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MEDIA RELEASE

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INVITATION FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY ABOUT SC FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS AT HOUSE LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE'S SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Columbia, SC - The Education and Cultural Subcommittee of the House Legislative Oversight Committee is currently conducting an oversight study on SC First Steps to School Readiness. The Subcommittee has a meeting on the date below for the purpose of receiving comments from the public.

SC First Steps to School Readiness - Thursday, March 10, 2016 - 45 Minutes After Adjournment - Room 110, Blatt Building

During this time, Speaker Jay Lucas and the South Carolina House of Representatives' Legislative Oversight Committee are pleased to invite the public to provide comments and recommendations about the agency. Individuals can sign up to speak by calling the House Legislative Oversight Committee at 803-212-6810, emailing the Committee at hcommlegov@schouse.gov or signing up in person a few minutes prior to the meeting.

These meetings provide the opportunity to have an individual member of the public's face and voice connected with the comments while speaking directly to the Subcommittee members. This meeting is another chance for the public to have their voice heard in the oversight of state agencies. Another ongoing opportunity is a public input link available on the Committee's website, which allows individuals to provide comments anonymously. A previous opportunity was an online public survey to provide comments anonymously, which was open for a month.

There were 1,788 responses to the public survey conducted during the month of May on the first five agencies under study by the Committee (Comptroller General's Office, Department of Transportation, First Steps to School Readiness, Department of Social Services, and Department of Juvenile Justice), with at least one response coming from each of the 46 counties. It is the Committee's practice to publish responses to online surveys verbatim as received by the Committee. To view responses, go to www.sccstatehouse.gov, click on the "Citizens' Interest" tab on the top row, then on the "House Legislative Oversight" link and finally click on the agency for which you would like to view responses from the public.

The Committee's vision is for South Carolina agencies to become, and continuously remain, the most effective state agencies in the country through processes which eliminate waste and efficiently deploy resources thereby creating greater confidence in state government. Comments from those citizens who choose to provide input are important to the Members of the House Legislative Oversight Committee because they may help direct the Committee to additional potential areas for improvement with these agencies.

The specific task of the House Legislative Oversight Committee is to conduct legislative oversight studies on agencies at least once every seven years. The purpose of a legislative oversight study is to determine if agency laws and programs are being implemented and carried out in accordance with the intent of the General Assembly and whether or not they should be continued, curtailed or even eliminated. Also, the Committee recognizes that an oversight study serves the purpose of informing the public about an agency. Any legislator may file legislation, which will go through the normal legislative process, to implement recommendations this Committee may have relating to the agencies.

Suggestions for additional ways to inform the public about this meeting and the House Legislative Oversight Committee's process are welcomed. ###