

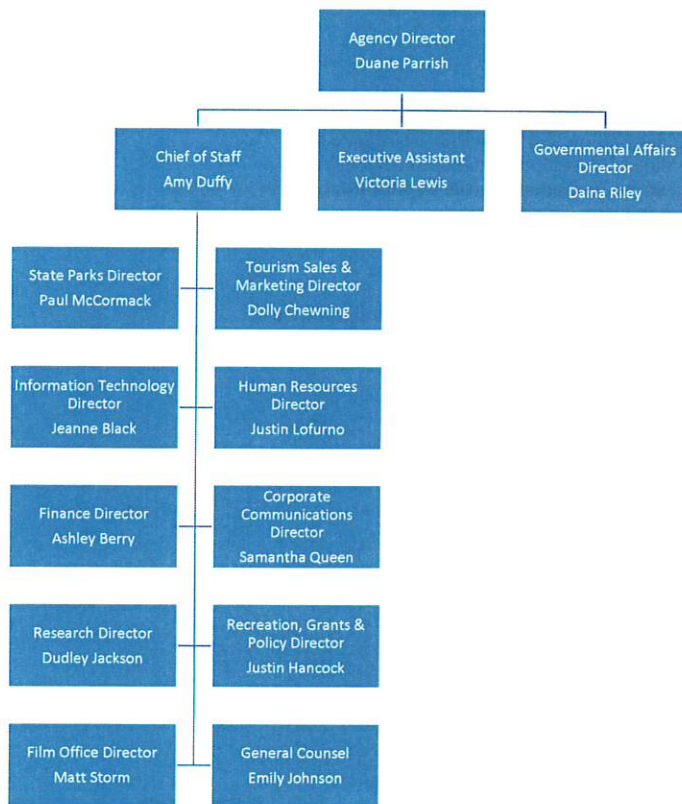
# South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism

FY 2024-25 Economic Development Budget

Subcommittee Budget Hearing

## Agency Attendees

- Duane Parrish – Director
- Amy Duffy, Chief of Staff
- Ashley Berry, Finance Director
- Sam Queen, Director of Corporate Communications
- Justin Hancock, Director of Recreation, Grants & Policy
- Dolly Chewning, Director of Tourism Sales & Marketing



Agency FTE Count	As of December 31, 2023			
	State	Federal	Other	Total
Authorized	198.75	0.00	248.25	447.00
Filled	173.00	1.00	238.00	412.00
Vacant	18.00	0.00	18.00	36.00

### **About SCPRT**

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SCPRT) is a cabinet agency assigned to operate and manage South Carolina's 47 state parks, market the state as a preferred vacation destination and to provide assistance to communities for parks, recreation and tourism development and promotion. The agency is perhaps most widely recognized for its leadership role in promoting and supporting South Carolina's number one industry – tourism.

### **Mission**

Growing South Carolina's economy by fostering sustainable economic development and effectively marketing our state to increase visitation and improve the quality of life for all South Carolinians.

### **Goals**

Heads in Beds

Feet in Fairways

People in Parks

### **Agency Program Areas;**

- Executive Offices (Directorate & Human Resources)
- Administrative Services (Finance & Information Technology)
- Office of Recreation, Grants & Policy
- Tourism Sales & Marketing
- Welcome Centers
- State Parks
- Communications
- Research
- Film Commission

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## Statewide Marketing

Started the Palmetto Porch Podcast series, which was a finalist for an ESTO Mercury Award in the Video, Film or Podcast Series category. Over 5K podcast downloads to date. Tourism Ambassador, Darius Rucker, the first to be interviewed, reminisced about Columbia, where he and his band, Hootie and the Blowfish started.

The SC Welcome Centers have partnered with local visitor centers in the state to form the Front Porch Program. Participating centers undergo a certification process to ensure the information and service South Carolina travelers receive meet PRT standards. Over 30 visitor centers have been certified to date.

