

Title: **Berkeley school board to consider restoring prayer**
 Author: BRENDA RINDGE For the Independent
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Berkeley school board to consider restoring prayer

BRENDA RINDGE

For the Independent

The Berkeley County School Board was expected to consider a proposal Tuesday that could reinstate its opening prayer.

Any discussion took place after the print deadline for this story, but a report can be found online at www.BerkeleyInd.com.

For years, the board has begun its bi-monthly meetings by reciting the Lord's Prayer, but that practice stopped in June after the district was put on notice by the Americans United for

Separation of Church and State that their tradition violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Since June 28, board meetings have instead opened with a moment of silence.

On Tuesday the board was scheduled to consider a policy addition called "Public Invoca-

tion." The agenda for the meeting was not available Friday.

"The board is exploring the option of an invocation like the state Legislature has adopted," Chairman Jim Hayes said. "We would have to follow the guidelines the

district spokeswoman Katie Orvin said it will be included in the meeting minutes. The minutes are not available to the public until they have been approved by the board, which should happen at the Tuesday meeting.

Board members said Hayes presented a chart showing how about 75 percent of the districts in the state open their meetings. It indicated that 23 of 62 districts reported moments of silence and 27 of 62 said they have an invocation.

Hayes also distributed to the board sample prayers based on those that have been delivered

Legislature set forth this spring for government bodies."

Background

The board discussed the issue at its July 26 meeting but did not take action. The item was not specifically listed on the agenda but was discussed during Hayes' "Board Chair Report," which comes between the board's return from executive session for student attendance appeals, and the adjournment. The discussion was not included on the meeting video posted on the district website.

Asked about the discussion,

says, "The Board is a deliberative public body and may open its regular public meeting with a public invocation complying with Section 6-1-160 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina."

The invocation, to be given by a board member, will be

nonsectarian and nondenominational, and "will not proselytize for or advance any one or disparage any other, faith or belief." Board members and members of the public are not required to participate.

The change needs just one reading to be approved.

in the state Senate.

In July, state Sen. Larry Grooms, R-Charleston, sent a letter to board members — signed by 50 legislators — citing a 2014 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, which reaffirmed the right to pray at public meetings. Additionally on June 3 Gov. Nikki Haley signed an amendment to the Public Prayer and Invocation Act that includes a school board as being as a "deliberative body" which has the right to open meetings with an invocation.

Berkeley's proposed policy

Title: **Salute to business**

Author:

Size: 5.27 column inches

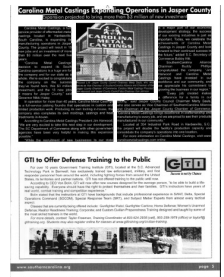
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**Salute to business**

The Berkeley Chamber of Commerce has planned its Salute to Business Luncheon featuring South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley. The Governor will discuss how the state plans to position itself for the continued growth and success of new and existing businesses in South Carolina.

The luncheon will take place at noon Sept. 8 at the North Charleston Convention Center - Ballroom A, 5001 Coliseum Dr. in North Charleston. The cost is \$50 for members and \$60 for non-members. Call to RSVP at 843-761-8238 or 843-577-9549. Sponsorships are still available.

Title: **Carolina Metal Castings Expanding Operations in Jasper County**
 Author:
 Size: 37.97 column inches
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Carolina Metal Castings Expanding Operations in Jasper County

Expansion projected to bring more than \$3 million of new investment

Carolina Metal Castings, a full-service provider of aftermarket metal castings located in Hardeeville, South Carolina, is expanding its manufacturing operations in Jasper County. The project will result in 13 new jobs and an investment of more than \$3 million over the next five years.

"Carolina Metal Castings' decision to expand its South Carolina operations is a huge win for the company and for our state as a whole. We're excited to congratulate the company on the success they've found here, this \$3 million investment, and the 13 new jobs it means for Jasper County," said Governor Nikki Haley.

In operation for more than 40 years, Carolina Metal Castings is a full-service jobbing foundry that specializes in custom and limited production work. Producing its own tooling in-house, the company also completes its own moldings, castings and heat treatments in-house.

