

Request for Special Appropriation to Remediate Environmental, Health and Safety Issues SOUTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

South Carolina State University (SCSU) has requested \$1,905,375 from the General Assembly to remediate environmental, health and safety issues.

During the Fall 1998 semester, an incident involving carbon monoxide poisoning of several students, including one death, occurred at the South Campus residence hall of South Carolina State University. A week earlier another student had died in Battiste Residence Hall as a result of meningitis. To ensure the safety of the students and employees, the President of the University requested of the Governor that an inspection team be sent to investigate health, safety and environmental hazards on campus. The team consisted of members from the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (LLR).

The final report from DHEC entitled, "South Carolina State University: A Report to Identify Hazards that Potentially Impact Human Health" and a companion report from LLR/OSHA identified a number of environmental, health and safety issues. Although the University has addressed some of the violations and recommendations in the report, many of the issues will require resources far beyond the University's current capability.

The University retained the services of Aiken Cost Consultants to estimate the funding required to remediate all of the findings in the DHEC and LLR/OSHA reports. The consultants emphasize that their cost projections, "do not reflect all of the cost for the necessary design engineering, repairs and alterations that are required to bring the facilities of SCSU within compliance of the South Carolina DHEC and LLR/OSHA recommendations." Thus, the cost projections are minimal and additional costs will likely be incurred. The \$1,905,375 identified by the consultants will be used for the following:

1. Construction cost estimate of items identified by DHEC - \$ 757,642
 2. Construction cost estimate of items from LLR/OSHA - \$700,733
 3. Staffing and Management of Safety & Health Office recommended by DHEC - \$250,000
 4. Garbage and refuse disposal equipment recommended by DHEC - \$197,000
- TOTAL - \$1,905,375

Although this request was sent directly to the Governor's office from SCSU, the Governor's office forwarded the request to CHE for a recommendation.

The staff at CHE is currently working with the appropriate officials at SCSU in order to gain a better understanding of the currently identified and long-term cost of resolving the issues identified in the final report from DHEC entitled "South Carolina State University: A Report to Identify Hazards that Potentially Impact Human Health."

Staff recommendation: The staff recommends that the \$1.9 million be appropriated to SCSU with the understanding that the CHE staff will work closely with the University over the next few weeks and report back to the Commission with a more comprehensive recommendation of addressing the concerns contained in the report.

The Committee on Finance and Facilities will give its recommendation at the Commission meeting on April 1, 1999.