FY 22/23 paid media efforts drove more than 416 million impressions and \$135.2 million in projected hotel revenue bookings.

Partnered with Live with Kelly and Ryan for a national TV integration and South Carolina trip sweepstakes. Campaign produced over 23 million impressions and over 20K clicks to DiscoverSouthCarolina.com

The Atalaya Arts & Crafts Festival at Huntington Beach State Park hosted the largest number of participating artists, and a record number of attendees at the annual event

The DiscoverSouthCarolina.com website had nearly 9.6 million pageviews in 2022, and sitewide traffic was up 15.94% over 2020.

The South Carolina coast was named best golf destination in the world by the National Association of Golf Tour Operators.

The International Association of Golf Travel Operators (IAGTO) named South Carolina among the top five golf destinations in the world for 2023. The Palmetto State is the only US destination to make the global Golf Destination of the Year list.



**TOTAL IMPRESSIONS:**  
**23,075,330**

This national broadcast opportunity used incremental COVID recovery funds and would not have been possible within our standard media budget.



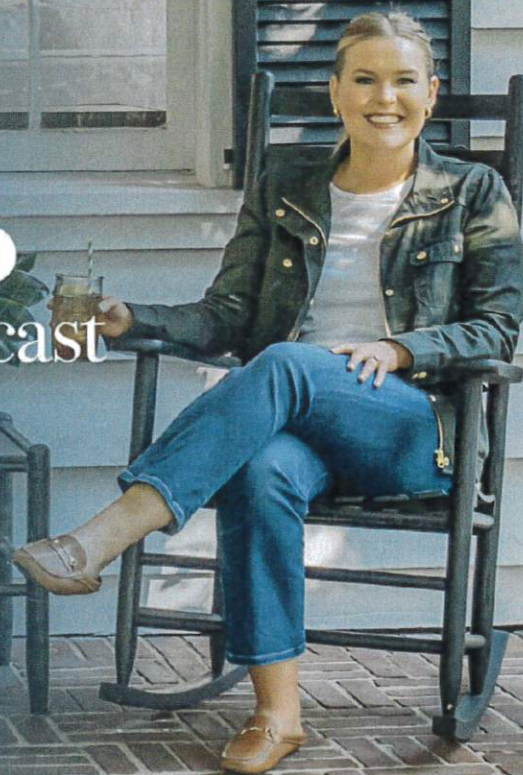


# the Palmetto Porch podcast

A DISCOVER PODCAST  
*South Carolina*

VIDEO, FILM, OR PODCAST SERIES

2023 ESTO MERCURY AWARD FINALIST!



## Statewide Public Relations Efforts

Year-over-year increase of editorial coverage by approximately 13 percent (483 articles), which resulted in over 1.4 billion PR impressions.

Top media coverage included Fodor's Travel, Lonely Planet, Tasting Table, Travel + Leisure, ELLE, Smithsonian Magazine, and The TODAY Show.

Approximately 83 percent of the articles secured reached potential travelers in South Carolina's target regional markets.

In-market media missions and activations in Denver and New York with over 15 media interactions and SCATR partner participation.

Hosted 17 media throughout the state, including one small group FAM that explored South Carolina's lowcountry, with emphasis on outdoor exploration in St. Phillips Island.

Executed a "Travel and Media Trends" breakout session media panel with three top-tier journalists during South Carolina's Governor's Conference on Tourism 2023.



### **Bronze Award:**

Discover South Carolina  
Pitch Bank Interview Program  
(Public Relations/Communications —  
Innovation)

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## Statewide Influencer Campaigns

Hosted 7 influencers throughout the state, resulting in over 17 million social media impressions over three distinct campaigns and numerous assets for use on owned channels.

Developed and executed a Film/TV-focused campaign. The campaign resulted in 16 social media posts and 49 Instagram story frames, garnering 16 million impressions and generating an engagement rate of 76%.

