we will do our part to curtail the inflation of cost for a Winthrop degree.

We do face continuing challenges in the areas of deferred building maintenance, as do many of our peer institutions. Again, the Legislature's recognition of this issue and additional funding to pay for

deferred maintenance on university buildings is greatly needed and greatly appreciated. Roofs, electrical systems, and boilers are not exciting things, but they sure are important in the life of an institution.

I'm seeking a second term because I appreciate and want to preserve and enhance the value that Winthrop brings to our community, our region, and our state. The university is an economic anchor, and as such, deserves the commitment of all its stakeholders -- the board of trustees, faculty and staff, students, and alumni, of which I am one -- to position her for continued service to students and citizens throughout South Carolina and the nation.

I'm happy to take any questions you might have.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: (Raises hand.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Clary.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Thank you very much, Mr. Imler, for your service and for being here today. In looking at your responses, I guess it's no surprise that you're in a period of transition now that your president has announced that he is going elsewhere. And you pointed out some areas of flat enrollment for ten years, small endowment, searching for a new president.

As a board member, what kind of strategic -- do you have a strategic plan that you're operating under? Now, I know when you get a new president, you'll probably have another one, but tell me what you're doing to address these issues, because you've had a lot of -- a lot of movement over there in the last few years.

MR. IMLER: Sure. When Dr. Mahoney came, he set in place the Winthrop Plan, which takes the institution through 2025. We are operating under that strategic plan.

The board of trustees has hired an interim president, Dr. George Hynd. Dr. Hynd served as provost at the College of Charleston and also as president of Oakland University in Michigan.

Dr. Hynd's interim tenure is strategically pegged at being over two years, which is a long tenure for an interim. But the university is entering in its SACS reaccreditation process, which is about an 18-month process, and so the board felt it was prudent to have a long-term interim in place and gives the trustees an opportunity to think strategically, to your point, about what is necessary for the institution as we search for a long-term, permanent president.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: You know, I look at your background. You have an unusual background for your vocation now. Did you ever have that guy by the name of Bill Malambri when you were over at Winthrop?

MR. IMLER: I do know Dr. Malambri.

REPRESENTATIVE CLARY: Well, God bless you. He's a good friend of mine.

MR. IMLER: He's actually played golf with my father quite a bit.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? Desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable.

MS. CASTO: Senator Scott has a question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Oh, Senator Scott. I thought he was moving.

Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Question.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you. Thank you for your willingness to serve. Tell me a little bit about the diversity plan up to Winthrop and what are you doing to recruit students and costs associated with tuition.

MR. IMLER: Senator, I'm pleased to say that we are one of, if not the most, diverse institutions in the state. We have a minority enrollment that tops 40 percent.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. IMLER: Our freshman class last year, over 50 percent were considered minority students.

Regarding costs --

SENATOR SCOTT: Tuition.

MR. IMLER: Yes, sir. The board held tuition increase to less than -- or to a half a percent last year, and in the preceding four years, to around 2 1/2 percent each year. We do recognize we are one of the higher tuition -- in-state tuition institutions in the state, and the board has worked to address this over the years, and that's why, as other institutions have had higher increases, we've had lower increases.

SENATOR SCOTT: So most of your students live within the area?

MR. IMLER: No, it's -- about 87 percent are in-state students. We do have a --

SENATOR SCOTT: What about region? What about within your region?

MR. IMLER: We do have a concentration of students within what I'll say -- the Chester, Lancaster --

SENATOR SCOTT: Right.

MR. IMLER: -- York County area, but we have students from all over the state; a lot from Columbia, a lot from Charleston, a lot from the Upstate.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable. Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand. Unanimous. Thank you, sir.

MR. IMLER: Thank you. Appreciate your time.

WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School, At-Large. The first is Doris Adams from Columbia.

MS. ADAMS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: How do you do, ma'am?

MS. ADAMS: Hello.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record, if you would, give us your full name, ma'am.

MS. ADAMS: Doris McBride Adams.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. ADAMS: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. ADAMS: Yes.

It is an honor as well as a pleasure serving on the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School board. In keeping with Dr. Wil Lou Gray's motto, "Why stop learning," we're committed to serving and motivating at-risk students of South Carolina into becoming productive, employable young adults through academic and vocational coursework.

And guess what? The school started in 1921. In 2021, we'll be what? One hundred years old. We'll have our 100th anniversary. And it has been a pleasure serving on the board and helping our students.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good. Questions or comments?

Mr. Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Adams, welcome today.

MS. ADAMS: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: My subcommittee in Ways and Means gets the opportunity to listen to the Wil Lou Gray story, and I just wanted to tell you and I want to tell the other candidates, it's just

refreshing to have a school like that that has -- I think has stepped up and probably saved a lot of children --

MS. ADAMS: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- that would have gone the wrong way if they hadn't offered that military and some discipline in their lives.

MS. ADAMS: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And they shared with me how many of the students go on and are successful in life, and so I just want to personally thank you for your service and for the school.

