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## **The Honorable Glenn McConnell Champion of Issues and Causes**

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Senator and Community  
Charleston, SC**

**Robert Ford,**

**Developer**

**December, 2013**

Charleston, SC... Let me start this press release with an opening statement that personifies Glenn McConnell the man and let his actions speak for him. The Honorable Glenn McConnell, our Lt. Governor is a man of honor and integrity. Lt. Governor McConnell is a scholar of the essence of the law while serving in the SC Senate relished the order of the Senate Rules and their application.

There are those of us, who don't mind discussing our achievements whether successful or not. In the case of Glenn McConnell it's a different subject altogether. I first officially met Senator Glenn McConnell at a debate of the Confederate Flag at a gathering of Berkeley County Republican men. Ironically, this was the same day I was sworn into office as a member of the SC Senate. After that debate and before several hundred Republican men, I received a thorough education about the Confederacy and what it meant to my White brethren in the South.

Since that day in 1993, I am proud to say that I am a better man. I found a friend and colleague as a result of that meeting and

can definitely speak to the commitment of Glenn McConnell to the people of South Carolina. What people fail to understand is when you hold the position of Senator, followed by Senate President Pro Tempore and Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee you are a powerful force. I can say without hesitation in each of these positions, I could always rely and expect nothing less than the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God from Glenn McConnell.

On issues of keen and paramount importance to African-Americans, Senator, President Pro Tem and Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman McConnell, always had our backs. When I sought his support he always gave me his honest opinion and offered his support. On the matters of:

### **Black Judges in South Carolina**

The SC Legislative Black Caucus was dissatisfied with the disparity of Black candidates seeking election to serve as judges. The Caucus staged a protest and walked out of a judicial election due to the absence of Black judicial candidates. I was appointed by Senator McConnell to serve on the Judicial Screening Committee. I served proudly for two and one-half years. We were able to screen out all of the Black candidates seeking election. As a result of these efforts, ten additional Black judges were elected increasing the number for 7 to 17.

### **African American Monument**

With the assistance of Senator McConnell the African American Monument became a reality. Senators Jackson, Glover and I went to Senator McConnell and asked for his assistance in getting this legislation passed in both the Senate and the House. This proposal took two years for the legislation to pass the lower chamber. During that process, Senator McConnell assisted with the fundraising venture to raise the funds for the monument to be placed on the grounds of the State House. Through our combined efforts this feat was accomplished and would not have happened without Senator Glenn McConnell's insight and guidance.

### **South Carolina Lottery & Private Religious Institution Funding**

As sponsor of the State Lottery Bill, accompanied by cosponsors Senators Glenn McConnell and Ernie Passailaigue, we finally acquired a State Lottery. With the assistance of Senator McConnell, I was able to raise

**funds to campaign across the State of South Carolina to promote the passage of the lottery. Without the Lowcountry's support the lottery proposal would not have passed and needless to say, we were successful. After the successful referendum, Senators Jackson, Glover and I went to Senator McConnell and asked him to support our request to give the five Black religious private institutions \$650,000 each annually from State Lottery funds. Senator McConnell agreed and went one step further and requested that his Senate Judiciary staff find a way to make this happen with legislative approval. As a result Allen, Benedict, Claflin, Morris and Voorhees College have received over 60 million dollars of SC State Education Lottery funds. Glenn McConnell went above and beyond his call of duty to accomplish this noble deed.**

### **Senate Committee Appointments**

**Senator Glenn McConnell has always been fair and equitable in the appointing of Black senators to key Senate committees, Joint, Ad-Hoc and other special committees. This was not necessarily the practice with other President Pro-Tem's who were Democrats.**

### **Community Projects**

**For the past 12 years, Wendell Gilliard and I have sponsored seven programs in the Lowcountry that feed and clothed low income citizens, veterans and the homeless. One program donates air conditioners and fans to the citizens who are in need. Over the years, Glenn McConnell and his brother have supported these efforts with significant contributions. I cannot make that same statement about some of my other colleagues Black or White.**

### **Government Relations**

**On many occasions' individuals and groups in various parts of South Carolina who are Black and had problems with state government and wanted an audience with Senator McConnell either in Charleston or Columbia, he has never hesitated to listen to their concerns. Based on my information and knowledge Senator McConnell has always addressed their inquiries appropriately. I thought it was important to recognize and point out some points about Senator McConnell based on my personal knowledge and his actions in reference to the Black community. I hope what I have shared about Glenn McConnell would refute the misinformation about one of the kindest and generous people in South Carolina today.**

**Martin Luther King Day, Confederate Memorial Day and the**

## **Confederate Flag**

I introduced my first bill to make Dr. Martin Luther King's Birthday a state holiday in 1993. I re-introduced it again in 2006, and added a legal holiday called Confederate Memorial Day which took four (4) optional Confederate Holidays and made one legal Confederate Holiday. Of course the bill passed and was made law. Senator Glenn McConnell and the other 44 senators were not aware of this legislation until it was introduced and read across the Senate Desk. At no point in this juncture did I receive any opposition or non-concurrence about his non-support of the Martin Luther King holiday bill. I can go on and on about issues of diversity that Lt. Governor Glenn McConnell has championed over the past 21 years that I have known him.

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