South Carolina increased destination awareness by reaching approximately 1.4M potential travel enthusiasts within flight markets such as Atlanta, Denver, North Carolina, Los Angeles and New York. Each influencer partnership included Instagram posts and stories with direct links to Discover South Carolina's owned Instagram channel, and swipe-up links in stories drove traffic to Discover South Carolina's website.

Highlighted additional South Carolina assets with targeted outdoor adventure, luxury and culture influencers.



### **Bronze Award:**

Discover South Carolina Flights Program  
(Public Relations/Communications – Influencer Marketing)



### **2022 ESTO Award Finalist:**

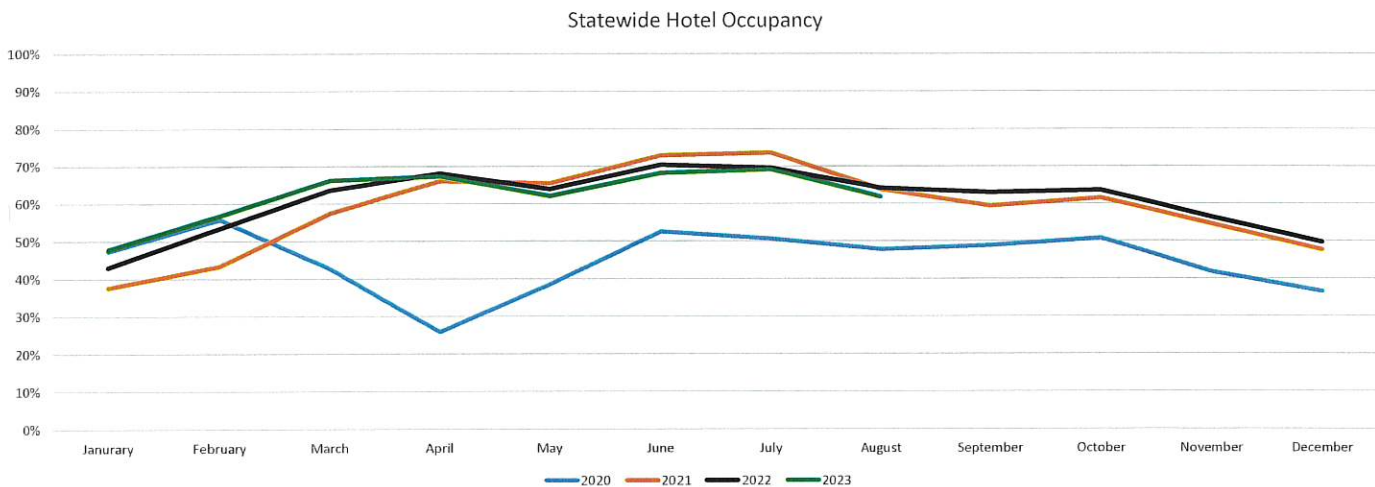
Discover South Carolina's Virtual Pen Pal Program  
(Social Media Campaign)