According to Carolina Metal Castings President Jim Harwood, "We are very excited to take this next step in our development. The SC Department of Commerce along with other government agencies have been very helpful in making this expansion possible."

"While the recruitment of new businesses to our state

is a major part of our economic development strategy, the success of our existing industries is just as important. Today, we celebrate the achievements of Carolina Metal Castings in Jasper County and look forward to their continued success in the future," added S.C. Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt.

SouthernCarolina Alliance Chairman Buddy Phillips congratulated the company, "Jim Harwood and Carolina Metal Castings have invested in our workforce and our community, and we appreciate his commitment to growing the business in our region."

"Every job created makes a difference for a family in our county," said Jasper County Council Chairman Marty Sauls, who also serves as Vice Chairman of SouthernCarolina Alliance and Chairman of the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce.

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"Carolina Metal Castings brings excellence in craftsmanship and manufacturing to every job, and we are proud to see their products manufactured in our community."

Located at 354 Industrial Park Road in Hardeeville, S.C., the project will double the facility's production capacity and consolidate the company's operations into one location.

For more information on Carolina Metal Castings, visit www.carolinametalcastings.com online.



Pictured L-R: Jasper County Council Chairman Marty Sauls, who also serves as Vice Chairman of Southern Carolina Alliance and Chairman of the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce; Carolina Metal Castings President Jim Harwood; and Jasper County Council Vice Chairman Tom Johnson

Title: **J&L Wire Locating in Colleton County**

Author:

Size: 37.04 column inches

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J&L Wire Locating in Colleton County

Company investing \$2.5 million to establish first South Carolina operations

J&L Wire, headquartered in St. Paul, Minn., has announced the establishment of its first South Carolina operations. The company is opening a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in the former Press Printing building in Colleton County. Located at 387 Mable T. Willis Boulevard in Walterboro, S.C., the 31,000-square-foot facility is situated on 5.1 acres. The company is investing \$2.5 million in the project, which is expected to create 50 new jobs.

"We are excited about the market opportunities in the Southeast and believe the South Carolina site will position us to profitably expand our core business," said J&L Wire General Manager Gary Hyde.

"It's exciting to see a company like J&L Wire, which is dedicated to making products right here in the U.S., make the decision to establish operations in South Carolina. J&L's \$2.5 million investment and the 50 new jobs it means for Colleton County are real reasons to celebrate in Colleton and across our entire state," said Gov. Nikki Haley.

"South Carolina continues to lead the nation's manufacturing renaissance, and today's announcement by J&L Wire reinforces that notion. We congratulate the company on all of their success and look forward to supporting them as they establish operations in our state," added Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt.

"We are pleased to welcome J&L Wire to South Carolina. We are confident that their investment in Colleton County will prove beneficial not only to their customers, but also to the citizens of Colleton County. J&L Wire has a proven record of success and

we are delighted to have the opportunity to help carry that forward in the years to come," commented Colleton County Council Chairman Steven Murdaugh.

"We are proud J&L Wire has chosen Colleton County for their expansion. Our economic development professionals on the local, regional and state levels work diligently toward this kind of growth. We will continue to support J&L Wire as they become an established South Carolina manufacturer," remarked Bill Workman, Chairman, Colleton County Resource & Development Board and Co-chair of the Colleton County Economic

Alliance.

"We appreciate the 50 direct jobs that J&L Wire will bring to Colleton County, as well as the economic impact that these jobs and this investment will ultimately have on Colleton County and the surrounding region," said Danny Black, President and CEO of SouthernCarolina Alliance. "At SouthernCarolina Alliance, we believe that good jobs build communities and opportunities,

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and we look forward to working with the company to improve the quality of life for our residents through their success and job creation."

J&L Wire is a leading manufacturer of galvanized wire decking and shelving used in warehouse storage, material handling and logistics. The established product line includes Galva-Deck® wire decking and Boss Hog™ woven wire flooring for agricultural confinement panels.

For additional information on the company, visit www.jlwire.com.



