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Subject: Studies on the Superintendent of Education

Sen. Campsen,

I've been trying to validate then-Rep. Young's 2011 statement:

"Every restructuring report since 1920, all six of them, has recommended that the Superintendent of Education be appointed and not elected by the people. Five of those restructuring reports were commissioned and asked for by Democratic governors."

An important nuance is that he says that they would be "appointed and not elected by the people." Several reports (in fact more than six, as you'll see below) agreed on that point, but varied in expressing a preference as to what the appointing authority might be. Looking back towards 1920 – many of them, as a reflection of the form of government at the time, called for either the State Board of Education to select the Superintendent, or else for the Governor to appoint a board to in turn select the Superintendent. The more contemporary reports have tended to endorse a Senate confirmation process for the Governor's appointee.

Here's the link where I found the reports. The link to the 2003 Task Force Report is broken, but I located it elsewhere online:

<http://www.ipspr.sc.edu/scip/documents2.asp>

Many of the reports identified on that website made no recommendations regarding the Superintendent of Education and are therefore omitted below. Of the reports that made a recommendation:

- The 1920 "Griffenhagen" report stated that the Superintendent of Education (elected to 2-year terms in those days) should no longer be elected, but should be replaced with a Director of Education who would either be (1) appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate or (2) selected by the State Board of Education (pg. 72).
- The 1935 "Coleman" report stated "it is very doubtful whether popular election is the method best calculated" to obtain the leadership skills needed in order to run the Department of Education (pg. 144).
 - "If South Carolina is to be assured always of a real leader, the method of selecting him must be changed from popular election to appointment by some responsible authority. He should be freed from politics... Popular elections have no place in filling such an office."
- The 1945 restructuring report called for the Governor to appoint a Board to select the Superintendent (pg. 343).
- The 1956 Fiscal Survey Commission report stated that South Carolina "should immediately take steps to remove the constitutional requirement, making the head of the Department of Education a Constitutional officer..." (pg. 10).
- The 1989 final report from the Commission on the Future of South Carolina stated that "the office of the State Superintendent of Education [should be] made an appointive position." (pg. 20)
- The 1991 South Carolina Commission on Government Restructuring declared: "The Office of the State Superintendent of Education should be changed from an elected position to an appointed position." The Superintendent would serve as Secretary of a new Department of Public Instruction, and would be nominated by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate (pg. 62).
- The 2003 report from the Governor's Commission on Management, Accountability and Performance stated: "A constitutional amendment should be proposed that would change the position of the State Superintendent of Education from an elected office to an appointed office. The cabinet secretary should be

appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate." (pg. 41)

- Also in 2003, the Task Force on Government Restructuring and Campaign Finance Reform called for the Superintendent of Education to be appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate (pg. 6).

I tried to capture the relevant quotes in places where there are quotable passages that concisely convey the original authors' key points. Thanks.

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