## South Carolina Hotels

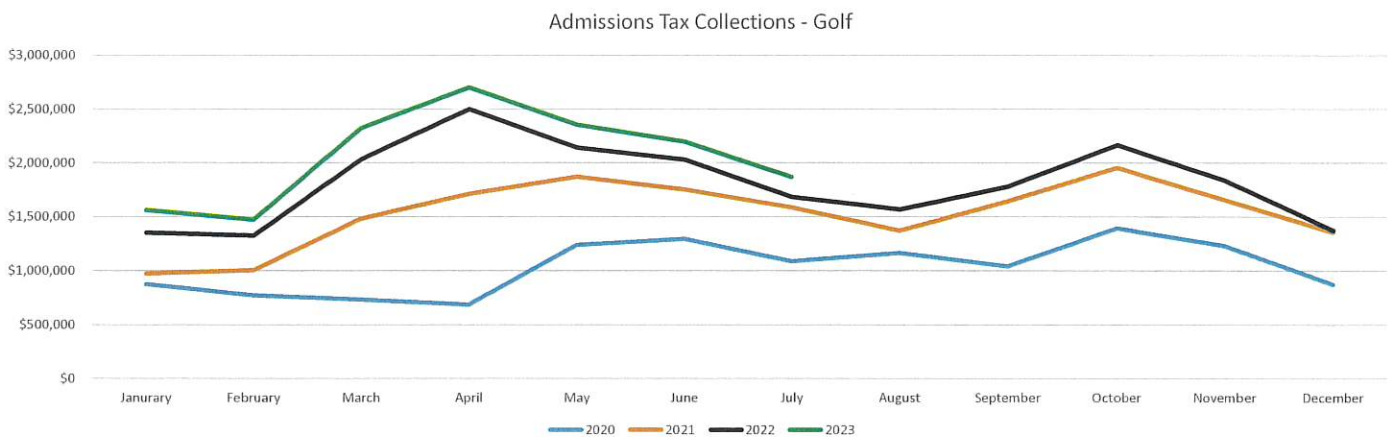
In 2022, statewide Hotel Occupancy increased 4.8% compared to 2021. Statewide Hotel Average Daily Rates (ADR) for 2022 increased 6.8%, yielding a RevPAR (revenue per available room) increase of 11.9% compared to 2021.



Through August 2023, statewide Hotel Occupancy increased 0.3% compared to the same time period in 2022. Statewide ADR increased 1.2% and RevPAR increased 1.6%.

## South Carolina Golf

Statewide Admissions Tax collections from Golf (a subset of total Admissions Tax collections) in CY2022 increased 18.9% over CY2021. Based on data provided by Golf Data Tech, the number of golf rounds played in South Carolina decreased 2.3% in 2022, compared to the number of rounds played in 2021.



Through July 2023, Admissions Tax collections from Golf increased 10.8% over the same time period in 2022. As of August, the total number of golf rounds played in 2023 have increased 4.1% compared to the same time period in 2022.

## South Carolina State Parks



**FY 23**  
**Cabin Occupancy**  
**67.3%**  
**33,012 Nights**

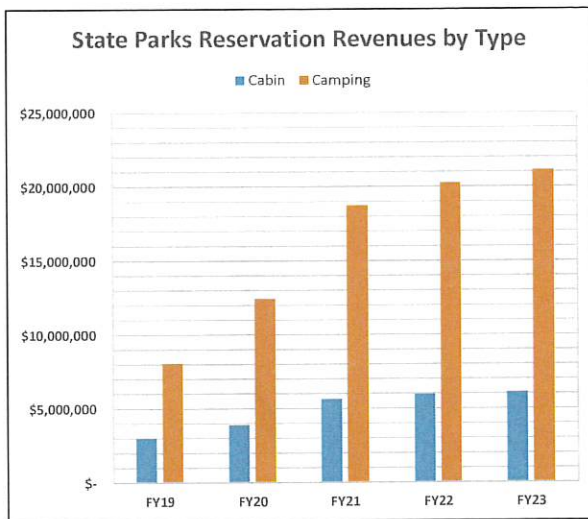


**FY 23**  
**Campsite Occupancy**  
**57.4%**  
**517,466 Nights**



**FY 23**  
**Golf Rounds**  
**44,491**

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## State Parks Growth

South Carolina State Parks experienced near-record-level visitation, cabin and campground occupancy throughout FY 2023, finishing with the third-highest visitation and occupancy on record.

The decrease in occupancy rates from FY 2022 to FY 2023 met projections following Hurricane Ian, which led to park evacuations for the first time since 2019.

Despite this obstacle, South Carolina State Parks achieved record-breaking cabin and campground revenues in FY 2023 for the fifth consecutive year.

