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October 3, 2016

Secretary of Transportation Christy A. Hall
Commission of the South Carolina Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 191
Columbia, South Carolina 29201 - 3959

Dear Secretary Hall:

While the House Legislative Oversight Committee approved its study of the agency on June 1, 2016, notably, the study included a recommendation that the full committee follow up with the agency at the end of the calendar year. Listed below please find issues of interest that committee members would like to pursue at this time with the agency. Please provide responses to the questions below on or before Thursday, November 17, 2016.

Accountability

- Are any agency vehicles equipped with global positioning system devices? If yes, please provide a summary of how or if, these devices are utilized as an accountability measure? If no, has the agency considered using these devices as an accountability measure?
- Are there proper internal investigations to combat corruption? If yes, please provide a summary of internal agency activities which help combat corruption.

Implementation of Legislative Audit Council Recommendations

- Please provide the committee with an update on the agency's implementation of Legislative Audit Council recommendations.

Minority and Small Business Affairs

- Please provide the committee with an update on the activities of the Office of Minority and Small Business Affairs activities. As a part of this update, please include statistical information on (1) those entities which have made application and received certification in compliance with federal and state requirements as a disadvantaged business enterprise including the date of application, date of certification, reason for social and economic disadvantage noting any applicable presumptive group (2) number of contracts since the date of certification to which those entities qualified, and (3) value of contracts and subcontracts awarded to those entities certified as a disadvantaged business enterprise.

Maintenance

- What is the schedule for grass cutting off I-95 near the rest area coming into Florence (mile marker 139)?
- What is the schedule for maintenance of the Welcome to South Carolina signs on I-95 at the Georgia/South Carolina line? Is there a projected date as to when the sign will be replaced?

Human Resources

- What are the procedures for hiring and terminating employees, in particular trade specialists?
- How many human resource personnel does the agency have? Is there one human resource personnel for each engineering district? If not, how would an employee at a particular engineering district know who to contact with a human resources related issue?
- Is there a policy providing a timeframe for how quickly a resident engineer, district engineer, and/or human resources personnel should respond to an employee complaint (e.g., three days, ten days, etc.) to ensure employees know what to expect in terms of when they will receive an initial response, and, if needed, continued updates if it will take longer to resolve the complaint? If so, who is responsible for monitoring and ensuring the policy is followed?
- Is there a requirement that a certain number of individuals must apply for a position before interviews begin? If not, are there any requirements that must be met before interviews begin?
- Is a resident engineer allowed to solicit certain current employees to apply for a job opening?
- If there is a job opening in an engineering district, is a resident engineer required to inform all existing employees in the district of the opening?
- Should a Trade Specialist II serve as a lead/foreman on a crew that includes one or more Trade Specialist III? If so, please provide examples of situations in which this would be appropriate and the reasoning of why it is appropriate.

In your response to these questions, please provide the committee with any relevant, necessary context information. If the agency has any concerns (1) about the format of these questions yielding answers that do not provide an accurate reflection of the agency, or (2) that the requests may in any manner compromise the safety and security of our state government, agency employees, or individuals members, or (3) any concerns at all about the format of the question, please express those concerns, prior to responding to the question, in a written letter to me with a copy to committee staff. Please retain your working papers for these responses in the event the committee would like to view those. We appreciate your team following up on these issues and providing the information. We also appreciate the agency's cooperation throughout the legislative oversight process.

Sincerely,

Signature Redacted

Wm. Weston J. Newton

cc: House Legislative Oversight Committee