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South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

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November 24, 2008

Dr. Garrison Walters, Executive Director

The Honorable Mark Sanford
Governor of South Carolina
P. O. Box 12267
Columbia, SC 29211

Dear Governor Sanford:

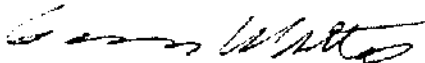
At its meeting on November 6, 2008, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education discussed concerns that have been expressed by public colleges and universities in regard to the present budget situation and its potential impact on enrolled students. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the Commission's support for providing colleges and universities with flexibility as they assist students in pursuing postsecondary education in these difficult economic times.

Dr. David DeCenzo, President of Coastal Carolina University, addressed the Commissioners at the November meeting and explained that his university and South Carolina's other public colleges and universities may lose as much of 10% of their enrollment in Spring 2009 due to declines in family income as well as students' inability to access loans. He explained that he had met with you recently to request that our colleges and universities be permitted to exceed limitations on tuition waivers during the upcoming semester in order to assist students. The Commission voiced its support for Dr. DeCenzo's request by passing a resolution encouraging such action.

The Commission believes that an educated citizenry is part of the solution to the present fiscal crisis and supports actions to provide the state's public colleges and universities with maximum reasonable flexibility during the Spring 2009 semester in determining how they might best assist students.

We appreciate your understanding of the critical importance of higher education and an educated citizenry to the state's economy and its future. Your careful consideration of the request is appreciated. Should you have any questions or concerns, I will be most pleased to respond to them.

Sincerely,



Garrison Walters
Executive Director

cc: Mr. Ken Wingate, Chair, and Members of SC Commission on Higher Education
Mr. Scott English, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
Ms. Ashlei Stevens, Education Advisor, Office of the Governor