South Carolina State Parks recently acquired Ramsey Grove and May Forest properties, which will soon become Ramsey Grove State Park and May Forest State Park, respectively. Property acquisitions along the Black River continued, moving forward plans for Black River State Park. Additional acquisitions from Dominion Energy at Misty Lake and Pine Island officially transferred ownership in FY 2023.



FY 2024 - 2025 Budget Request												
South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism												
BUDGET REQUESTS				FUNDING					FTEs			
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	Brief Description	General - Recurring	General - Nonrecurring	Other	Fed	Total	State	Other	Fed	Total
1	Recurring	Market Competitiveness Salary Adjustment	This increase would allow SCPRT to substantially improve market competitiveness for employee recruitment and retention while also addressing compensation inequities within the agency.	\$ 3,985,000.00				\$ 3,985,000.00	55.00	-55.00		0.00
2	Recurring	Agency Head Salary Increase	Increase salary to reflect Agency Head Salary Commission approved amount	\$ 82,863.00				\$ 82,863.00				0.00
3	Recurring	Statewide Marketing	Increase amount for statewide marketing.	\$ 1,000,000.00				\$ 1,000,000.00				0.00
4	Recurring	Lease	Funds to pay Brookgreen for yearly lease	\$ 1,050,000.00				\$ 1,050,000.00				0.00
5	Recurring	State Parks Insurance	Funds to pay Insurance for state parks	\$ 805,000.00				\$ 805,000.00				0.00
6	Recurring	Additional Position - Application Developer II	IT position for security and application development and maintenance.	\$ 115,200.00				\$ 115,200.00	1.00			1.00
7	Recurring	Information Technology Equipment, Cloud Services, and Microsoft Licensing	IT hardware, security, and other costs have continued to increase.	\$ 338,000.00				\$ 338,000.00				0.00
8	Non-Recurring	Sports Marketing Program	This will support SCPRT's efforts to recruit major sports events that provide significant economic impact to the state's tourism economy and strengthen South Carolina's competitive position as a preferred sports destination.		\$ 4,000,000.00			\$ 4,000,000.00				0.00
	Recurring	Undiscovered South Carolina Grant Program	Provide additional financial assistance to rural and developing destinations for the construction or renovation of publicly owned tourism attractions.	\$ 250,000.00				\$ 250,000.00				0.00
	Capital	Venues at Arsenal Hill Project	Additional costs for the ongoing renovations.		\$ 1,000,000.00			\$ 1,000,000.00				0.00
11	Capital	Road Paving	This funding will be used to continue SCPRT's partnership with SCDOT to pave state park roads.		\$ 3,000,000.00			\$ 3,000,000.00				0.00
12	Capital	New Park Property Development	This will be used to develop newly acquired property for visitor use and revenue generation.		\$ 14,000,000.00			\$ 14,000,000.00				0.00
13	Capital	Boardwalk and Docks	Construction of a new dock at Hampton Plantation, beach boardwalk repairs at Huntington Beach, and kayak launch repairs at Aiken.		\$ 1,000,000.00			\$ 1,000,000.00				0.00
14	Capital	State Park Housing - Phase 1	Replacing aged mobile homes with houses for park Ranger on-site housing.		\$ 1,000,000.00			\$ 1,000,000.00				0.00
15	Capital	State Park Cabin Upgrades	These funds will be used for minor renovations and amenities upgrades for the 135+ rental cabins.		\$ 1,000,000.00			\$ 1,000,000.00				0.00
16	Capital	State Park Camper Cabins	This request will fund the installation of new revenue generating camper cabins at two state parks.		\$ 1,500,000.00			\$ 1,500,000.00				0.00
17	Capital	Hickory Knob State Park Remodel	This project will upgrade Hickory Knob's existing overnight accommodations, restaurant and lodge, which were built in the 1970s and have become outdated in terms of appearance and functionality.		\$ 1,000,000.00			\$ 1,000,000.00				0.00
18	Non-Recurring	Beach Renourishment Grants	Provide grants to local governments and state agencies for beach renourishment and restoration.		\$ 7,000,000.00			\$ 7,000,000.00				0.00
19	Recurring	State Park Payroll Authority	Additional authority for state parks for payroll			\$ 1,777,000.00		\$ 1,777,000.00				0.00
20	Recurring	State Parks PARL Authority Increase	Additional authority for state parks for PARL			\$ 200,000.00		\$ 200,000.00				0.00
21	Recurring	Welcome Centers Facility Operating Funds	Funding for operations of the Welcome Centers	\$ 4,563,360.00				\$ 4,563,360.00	15.00	-15.00		0.00
TOTAL BUDGET REQUESTS				\$ 12,189,623	\$ 34,500,000	\$ 1,977,000	\$ -	\$ 48,666,623	71.00	-70.00	0.00	1.00