Title: **Masonite International Expanding Bamberg County Operations**
 Author:
 Size: 44.02 column inches
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Masonite International Expanding Bamberg County Operations

Company expanding operations with additional workforce

Masonite International, one of the world's leading manufacturers of decorative interior doors and entry door systems, is expanding its existing Bamberg County operations. The expansion will result in the creation of 50 new jobs over the next year, with additional growth expected in the years to come.

Featuring a wide array of patented designs for frames, stain kits and building materials, Masonite International operates more than 70 locations around the world--with 37 sites in the United States alone. Headquartered in Tampa, Fla., the company employs more than 10,000 people worldwide.

"South Carolina continues to build on its reputation as a leader in manufacturing, and Masonite's decision to expand in Denmark is another big win for our state. It's special any time we see a company succeed and grow in one of our rural communities, and we couldn't be more excited to celebrate the 50 new jobs this expansion means for Bamberg County," said Gov. Nikki Haley.

"The success that we've seen in economic development in South Carolina is due to great companies like Masonite International, which continue to invest in our communities and people. We look forward to watching this company continue to grow and support the Bamberg community," commented Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt.

"Masonite is a fine company that has been an asset to our county," said Bamberg County Council Chairman Isaiah Odom. "Every good job they provide in our area creates a better future for a family here, where Masonite continues to expand. We congratulate the company and want to help Masonite flourish in Bamberg County."

"We appreciate Masonite's continued investment in our region, where they already employ nearly 200 people. We are proud of the fact that our workforce has been a part of Masonite's success at the Denmark facility, where Masonite continues to produce the world's finest products in the industry. We extend our gratitude and our pledge to continue to support Masonite's success in any way that we can," added SouthernCarolina Alliance President and CEO Danny Black.

The 50 new positions will allow Masonite's Denmark, S.C. facility to add another auto line shift. Additional growth and capacity increases are expected to take place through the first quarter of 2017. There are also plans for the creation of a weekend shift, which will require additional staffing in auxiliary support departments.

If you are interested in applying for any of the new positions, visit the company's careers page online for more information. Applications must be submitted in person at the facility, which is located at 1349 Locust Avenue in Denmark.

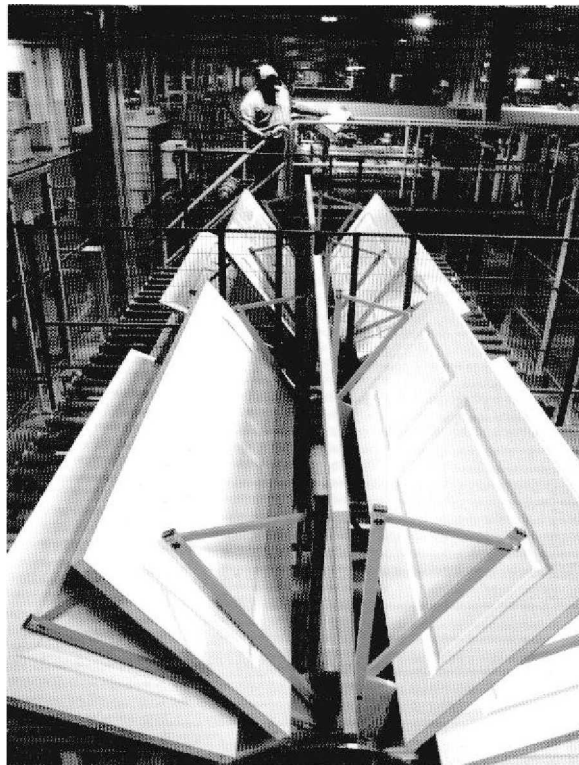
For more information on Masonite International, visit www.masonite.com.

Title: **Masonite International Expanding Bamberg County Operations**

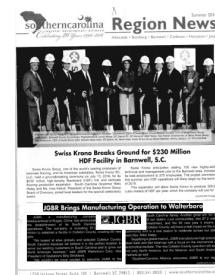
Author:

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Title: **JGBR Brings Manufacturing Operation to Walterboro**
 Author:
 Size: 38.75 column inches
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JGBR Brings Manufacturing Operation to Walterboro

JGBR, a manufacturing company headquartered in Rugao, China, has announced the establishment of its South Carolina operations. The company is investing \$7.2 million to establish a facility in Colleton County, creating 65 new jobs.