MS. ADAMS: Thank you, and I'd like to -- I brought this letter along because we're always receiving letters and information about our students. It says, My name is Darion Lord (phonetic), and I am from Irmo, South Carolina. I attended Dutch Fork High School for approximately one year before I disenrolled and chose to come to Wil Lou Gray.

Even though I knew I had leadership qualities, I chose to ignore them, and I became a follower. Then I was following -- the people that I was following were not the right ones. They were leading me down a path my grandmother had not set out for me to go down.

I eventually moved in with my grandparents and soon after started Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School. Before I came here, I only had one goal, which was only to get my GED. I quickly realized that I needed much more than that.

Aside from my GED, I found out that I needed discipline. Discipline is what is going to allow me to use my GED in the future. Without discipline, my GED will be useless.

Wil Lou Gray has helped instill the quality in myself and other cadets with the distinct military structure of the school, which I have learned to appreciate. I've been using my skills, becoming more of a leader, by leading by example and by being vocal while serving as my classmates' platoon sergeant. I am very grateful for Wil Lou Gray since I've been here.

And these are the kinds of letters that we receive from our students.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chair, more than 55 years ago, I met this lady. I guess I was a third grader or fourth grader. And I can tell you, she has spent her entire life in education.

And I want to commend you, Ms. McBride Adams, for all the many years, and still at the latter part of your career, you're still working to help these children. Thank you so much for your service. You're a true South Carolinian.

MS. ADAMS: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: And we really appreciate your hard work.

So at the appropriate time, I move for a favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Did he behave in the third grade?

MS. ADAMS: Did he behave?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes, ma'am.

MS. ADAMS: Oh, he was an excellent student.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: How'd you get him to hush? I can't get him to hush.

Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: She'll give you some pointers maybe later on.

And thank you, and please share those with us.

A couple of things. I really wanted to talk to you and ask you about the weakness, but I just wanted to point out that their biggest strength is its board of trustees and director. So I think that was a -- that's worth noting from that standpoint.

But the weakness, constant staff turnover, how are you -- I mean, I think that's something we're seeing statewide. Is there any initiative that y'all are doing to try to address the turnover rate?

MS. ADAMS: Well, with the Education Oversight Committee, we have meetings with them during the year, and we give the input about that during that time.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable report. Do you second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you so much, ma'am.

MS. ADAMS: Thank you too, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Bryan England, Georgetown, Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. ENGLAND: Good afternoon.

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

MR. ENGLAND: My full name is Bryan Benson England, Jr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. ENGLAND: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a statement?

MR. ENGLAND: Yes, sir.

I've been on the board for around 20 years, and I've seen Wil Lou Gray make great strides. I remember when I first considered trying to be on this board, and I looked around at the different boards that I might apply for. But the one that appealed to me the most was Wil Lou Gray. And the reason it did is because I really deeply believe in what they do. And I believe we've served this state well, and we will continue to do so.

As all of y'all know, there's a lot of at-risk kids in this state, and thankfully, we're able to offer an opportunity to them to bring some discipline to them, give them an educational opportunity, and give them a chance to turn their life around.

I guess the thing that probably gives me the greatest satisfaction is maybe a young man will come up to me and my -- see my car at the car wash, and he'll notice that I'm on the Wil Lou Gray board, and he'll say, I went there, and I'm glad I did, and today I'm doing this, or I'm doing that. And I knew that -- I could tell that he'd benefitted from the experience and that it'd changed his life. And that's what I think we're all about.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments? Well, what's the desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Second?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, sir. Thank you so much for your service.

Next, Reginald Thomas, Spartanburg.

Good afternoon, sir.

MR. THOMAS: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record, give us your full name, sir.

MR. THOMAS: Reginald Jason Thomas.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. THOMAS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. THOMAS: Yes, sir.

For 30 years, I was the program director directing the operations for Spartanburg city and county parks and recreation department. It gave me the opportunity to really work with youth, teens, and young adults, and retiring eight years ago, I continue my work throughout the city and county doing the same thing.

And then having the opportunity to come almost four years ago to be a trustee at Wil Lou Gray gave me the opportunity to continue there, to see -- to help young people become productive citizens. When they're going down the wrong path, then it gives them the opportunity to change their lives. It's just an honor and a blessing to me to be able to serve and continuing to serve in that capacity.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you so much.

Questions or comments? Desire of the committee?

(Motion for a favorable report.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion favorable. Seconded?

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you so much, sir.

MR. THOMAS: Thank you. Y'all have a blessed day. May I say --

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Certainly.

MR. THOMAS: If you haven't gone out to the school, we surely invite you to come and go and see how -- the wonderful job the administration and the staff, as well as the good jobs that the -- the young adults are doing there. I think you'll be very impressed if you go.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

MR. THOMAS: Thank you, and we appreciate your support.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Kimberly Suber, Chapin.

Good afternoon, ma'am. For the record, give us your full name.

MS. SUBER: Kimberly L. Suber.

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

MS. SUBER: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. SUBER: I would.