### FM Budget vs Actual End of Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Fund		Current Budget	YTD Actual Expense	Remaining Balance
10010000	EXECUTIVE OFFICES	\$ 1,330,238.76	\$ 1,330,238.76	\$ 0.00
10010000	ADMINISTRATIVE SVCS	\$ 2,962,615.78	\$ 2,962,615.78	\$ 0.00
10010000	TOURISM SALES & MKT	\$ 773,807.94	\$ 773,807.94	\$ 0.00
10010000	ADVERTISING	\$ 10,879,285.90	\$ 10,879,285.90	\$ 0.00
10010000	WELCOME CENTERS	\$ 1,649,920.05	\$ 1,649,920.05	\$ 0.00
10010000	STATE PARKS SERVICE	\$ 4,871,458.67	\$ 4,871,458.67	\$ 0.00
10010000	COMMUNICATIONS	\$ 102,412.29	\$ 102,412.29	\$ 0.00
10010000	RESEARCH	\$ 179,872.61	\$ 179,872.61	\$ 0.00
10010000	RECREATN, GRNT & POL	\$ 256,947.32	\$ 256,947.32	\$ 0.00
10010000	VENUES ARSENAL HILL	\$ 285,741.80	\$ 285,741.80	\$ 0.00
10010000	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 4,050,397.75	\$ 4,050,397.75	\$ 0.00
30350000	EXECUTIVE OFFICES	\$ 2,021.25	\$ 2,021.25	\$ 0.00
30350000	STATE PARKS SERVICE	\$ 42,779,282.24	\$ 40,187,204.30	\$ 2,592,077.94
30350000	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 5,487,793.40	\$ 5,487,793.40	\$ 0.00
30370000	TOURISM SALES & MKT	\$ 21,389.00		\$ 21,389.00
30370000	WELCOME CENTERS	\$ 5,656,764.74	\$ 4,250,994.17	\$ 1,405,770.57
30370000	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 218,730.89	\$ 218,730.89	\$ 0.00
30370001	VENUES ARSENAL HILL	\$ 287,000.00	\$ 194,810.22	\$ 92,189.78
30370001	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 5,774.32		\$ 5,774.32
37070000	FILM COMMISSION	\$ 24,935,876.84	\$ 4,072,852.64	\$ 20,863,024.20
37070000	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 96,773.07	\$ 73,572.05	\$ 23,201.02