"We looked at sites globally and selected Colleton County, South Carolina because we believe it is the perfect location to serve our existing customers in South Carolina and to grow our North American business," said JGBR Walterboro Corp. Vice President of Operations Billy Strickland.

"We couldn't be more excited to welcome JGBR to the South Carolina family. Another great win for one of our state's rural communities, this \$7.2 million investment, and the 65 new jobs it means for Colleton County, will have a real impact on the local community and is a real reason to celebrate across our state," said Gov. Nikki Haley.

Supplying a global market, JGBR manufactures high-precision steel balls and ball bearings with a focus on the mechanical and automotive markets. The new Colleton County operation will serve not only North America, but the Mexican and South American markets as well.

"Southern Carolina Alliance welcomes JGBR to our region

(continued on page 2)

JGBR *(continued from page 1)*

and congratulates Colleton County. We are proud that this global manufacturing company has chosen Walterboro's workforce and business friendly community," remarked Southern Carolina Alliance President and CEO Danny Black. "Every good job created changes the future of a family here, and we appreciate JGBR's commitment to our people. We look forward to working with JGBR and Colleton County for many more years to come."

"We are proud that JGBR has chosen Colleton County for their North American location. This decision is a great indicator that Colleton County can compete globally and be successful. We look forward to a long and strong business relationship with JGBR," said Colleton County Council Chairman Steven Murdaugh.

According to Bill Workman, Chairman of the Colleton County Resource and Development Board and a Vice Chairman of SCA, "The jobs created by JGBR will have a positive economic impact on Colleton County. Our county, regional and state officials have done an excellent job in meeting JGBR's business needs with a solution that benefits JGBR, Colleton County and South Carolina."

Located at 1310 N. Jefferies Boulevard in Walterboro, S.C., the 240,000-square-foot facility, formerly known as the Asten Johnson Building, will be situated across nine acres. The company plans to begin operations in Colleton County later this year with a goal of full production by early 2017. Once fully operational, JGBR plans to produce 400 tons of steel balls every month at the Walterboro facility.

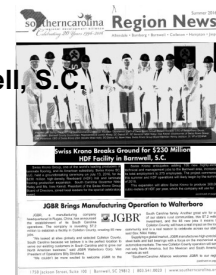
For more information on the company, visit www.igbr.com/cn.

Title: **JGBR Brings Manufacturing Operation to Walterboro**
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JGBR has purchased the former Asten Johnson facility in Walterboro.

Title: **Swiss Krono Breaks Ground for \$230 Million HDF Facility in Barnwell, S.C.**
 Author:
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 Bamberg, SC Circulation: 2207



Swiss Krono Breaks Ground for \$230 Million HDF Facility in Barnwell, S.C.

Swiss Krono Group, one of the world's leading producers of laminate flooring, and its American subsidiary, Swiss Krono SC, LLC, held a groundbreaking ceremony on July 13, 2016, for its \$230 million high-density fiberboard (HDF) mill and laminate flooring production expansion. South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley and Ms. Ines Kaendl, President of the Swiss Krono Group Board of Directors, joined local leaders for the special celebratory event.

Swiss Krono anticipates adding 105 new highly-skilled technical and management jobs to the Barnwell area, increasing its total employment to 275 employees. The project commences this summer and HDF operations will likely begin by the summer of 2018.

This expansion will allow Swiss Krono to produce 300,000 cubic-meters of HDF per year, which the company will use for

(continued on page 2)

Swiss Krono *(continued from page 1)*

laminate flooring manufacturing operations and sell to furniture, cabinet, fixture, door and other wood-based manufacturers. In total, the project will increase the company's annual laminate flooring capacity by an additional 8 million square-meters.

