

Statement Concerning Dr. J. Howard Stokes
by
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Mr. Chairman:

I request that this Commission take note with sadness of the sudden death of Dr. J. Howard Stokes of Florence early last Friday morning.

Dr. Stokes is known throughout this State as the Founding Father of Francis Marion College. For twenty years Dr. Stokes worked diligently "for the college we got to have in Florence," to paraphrase Dr. Stokes. In recent years Dr. Stokes was recognized in Florence for his community contributions and particularly those to Francis Marion College. The first permanent structure constructed on campus, the J. Howard Stokes Administration Building, bears his name. In 1975, he was named a member of the board of trustees. He initiated and was the first president of Friends of Francis Marion -- its "instant alumni," he termed them. Dr. Stokes' commitment and time devoted to higher education in the Pee Dee were made more available because of the strong family foundation he developed in his medical practice. At his death, all three of Dr. Stokes' sons (his only three children) were in medical practice with him.

It goes without saying that those three men suffer the greatest loss, but let it be known by them and Mrs. Stokes that their loss is our State's loss. Higher education will miss J. Howard Stokes.

/s/ Louis D. Wright, Jr.