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January 16, 2015

This week, South Carolina celebrated the 96th inaugural and the start of a second term for Gov. Nikki Haley, our state's chief executive. On a brisk Wednesday morning, hundreds of elected officials, international dignitaries, business people and well-wishers gathered on the Statehouse grounds to watch those elected to the state's highest posts take the oath of office.

In her inaugural address, Gov. Haley highlighted the positive transformation over the past four years stating, "We have changed the image of South Carolina, not just around the country but around the world." Our state has certainly seen its share of change. In four years, our unemployment rate has dropped four points, we have added nearly 155,000 jobs to the state's payrolls, and we lead the Southeast region in manufacturing job growth. We have continued to attract many of the world's top companies, including high-tech firms, pharmaceutical brands and composite manufacturers, demonstrating the industry diversity we have strived to achieve.

Looking back some 25 years ago, South Carolina was primarily a textile state. In the years that followed - spurred by BMW, Boeing, major expansions by Michelin and many others - we have become an advanced manufacturing state, sought out because of our skilled workforce, logistics network and unmatched quality of life. It's been exciting to see firsthand how this transformation has shaped our communities - both rural and urban - and I am even more excited to see where the next four years will take us.

Bobby Hitt, Secretary of Commerce

Just /

Schaeffler
North America
expanding
manufacturing
operations
in counties
million in
creating
in Chester
Spartanburg
Counties

Vapor America
established
in Union
\$1.3 million
investment
creating
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Movement
LLC
established
headquarters
in Lancaster
The \$22 million
investment
creating
650 new
Read More

Spotlight: United Kingdom

The United Kingdom (U.K.) and the Palmetto State share much more than just a rich colonial history. Despite separation by the globe's second-largest ocean, U.K.-based firms play a vital role in the success of South Carolina's economy. Major U.K. companies - such as [British Petroleum](#) (BP), pictured above, and [BAE Systems](#) - maintain significant operations in the state. In the Lowcountry, [BP's Cooper River site](#), which was constructed in 1976, directly employs more than 200 workers and generates an economic impact of more than \$100 million annually.

Last year, yet another U.K. firm made the decision to establish operations in the Palmetto State when the Ireland-based [E&I Engineering, Ltd.](#) [announced](#) an investment of \$17 million to create the company's first U.S. facility in the Upstate. The project is expected to create approximately 250 jobs in Anderson County over the next five years. Since 2011, E&I and other U.K.-affiliated firms have collectively committed capital investments of greater than \$100 million in South Carolina.

Photo courtesy of BP America.

Commerce Capture: Nestlé Waters North America

In November 2014, [Nestlé Waters North America](#) announced the establishment of a new water-bottling facility in Chocoma County. The 200,000-square-foot McBee, S.C. plant will produce bottled water under the company's popular Deer Park and Pure Life® brands. Once fully operational, the facility is expected to employ more than 40 workers directly, and, according to an economic impact study conducted by independent economists with Miley and Associates, Inc., have an annual economic impact more than \$40 million on the region.

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