"Strong consumer demand for our quality laminate flooring drove our decision to expand," said CEO Zeb Portanova. "And our strong retail partners who choose to sell our innovative products are the real foundation on which this expansion is built."

According to Portanova, "The company gratefully acknowledges the collaborative efforts of South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, the South Carolina Department of Commerce, the South Carolina Forestry Commission, the Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance and various Barnwell County governmental agencies. Their patience, perseverance and continuous support have been and will continue to be instrumental in the future success of this project."

The SWISS KRONO GROUP has its origins in a company founded in Menznau, Switzerland in 1966. Today it is one of the world's leading producers of engineered wood products with more than 4,500 employees working in Switzerland, France, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Hungary and Russia as well as in the United States.

Further information is available at www.swisskronoUSA.com.

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Pictured L-R: Danny Black, CEO of Southern Carolina Alliance; Max Von Tippelskirch, CMO of Swiss Krono Group; Roland Kovacic, CTO of Swiss Krono Group; Keith Sloan, Barnwell County Councilman; Representative Lonnie Hosey, SC District 91; SC Governor Nikki Haley; Ines Kaindl, Chairwoman of Swiss Krono Group; Zeb Portanova, CEO of Swiss Krono USA; Senator Brad Hutto, SC District 40; Norm Voss, Swiss Krono Group Board Member; Kenny Jackson, Sr. VP of SCANA



Danny Black, CEO of SCA is pictured with Ines Kaindl, Chairwoman of Swiss Krono Group

Title: **SCA Advisor Leads Delegation**

Author:

Size: 15.96 column inches

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SCA Advisor Leads Delegation

Barnwell businessman Mahesh "Mike" Patel, who is the South Carolina Regional Director of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) and serves on the Advisory Board for Southern Carolina Alliance, led the AAHOA delegation during their recent State Capital Day, meeting with members of the state legislature and the governor. During the visit, they met with elected officials to discuss issues of concern to business owners including minimum wages, unions, joint employer issues and the state's travel tourism budget. The AAHOA is a 16,000-member association, representing 40% of the hotels located in the United States, a \$40 billion investment and a \$10 billion payroll.

Pictured here, from left: Brandon Vallrado, AAHOA Government Affairs; Chetan Patel, AAHOA Ambassador; Dharmesh Patel, AAHOA Member; Mahesh (Mike) Patel, AAHOA SC Regional Director; Gov. Nikki Haley; Atul Patel, AAHOA Ambassador; John Durst, SC Restaurant and Lodging Association President & CEO; and Susan Walters, SCRLA Director.



Title: **SC Economic Ambassador Meets With Governor**

Author:

Size: 14.26 column inches

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Around the Region

SC Economic Ambassador Meets With Governor

Vittorio Musso, CEO of Meter Bearings and Colleton County's 2016 Economic Ambassador, met with Governor Nikki Haley recently at the State House to thank her for his recognition as one of S.C.'s Economic Ambassadors.

A manufacturer of ball and cylindrical roller bearings, Musso located his U.S. operations in Walterboro, South Carolina, in 2014, resulting in a \$4.5 million investment and the creation of 50 jobs.

Mr. Musso was instrumental in another Italy-based company, BUSCOT LLC, locating in South Carolina. His decision to expand Meter Bearings to the U.S. greatly influenced BUSCOT LLC to announce their decision earlier this year to establish manufacturing operations in Colleton County as well, investing \$1.15 million and creating 10 additional jobs.



Title: **DOT: The test case for reform**
 Author: By PHIL NOBLE Guest column
 Size: 63.55 column inches
 Pageland, SC Circulation: 4126



DOT: The test case for reform

By PHIL NOBLE

Guest column

Simple math: High Cost + Bad Roads = Corruption

To say that there is corruption in the South Carolina Department of Transportation is like saying its dark at night.

The question is will the current "reform" effort shed any light in the darkness or is this simply the case of the day following the night – only to see the darkness return.

We'll see.

State highway departments, especially in the South, have been notoriously corrupt since the 1930's when states first began to spend significant money to pave dirt roads.

