

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 2006-01

WHEREAS, it is vital that South Carolina has a higher education system that prepares students for the challenges of a competitive global marketplace;

WHEREAS, South Carolina has 33 colleges and universities operating 79 campuses around the state with little or no centralized oversight and coordination;

WHEREAS, over the past ten years, the average tuition at our higher education institutions has increased by 132 percent;

WHEREAS, South Carolina spends 18.8 percent of its total budget on higher education;

WHEREAS, South Carolina has the highest average tuition for public four year universities in the Southeast;

WHEREAS, in 2004 the average South Carolina family had to dedicate 32 percent of its annual income to send a student to one of our 4-year colleges;

WHEREAS, as a result of South Carolina's high tuition, the National Center for Public Policy gave South Carolina an "F" for affordability in a 2004 report;

WHEREAS, Section 59-103-20 of the South Carolina Code of Laws provides that the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education shall examine the state's institutions of higher learning in the areas of state-level coordination and cooperation with the objective of reducing duplication, and in enrollment trends, student costs, business management practices, operating results and needs, and capital fund requirements;

WHEREAS, Section 59-103-45 of the South Carolina Code of Laws provides that the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education shall review admissions standards, coordinate transferability between two- and four-year colleges, develop performance funding standards, and review and approve each institutional mission statement to ensure it is within the overall mission of that particular type of institution and is within the overall mission of the state;

WHEREAS, Section 59-103-60 of the South Carolina Code of Laws further provides that the Commission shall make recommendations to the Governor regarding the policies, programs, curricula, facilities, administration and financing of all state-supported institutions of higher learning;

WHEREAS, in discharging the referenced duties, the Commission has the statutory obligation to coordinate and collaborate with the Council of Presidents of State Institutions, the council of board chairs of the various public institutions of higher learning, and the business community; and

WHEREAS, Section 1-3-10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws provides that the departments, boards, commissions, and agencies of the state shall immediately furnish to the Governor in such form as he may require any information desired by the Governor in relation to their respective affairs or activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I hereby establish the South Carolina Higher Education Task Force (Task Force).

1. The Task Force shall examine ways to improve our system of higher education for South Carolina families to include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. identifying concrete steps that can be undertaken to lower tuition at the state's public institutions of higher learning;
 - b. reducing program duplication;
 - c. improving business management practices; and
 - d. improving and increasing statewide coordination and collaboration of higher education.
2. The Task Force shall identify reforms and work with the Commission on Higher Education and its Commissioners to make policy recommendations in a final written report to the Governor by no later than June 30, 2006.
3. The Task Force shall be comprised of members appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall serve as chair, and shall include students, parents, professors, business representatives, and higher education officials.

4. The Task Force will be authorized in the furtherance of its mission to hold public hearings and take such other actions as it deems necessary and advisable.
5. I hereby direct the Commission on Higher Education and its Commissioners to collaborate with the Task Force in examining and identifying ways to improve the state's system of higher education and in preparing a final written report to the Governor by no later than June 30, 2006.

This Order shall take effect immediately.

**GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE
GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF
SOUTH CAROLINA, THIS _____ DAY
OF FEBRUARY 2006.**

MARK SANFORD
Governor

ATTEST:

MARK HAMMOND
SECRETARY OF STATE