



**SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

RUTLEDGE BUILDING

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**RESOLUTION ON OPTOMETRIC EDUCATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA**

Prepared by the  
Commission's Ad Hoc Committee on Optometry and  
Unanimously Adopted by the  
Commission on Higher Education on June 2, 1977

Whereas, the Task Force on Optometric Education chaired by Mr. Joe B. Davenport was directed by the Commission on Higher Education on December 2, 1976, to provide updated and unbiased information concerning the current need and the projected need over the next five to ten years for optometry and associated vision care services in the State, and

Whereas, the Task Force duly appointed a subcommittee chaired by The Honorable S. Norwood Gasque that produced in March, 1977, the report, "Assessment of Need for Vision Care Services and Optometric Education in South Carolina," and

Whereas, the "Assessment of Need" concludes that there is substantial need for additional optometric manpower to improve accessibility to optometrists and to provide quality vision care to the underserved and unserved citizens of the State, underscores the necessity of insuring continuing opportunities for South Carolina residents to study the profession of optometry in the face of diminishing opportunities in out-of-state schools, and also identifies a number of significant advantages that would accrue if South Carolina were to establish a regional school of optometry within this State; therefore,

Be it resolved that the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education hereby accepts and endorses the findings of the "Assessment of Need" and by this action restates its desire to have South Carolina participate in a tri-state regional school of optometry with Georgia and North Carolina.

Be it further resolved that the Commission on Higher Education will extend the planning for this interstate project by making application for, and accepting if awarded, a planning grant from federal and/or other non-state sources that could result in but does not mandate the implementation of the tri-state regional school of optometry.

Be it further resolved that the Commission on Higher Education seek endorsement of the need through appropriate action by the General Assembly during the 1978 legislative session.

If detailed planning does support the feasibility and desirability of establishing a regional school in South Carolina, be it further resolved that the Commission on Higher Education recommend to the General Assembly in 1978 that South Carolina be advanced as the host state for the tri-state regional school of optometry.

## I. Planning Grant

An important part of the financial plan is the procurement of funds for the specific and detailed planning that would be necessary prior to the establishment of a school of optometry. The initial step would be the preparation of a planning grant application to the Federal Government (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare) that could provide the funds needed for planning and enable South Carolina to focus on the necessary preparations to apply for funds for the construction of a regional school of optometry, and for start-up funds for a new school from federal sources, the optometric profession, the business community, the private sector, and foundations at the local, regional and national levels. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education would be the applicant agency for the planning grant, rather than a specific educational institution, and the health affairs staff would implement the development of the planning. This is feasible in terms of the experience of the staff in grantsmanship and in planning, both in research and in construction of science facilities, and in the nature of the planning grant that would provide funds for released time for the health affairs staff. In this way, the staff could hire some additional temporary personnel to assist, under supervision, in maintaining commitments to other projects and regular duties.

The purpose of the planning funds is shown below:

- (1) to obtain the consulting services of an experienced administrator or dean from a leading school of optometry for sustained periods of time during 1977-78. One possible format might be the negotiation of a leave of absence for the visiting consultant.

- (2) to obtain the full-time services of a research assistant and secretary for one year to assist the visiting consultant.
- (3) to procure consulting services of other national leaders in optometric education.
- (4) for travel and expenses for consultants and staff to visit schools of optometry, agencies in Washington, D.C., foundations, SREB, colleagues in North Carolina and Georgia.
- (5) for temporary employment of two research assistants to work with the health affairs staff of the Commission in order to provide assistance during the planning period.
- (6) for procurement of the services of a firm of consulting engineers, architects, and professional planners specializing in health care facilities. The expertise of such a firm would synthesize the academic program and curriculum into a definitive program of space needs and performance specifications. The analysis would include economic impact, space utilization, assessment of space needs, thorough definition of the academic curriculum in terms of space and facilities. Thorough documentation would be prepared for needs, space, and cost, defined in terms of schematic design that could be used for a construction grant application to DHEW.

The budget for the planning grant is estimated as about \$200,000.

We have been informed by an administrative assistant to Senator Hollings that the Senator has introduced language in his report to the Labor, Health, and Welfare Subcommittee of the Senate on May 26, 1977, to the effect that a shortage of optometrists has been identified in the tri-state region of Georgia, North

Carolina, and South Carolina and that DHEW is encouraged to fund planning, as well as construction. The members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Optometry were advised by the visiting optometric leaders to submit a planning grant to DHEW in order to compete for the federal funds that will presumably be appropriated under PL 94-484, Section 788A.

As soon as the Commission on Higher Education accepts the "Assessment of Need", the Commission could become a strong contender as an applicant for such federal funds in view of anticipated peer review support from the optometric profession and the support of Senator Hollings. Incidentally, it should be understood that the award and acceptance of federal dollars for purposes of planning does not necessarily commit either party to additional action. The State would not be required to implement the plan and the federal government would not be required to provide construction funds.