To adapt a saying from the Watergate era, corruption "follows the money" and highway department budgets (and corruption) skyrocketed to meet the demands for better roads by votes that were no longer content to be stuck in the mud – literally.

How bad is it in South Carolina today? This analysis from FitsNews.com run by controversial Republican blogger Will Folks:

"This agency is an absolute disaster incompetent in its operations, corrupt to the core in its leadership and always pushing non-essential projects as it complains about its funding

despite its base budget more than doubling over the last six years."

And, as if right on cue just to prove Folks' point, last week Attorney General Alan Wilson obtained five indictments for corruption against former DOT employees and their friends.

Now, Folks is not without his critics (us included on some other issues) and he is often guilty of overblown rhetoric, but for years he has relentlessly and fearlessly chronicled the abuse at DOT and the politicians who have benefited.

Make your own judgment – go to FitsNews.com and search "DOT corruption," but you had better pack a lunch as it's going to take you a while to get through it all.

Setting aside all of the specific abuses that Folks chronicles, let's focus on the three big issues: the money, the roads and the reform efforts.

First the money

The S.C. Department of Transportation spends a lot of money – \$1.6 billion last year. And, de-

spite recent

tough economic times for the state, relatively speaking the DOT has continued to make out like a bandit.

According to a recent story in The State newspaper entitled, "How S.C.'s Leaders Have Failed South Carolinians" (I strongly encourage you to Google the story and read it), over the last 10 years, "counting federal and state money the state Department of Transportation (spending) ... has increased to \$1.6 billion from \$1 billion, including a \$49.9 million increase in money from the state's general fund."

This amounts to a 63 percent increase for the DOT from the 2007-2008 budget until today. At the same time, there were huge reductions in other departments:

- ◆ minus 27 percent for the Department of Health and Environmental Control;
- ◆ minus 25 percent for higher education;
- ◆ minus 24 percent in funds for local governments;
- ◆ minus 10 percent for K-12 funding, etc.

Clearly the highway boys (and girls) have their friends in the legislature who protect them.

Second, the roads

OK, we spend lots of money on roads, but look what we get – great roads, right?

Wrong – anyone who has driven in our state knows how bad the roads are.

Our roads are literally killing us – S.C. was tied with West Virginia as the state with the deadliest roads – according to last year's authoritative study by the National Transportation Research Group.

It also found that "throughout South Carolina, 46 percent of major roads and highways are in poor condition, a significant increase from 2008 when 32 percent of the state's major roads were

rated in poor condition. Twenty percent of South Carolina's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete ... (this) costs each S.C. driver as much as \$1,250 per year ... or \$3 billion statewide."

The roads are so bad that a couple of years ago, Pete Selleck, chairman and president of Greenville-based Michelin North America, said South Carolina's roads are in such bad shape the company might have to consider other locations for expansion.

"The roads in this state are a disgrace," he said.

And all this was before

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last year's floods that left massive destruction of our state's roads and bridges.

So much for good roads and bridges.

Third, the reform

The question is are things going to change? The answer is maybe, possibly, a little, in time – but don't count on it.

The road bill passed by the legislature this year supposedly had some sig-

nificant reform provisions.

Here's what Gov. Haley said of the so-called reforms, "A lot of elected officials went home and said, 'We got you roads. Rah rah!' You know, 'Re-elect us. We did a great thing.' And the truth of the matter is, I think we stepped back a decade."

So much for reform.

But reform efforts continue. Just last week, Sen. Niki Setzler announced

that this year's budget included a mandate to "fund a thorough study of the agencies' structure, regional offices, outsourcing and money spent by local county transportation committees."

Sounds great – but the chances are that after they spend a few hundred thousand dollars on this study, the lawmakers who share in the corruption of DOT will ensure that it goes on

the shelf (or more likely in the trash can) with all the other studies.

We don't need more studies – we need more indictments.

More simple math:

*Corruption + Inaction =
 More Corruption + More
 Bad Roads + More Deaths*

*Phil Noble is president
 of the S.C. New Democrats.
 E-mail him at phil@phil-
 noble.com*



NOBLE