### FM Budget vs Actual Fiscal Year 2023-2024 - Current

Fund		Current Budget	YTD Actual Expenses	Commitments and Other Transactions	Remaining Balance
10010000	EXECUTIVE OFFICES	\$ 1,216,557.00	\$ 652,109.16	\$ 21,049.79	\$ 543,398.05
10010000	ADMINISTRATIVE SVCS	\$ 3,829,536.00	\$ 1,660,661.60	\$ 155,460.30	\$ 2,013,414.10
10010000	TOURISM SALES & MKT	\$ 812,082.00	\$ 381,231.21	\$ 6,923.73	\$ 423,927.06
10010000	ADVERTISING	\$ 19,139,479.45	\$ 4,950,014.67	\$ 8,116,641.32	\$ 6,072,823.46
10010000	WELCOME CENTERS	\$ 1,969,831.89	\$ 1,126,083.58	\$ 35,136.71	\$ 808,611.60
10010000	STATE PARKS SERVICE	\$ 6,016,047.74	\$ 2,966,034.31	\$ 175,356.25	\$ 2,874,657.18
10010000	COMMUNICATIONS	\$ 114,083.00	\$ 57,029.31	\$ 0.00	\$ 57,053.69
10010000	RESEARCH	\$ 201,994.00	\$ 91,174.12	\$ 0.00	\$ 110,819.88
10010000	RECREATN, GRNT & POL	\$ 250,349.00	\$ 126,480.90	\$ 3,313.11	\$ 120,554.99
10010000	PARD GRANTS	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
10010000	VENUES ARSENAL HILL	\$ 435,000.00	\$ 144,542.67	\$ 19,958.28	\$ 270,499.05
10010000	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 4,630,147.00	\$ 2,144,443.30	\$ 0.00	\$ 2,485,703.70
10010000	UNOBLIGATED CARRYFORWARD	\$ 1,960,448.27	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 675,000.00	\$ 685,448.27
30350000	STATE PARKS SERVICE	\$ 39,975,904.09	\$ 18,776,068.62	\$ 3,469,446.13	\$ 17,730,389.34
30350000	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 6,050,471.00	\$ 3,147,575.66	\$ 0.00	\$ 2,902,895.34
30370000	WELCOME CENTERS	\$ 4,741,240.00	\$ 1,916,548.52	\$ 2,007,446.04	\$ 817,245.44
30370000	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 220,000.00	\$ 131,710.38	\$ 0.00	\$ 88,289.62
30370001	VENUES ARSENAL HILL	\$ 322,000.00	\$ 17,053.51	\$ 38,311.08	\$ 266,635.41
30370001	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 6,000.00			\$ 6,000.00
37070000	FILM COMMISSION	\$ 24,931,639.00	\$ 21,817,795.60	\$ 424.44	\$ 3,113,418.96
37070000	STATE EMPLOYER CONTR	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 41,165.34	\$ 0.00	\$ 58,834.66

## Proviso Changes

(PRT: Tourism and Promotion) The funds appropriated in this act for Regional Promotions shall be distributed equally to the eleven Regional Tourism groups, except that the Grand Strand Tourism Region's funds shall be divided, with ~~\$71,237~~ 22% distributed to the Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce, ~~\$163,784~~ 51.11% distributed to the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce, ~~\$42,717~~ 13.33% distributed to the City of Georgetown, and ~~\$42,717~~ 13.33% distributed to the Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce for tourism related activities. In addition, \$150,000 shall be distributed to the Lake Wylie Chamber of Commerce. The Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce and the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce shall submit a report to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee by December first each year describing how these funds were expended in the prior fiscal year.

## Proviso Changes

117.102. (GP: South Carolina Welcome Centers) The Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and the Department of Transportation shall maintain a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that provides that the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism shall control operations of all South Carolina Welcome Centers. The MOU shall include replacement, renovation and maintenance of the facilities, daily operations, and grounds maintenance and upkeep and shall clearly define responsibility for additional portions of Welcome Centers to include paving and sidewalks. The Department of Transportation shall transfer to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism the amount stated in the Memorandum of Understanding ~~\$5,140,727~~ less any state funds appropriated by the General Assembly for the same purpose. These funds must be increased by an amount commensurate with any statewide state employee salary increases or statewide state employee bonuses including employee fringes provided by this General Appropriations Act. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism assumes responsibility for this amount and the timing of the transfer of these funds shall be defined as part of the MOU. The funds transferred to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism shall be placed in a separate and distinct fund and these funds shall be carried forward from the prior fiscal year into the current fiscal year and be expended for the same purposes.

