



Att I

State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 12267
COLUMBIA 29211

November 2, 2005

Dr. Layton McCurdy
Chairman
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
1333 Main Street, Suite 200
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Chairman McCurdy,

I am writing regarding the recent proposal of establishing a satellite campus of the University of South Carolina - Upstate on the campus of Greenville Technical College. We are concerned that this expansion, while well-intended, only serves to further expand the higher education system in the state, adding more costs to parents and students.

Over the past five years, the average tuition in South Carolina has increased by 70 percent. In 2005, the average increase at our state's four-year teaching institutions was 12.3 percent, compared to the national average of 10.5 percent. We believe if these double-digit tuition hikes continue, a college education will be out of reach for too many of South Carolina's families.

With regard to the USC - Upstate proposal, we have two concerns. First, we may be unnecessarily expanding our higher education system in the Upstate. Second, the proposal was announced without having received approval from either the University of South Carolina Board of Trustees or more importantly, the Commission on Higher Education (CHE).

Last year, the Commission rejected a proposal to elevate the status of the University of South Carolina - Sumter from a two-year college to a four-year college, when the proposal came before the General Assembly, instead of the CHE.

Ultimately, we believe the higher education system should be governed by one board with a statewide view, either through enhancing CHE's power or establishing a Board of Regents. Before we open yet another campus, potentially duplicating services provided by other higher education institutions in the same area, we should first determine the need for such a campus.

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We would encourage the Commission on Higher Education to establish a task force with business leaders in the Upstate to determine our higher education needs and if the proposed Greenville facility would meet those needs. We would also encourage CHE over time to broaden the scope to look at all of the state universities and determine where we can reduce overlap and duplication, to avoid further increases in tuition to parents and students and unnecessary expenditures by the taxpayers.

We look forward to working with you on this and other important higher education issues in the future.

Sincerely,



Mark Sanford

MS/gh