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Subject: Press Conference: Workforce
Location: 1st Floor Lobby, Statehouse
When: 1/27/2016 1:45:00 PM - 2:15:00 PM

EVENT: Workforce Press Conference

DATE: Wednesday, January 27, 2016

TIME: 1:45PM *House goes in at 2:00pm*
Speakers and Special Guests to arrive at 1:30pm – holding room Governor's conference room.

LOCATION: Statehouse first floor lobby

LOCATION SET-UP: *Gov Office*

Podium
Podium Microphone
State Seal
Flags

PRESS: Yes

PUBLIC: Yes

LENGTH OF SPEAKING: 3-5 minutes

INVITES:

Superintendent Molly Spearman
Secretary Bobby Hitt
Director Cheryl Stanton
Jimmy Williamson, Tech Schools
Ted Pitts, Chamber President
John Uprichard, Chamber Chairman
Robbie Barnette, Chamber
Mikee Johnson, Chamber
Neal Getsinger, Vocational Rehab
Tim Hofferth, CHE
JT McLawhorn, Urban League and SWIB
Lewis Gossett, SCMA
Ben Homeyer, NFIB
John Lummus, Executive Director of Upstate Alliance
Burriss Nelson, Executive Director Anderson County Economic Development

Galen DeHay, Senior VP Tri-County Technical College
Pat Michaels, Goodwill
Craig Currey, Transitions

CONFIRMED ATTENDEES:

Speaker Jay Lucas

SUGGESTED SPEAKING ORDER:

Governor Nikki Haley

Superintendent Molly Spearman

Steve Nail, Vice President of Human Resources for Hubbell Lighting (SC Chamber Executive Committee Member)

Chairman Brian White

PRESS BACKGROUNDER: DB

SPONSORS: H.4145, By White, Clemmons, Goldfinch, Yow, W.J. McLeod, Horne, Murphy, Erickson, Duckworth, Gagnon, Gambrell, Hardwick, Jordan, Long, Lowe, Pitts, Sandifer, Thayer, Willis, Loftis, Alexander, Johnson and Whipper

BILL BACKGROUND:

- H.4145 is the Pathways to First careers program that provides for demand-focused workforce training for individuals in a high school and technical college setting.
- The Bill develops a Coordinating Council for Workforce Development and an associated advisory with the usual members of workforce development and education – Chambers of Commerce, Commerce Department, DEW, tech schools, CHE, Superintendent of Education and others.
- The primary responsibility of the Council is to engage in planning and program coordination, as well as staff accountability and program performance reporting.
- The bill also provides for intergovernmental data sharing. This is the first steps in program accountability, such as whether or not program graduates get jobs. There isn't real teeth in the council to shut down programs, but simply getting real data from the Tech Board is more than we have now, and a step in the right direction.
- Funding for the program is generally subject to appropriations, but allowable uses of funds falls into two major categories:
 - Scholarships and grants. This portion pays for tuition, transportation, fees and books for individual students. This starts to get at the 'opportunity cost' and other barriers to entering education by addressing issues other than tuition alone.
 - Program development. This provides for funding at both technical colleges and high school career centers to develop workforce-focused programs.
- One of the most important, and unstated, components of the bill is that none of the funding is tied to degree-seeking programs, and therefore the funding is not as limited as Lottery Tuition Assistance. This is different from most higher education funding in South Carolina, which is education for education's sake. The purpose of this set of programs, like SucceedSC is job-focused skills targeted at businesses and individuals who don't benefit from programs like ReadySC.
- Originally, the bill provided for two tax credits – an individual credit for individuals who donate to a scholarship fund and an apprenticeship tax credit. We have proposed an amendment that Chairman White seems amenable to that strikes the individual tax credit in its entirety and cleans up the apprenticeship tax credit.

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS:

- Our economy is among the fastest growing in the nation.
- As I have said many times before, in my office, next to my desk, and next to the desk of everyone on my staff is South Carolina's unemployment rate. It's been this way since 2011.
- Unemployment is at 5.5% with more people working in SC than ever before.

- Over the past year, employment gains totaled more than 78,000, an all-time, year-over-year record for South Carolina.
- We have done a great job growing our existing businesses and recruiting new ones which is why we make tires, cars, timber products, and so much more.
- South Carolina's exports continue to grow because we have built a reputation around the world as a great place to do business.
 - First in U.S. exports for tires and passenger automobiles, second in exports of gas turbines, and twelfth in civilian aircraft.
 - Ranked first for jobs linked to foreign investment.
 - Businesses from all over the world are interested in coming to South Carolina, due in large part to our world-class workforce and business-friendly climate.
 - Large-scale manufacturers certainly have a significant impact, but small businesses account for 97% of our state's total businesses.
- But the lower unemployment gets in South Carolina, the people with skills and professional attitudes are hired first. What we find then is that those people who still having a hard time finding a job have greater hurdles to overcome to enter the workforce.
- Some of these people can't pass a drug test or have a criminal history – those are challenges that will take the most time and effort to overcome, but the hurdle we know we can overcome is that of a skills gap.
- The people in an area aren't the welders, materials handlers, or truck drivers that the businesses in that area need. When I talk with businesses around the state, they tell me that we can't train truck drivers fast enough. Our focus is to give people a chance to fill the jobs available in their community now.
- We know we can measure this problem, too – with 124,022 people unemployed in South Carolina and almost 67,000 open jobs, pushing our technical colleges to train people to meet the needs of our businesses is a no-brainer.
- So that's what we're going to do. We're going to put everyone who touches workforce and businesses in the room – businesses, educators, economic developers – and we're going to find businesses, find people, and match them with training programs. We're going to make sure that the money we put into job training results in a return on our investment.