

Executive Order 1999-51

(September 17, 1999)

WHEREAS, I DECLARED A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 99-44 ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1999, DUE TO THE HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS PRESENTED BY HURRICANE FLOYD; AND

WHEREAS, I ALSO ORDERED A MANDATORY EVACUATION OF ALL PERSONS LOCATED IN AREAS OF JASPER, BEAUFORT, HAMPTON, COLLETON, CHARLESTON, BERKELEY, DORCHESTER, GEORGETOWN AND HORRY COUNTIES THAT WERE VULNERABLE DUE TO THE HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS PRESENTED BY HURRICANE FLOYD; AND

WHEREAS, I FURTHER DECLARED THAT ALL STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES PERFORM ALL EMERGENCY FUNCTIONS AS ASSIGNED IN THE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN OR AS DIRECTED BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DIVISION DURING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY; AND

WHEREAS, AS A RESULT OF THE VOLUNTARY EVACUATION RECOMMENDATION AND SUBSEQUENT MANDATORY EVACUATION ORDER, THE WESTBOUND LANES OF INTERSTATE 26 BECAME CONGESTED WITH WESTBOUND TRAFFIC; AND

WHEREAS, AS A RESULT OF THE TRAFFIC CONGESTION ON THE WESTBOUND LANES OF INTERSTATE 26 ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1999, THERE WAS A SUBSTANTIAL DANGER THAT CITIZENS WOULD DECIDE TO DISOBEY THE MANDATORY EVACUATION ORDER AND ATTEMPT TO RETURN TO THE AREAS MADE VULNERABLE TO HURRICANE FLOYD; AND

WHEREAS, AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, I CANNOT TOLERATE THE POSSIBILITY THAT CITIZENS WILL FAIL TO HEED A MANDATORY EVACUATION ORDER DUE TO TRAFFIC CONGESTION; AND

WHEREAS, AFTER LEARNING OF THE TRAFFIC CONGESTION PROBLEMS, THE UNDERSIGNED ORDERED THAT THE EASTBOUND LANES OF INTERSTATE 26 BE REVERSED IN ORDER TO PERMIT ALL LANES OF INTERSTATE 26 TO BE UTILIZED TO SPEED THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC FROM THE CHARLESTON COUNTY AREA; AND

WHEREAS, I REMAIN CONCERNED ABOUT THE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN'S FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE NEED FOR REVERSAL OF TRAFFIC ON INTERSTATE 26; THE POSSIBLE UNDER-UTILIZATION OF SECONDARY ROADS TO EASE TRAFFIC CONGESTION ON INTERSTATE 26; AND THE DELAY OF STATE AGENCIES IN IMPLEMENTING MY ORDER TO

REVERSE THE TRAFFIC FLOW ON THE EASTBOUND LANES OF INTERSTATE 26.

NOW, THEREFORE, BY THE VIRTUE OF THE POWER AND AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME AS GOVERNOR PURSUANT TO THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, I HEREBY AUTHORIZE SENATOR ARTHUR RAVENEL, JR., TO CONDUCT AN IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION INTO THE TRAFFIC CONGESTION PROBLEMS OF SEPTEMBER 14, 1999, ON INTERSTATE 26, AND TO PROVIDE ME WITH A REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THIS EXECUTIVE ORDER.