I see everybody is looking at counties, and I've come from different counties. I was born in Chester County, lived in Fairfield County in the Blair community, grew up in Pomaria, and now I'm in Chapin.

So I have been in education for 17 years and spent 3 years as a social worker. And during that time, I have learned that we have to provide

challenges -- provide opportunities for kids, especially with at-risk youth.

I have served as a secondary administrator. I have also helped place children at Wil Lou Gray for that second opportunity, so I'm a believer in second chances.

My son, who is now a grad -- he's graduating in 2020, in May, from The Citadel -- was once an alternative school student, so I'm very proud of that, how he was able to overcome that. And those success stories are things that can inspire others, and I think that's where I -- that's why I have a passion for alternative schools.

So recently, my recent job now is in Richland One School District where I had to create an alternative school for kindergarten through fifth grade. And at this time, we have two sites. We have a site that's at Hyatt Park Elementary, and we also have a site that's at Horrell Hill Elementary.

I think the problem is -- now is that the social-emotional learning is what our children need now. And being able to provide that for students who don't have an opportunity to go to Wil Lou Gray would be an excellent opportunity to stand on what Wil Lou Gray already has.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments?

Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And good afternoon, and thank you for your willingness to serve.

Did I understand that in your role in education you've had the opportunity to recommend students to be students at Wil Lou Gray?

MS. SUBER: Yes. Yes, sir. I've had students that were recommended that attended, and I've had students that, because they did not want to attend, those students ended up on "Live PD."

And I think that's one change that I want to see, where the parents are supported more, because at Wil Lou Gray, if the student's not interested in going, then they can't go. And at 16 years old -- as a mother, as a single parent myself, I just don't think a 16-year-old can make that decision. I think we should do some probationary things to get those kids in and possibly save them also.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And it's my understanding from your comments that your son had also been a --

MS. SUBER: Yes, my son was in an alternative school. He'd made a mistake, got a second chance. Ended up being a stand-out football player at Chapin High School. He's now at The Citadel. He's on the President's List. He's Gold Star. He's done so many different things, and I'm proud of him.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I was getting ready to say I'm sure you're proud of him.

MS. SUBER: Yes. And I have one more. I just did his IGP meeting this morning. So he's -- he'll -- he's in ninth grade and will finish up Eagle Scout by this summer.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Wow.

MS. SUBER: Yeah.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Congratulations.

MS. SUBER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else?

Ms. Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I believe you mentioned that you are currently starting alternative schools --

MS. SUBER: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: -- for K through fifth grade. Did I hear you correctly on that?

MS. SUBER: Yes, that is -- that is correct.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: So if you don't mind just explaining a little about what you're doing there. I mean, I'm surprised that we need alternative school --

MS. SUBER: We do.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: -- for K through fifth grade. So if you would just educate me a little bit on what you're doing there, I would appreciate that.

MS. SUBER: So with K -- Richland One came to a place where we were having so many hearing boards, hearing boards on K-5 students. And believe it or not, a K-5 student could probably tear this whole room up if they are having an episode.

So what we did was we decided that we needed to provide an intervention, and that intervention is a smaller classroom. It's more on a Tier 3 basis where we implement counseling, mental health. We also work with the parents and make the parents accountable.

So through that, we're doing it as -- their motto is "Together we will." We do it as a team effort. So within those 45 days that they are placed with us, we work with them intentionally on social-emotional learning, and that improves academic motivation once you tap into that. Because we have to realize that the children from 17 years old -- 17 years ago are not the same as the children now because they have so many adverse childhood experiences that we never experienced.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: So I just have a follow-up to that.

MS. SUBER: Go ahead.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Then -- so are you seeing success with that program? How long has that program been in existence?

MS. SUBER: This program has been -- it's going in its third year. We have been successful. The state department has come and looked at us as a model school.

Right now some of the things that I've implemented, we are taking it into the regular schools, so transforming schools. I just worked with a full school staff -- I'm still working with them now -- within our district. So they're taking that model and trying to implement it in the schools now.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Good. Thank you for your work on that. I appreciate that.

MS. SUBER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Suber...

MS. SUBER: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I am a native of Chester, South Carolina, as well, as you know. I just want to say I'm so proud --

MS. SUBER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- of your success, but more importantly proud of who you are as a mother and what you have done with your sons.

MS. SUBER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So I wish you much success with that.

Can you tell me -- can you tell me what you feel is -- and you may have already said this -- the weakness and strength of Wil Lou Gray?

MS. SUBER: I would say the strength is that they already have a process in place. I think that you can always add as the times change.

One thing as an administrator that I've noticed that was an issue was I had children who were very intelligent in Fairfield County, but because they didn't want to make that decision to go, they were denied -- of attending. And I think sometimes you have to push a child. My son didn't want to go to The Citadel, but I pushed him and said, No, that's where you're going because you need discipline.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Well, thank you for your willingness to serve.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Anyone else? What's the desire?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable.

(Motion is seconded.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Second. Discussion? Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor, raise your right hand.

Thank you, ma'am. Thank you so much.