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Subject: 12 SC Counties Certified Work Ready Community In Progress

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(Columbia, South Carolina) - Today, the South Carolina Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) approved the applications of 12 counties to be designated as South Carolina Work Ready Community In Progress. All 46 South Carolina counties are now designated Work Ready Community In Progress.

To earn the South Carolina Work Ready Community In Progress designation, counties had to demonstrate a commitment in meeting their two year criteria, which includes improving high school graduation rates, obtaining WorkKeys assessments and National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRCs), and having an alignment of community stakeholders in achieving county goals. Each community created a team of key community stakeholders including education, economic development, elected officials, employers, and community organizations who will work collectively to meet the certification criteria. Counties that have been certified as a Work Ready Community In Progress are given two years to reach the goals necessary to become a Certified Work Ready Community. -

"It speaks volumes that South Carolina is the first state in the nation to have all of its counties participating in the Work Ready Communities initiative," said Governor Nikki Haley. "Our local partners are the key drivers in ensuring that we have the best environment possible that leads to economic opportunity for all citizens. The fact that all counties are committed to raising the bar is another reason why South Carolina is the new 'it' state when it comes to economic development."

"We are excited to designate 12 additional South Carolina counties as Work Ready Community In Progress," said Mikee Johnson, Chairman of the SWIB and President & CEO of Cox Industries, Inc. "The significance behind the South Carolina Work Ready Communities initiative is that it brings together community leaders with a common goal of improving educational achievements and the employability of its workforce."

"We are delighted to participate in a program that will help develop our workforce for both existing and potential businesses coming to South Carolina," said John L. Finan, DEW agency administrator.

The 12 counties earning the In Progress status are:

Aiken	Barnwell
Chester	Chesterfield
Edgefield	Darlington
Dillon	Florence
Jasper	Marion
Marlboro	York

ABOUT SCWRC - The South Carolina Work Ready Communities initiative is a public-private initiative

whose mission is to empower counties in developing a workforce that meets the needs and challenges of a global economy. Developed by ACT, a Work Ready Community is a measure of the quality of a county's workforce. South Carolina was one of four pilot states selected by ACT to participate in the ACT Certified Work Ready Community program. For additional information, please visit www.scworkready.org.

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