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### **Economic Development, Transportation, and Natural Resources Subcommittee**

Monday, February 28, 2022

10:00 a.m.

Blatt Room 110

#### **Archived Video Available**

- II. Pursuant to House Legislative Oversight Committee Rule 6.8, South Carolina ETV was allowed access for streaming the meeting. You may access an archived video of this meeting by visiting the South Carolina General Assembly's website (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov>) and clicking on *Committee Postings and Reports*, then under *House Standing Committees* click on *Legislative Oversight*. Then, click on *Video Archives* for a listing of archived videos for the Committee.

#### **Attendance**

- II. The joint Economic Development, Transportation, and Natural Resources and Education and Cultural Subcommittee meeting was called to order by Chair Bill Hixon and Chair Jeff Johnson on Thursday, February 28, 2022, in Room 110 of the Blatt Building. Chair Johnson participated virtually. Members of the Economic Development, Transportation, and Natural Resources Subcommittee (Rep. Adam M. Morgan; Rep. Russell L. Ott; and Rep. Marvin R. Pendarvis) were present for all or a portion of the meeting. Members of the Education and Cultural Subcommittee (Rep. Kambrell H. Garvin and Rep. Michael F. Rivers) were present for all or a portion of the meeting.

## Minutes

- I. House Rule 4.5 requires standing committees to prepare and make available to the public the minutes of committee meetings, but the minutes do not have to be verbatim accounts of meetings. It is the practice of the Legislative Oversight Committee to provide minutes for its subcommittee meetings.

## Constituent Testimony

- I. Mr. Clarence Jenkins was placed under oath by Chair Hixon.
- II. Mr. Jenkins testified about his experience with state agencies and the House Legislative Oversight Committee.

## Discussion of the State's Education and Workforce Development Pipeline

- I. Chair Hixon places individuals making presentations (see below) under oath.
- II. Chair Hixon reminds all previously sworn in that they remain under oath.
- III. Secretary of Commerce, Harry Lightsey, provided brief comments about the State's Workforce Development Council, which he chairs.
- IV. Presentations were made by various agencies that are part of the State's Workforce Development Pipeline.
  - a. First Steps
    - i. Georgia Mjartan, Executive Director of the South Carolina First Steps, testified about the agency's contributions to workforce development (e.g., childcare services for caregivers and teachers; parenting programs; Early Childhood Advisory Council; partnership with Technical College System; 4k programs in private and charter schools; and economic impact of child care in the state).
    - ii. Dr. Chelsea Richard, Director of Research and Strategy of the South Carolina First Steps, testified about the agency's efforts in providing actionable data for decision making.
  - b. Department of Education
    - i. Katie Nilges, Director of Governmental Affairs, testified about where the Department of Education fits in this pipeline and the agency's outcomes for which it has responsibilities (e.g.,

profile of South Carolina graduate; privacy of data; education and workforce programs)

- ii. Dr. David Mathis, Deputy Superintendent of College and Career Readiness Division, testified offices within this division.
- c. SC Technical College System
- i. Dr. Tim Hardee, Technical College System President, provided comments about being in the workforce development business, which affects economic development that in turn affects quality of life. He testified about some of the agency's education and workforce programs and partnerships with other state agencies. He spoke to the outcomes the agency provides, which is job placement for students.
- d. Commission on Higher Education (CHE)
- i. Dr. Rusty Monhollon, CHE Executive Director, provides comments about the agency's involvement with workforce development and notes the agency has a coordinating role among higher education institutions. Try to forge an informal system that works together and is responsive to the needs of the state.
- e. Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW)
- i. Dan Ellzey, Executive Director of DEW, provided comments about the agency's involvement with workforce development (e.g., assist individuals who are eligible to find jobs; assist employers with finding employees).
- f. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
- i. VR Commissioner, Felicia W. Johnson, testified on how the agency provides services to citizens (students and adults) with disabilities other than blindness.
  - ii. Jacob Chorey, Director of Planning and Program Evaluation for VR, provided comments about collaboration with other agencies and VR's outcomes.
  - iii. Audrey Brown, Director of Communications and Governmental Affairs, testified on VR's employer services.
- g. Commission for Blind

- i. Commissioner Darline Graham testified about services to blind or have vision loss including the vending/food services operations; summer teen program 2021; and student internship program.
      - h. Department of Social Services (DSS)
        - i. Tammy James, Director of Employment Services for DSS, testified about Temporary Assistance for Needy Families services; Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program Employment and Training Program; workforce development efforts; involvement in the workforce ecosystem; and collaboration with other agencies.
      - i. Department of Veterans Affairs
        - i. Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs William F. Grimsley testified about: workforce development efforts for veterans, service members, and their families; outcomes; and collaboration.
      - j. Department of Commerce
        - i. Elisabeth Kovacs, Deputy Director for Workforce Development, testified about the agency's industry recruitment; workforce education and resources; community engagement; education and workforce pipeline.
- V. Presentations were made about established collaborative groups.
  - a. Early Childhood Advisory Council
    - i. The Executive Director of the South Carolina First Steps, Georgia Mjartan, testified about this council, which was created in 2010. The First Steps board is the coordinating entity for this council.
  - b. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
    - i. Michelle Paczynksi, Director of Workforce Development for the Department of Employment and Workforce, testified about this initiative and the partners involved with it.
  - c. Education and Economic Development Coordinating Council
    - i. Katie Nilges, Director of Governmental Affairs for the Department of Education, testified about this council and legislation to combine it with the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development. There are four subcommittees. She

testified about the recommendations from the last report from the council.

d. Coordinating Council for Workforce Development

- i. Elisabeth Kovacs, Deputy Director for Workforce Development, testified about this group established in 2016. The council is chaired by the Secretary of Commerce, which has advisory groups to assist in its operations.

VI. Members ask questions, which agency representatives answer.

a. Topics include:

- i. Availability of childcare services and potential solutions to improve access (First Steps);
- ii. Participation in a statewide unified workforce plan (all agencies);
- iii. High school graduate performance tracking (Department of Education);
- iv. Personal identifier data privacy and protection (Department of Education);
- v. Kindergarten readiness assessment (First Steps);
- vi. Open jobs in South Carolina (Department of Employment and Workforce);
- vii. Side gig economy in South Carolina (Department of Employment and Workforce and Department of Education);
- viii. How state's higher education institutions evaluate a student's return on the investment in the education (SC Technical College System; Commission on Higher Education; and Department of Employment and Workforce);
- ix. Average salary by graduate from degree from each college (Commission on Higher Education);
- x. Funding for county veterans' affairs offices and consistency of services provided in across counties (Department of Veterans Affairs);
- xi. What can legislators do to assist the agencies (all agencies);
- xii. Assistance for small businesses (Department of Employment and Workforce and Vocational Rehabilitation);
- xiii. Selection for Vocational Rehabilitation locations (Vocational Rehabilitation);
- xiv. Communication about services to the public (all agencies);
- xv. Do higher education institutions focus on a statewide workforce strategy or independently (Commission on Higher Education);
- xvi. Workforce development efforts of the Department of Commerce (Department of Commerce);

- xvii. Partners in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Department of Employment and Workforce and Commission for the Blind);
- xviii. Components of the workforce system (Department of Employment and Workforce);
- xix. Ascend 60 by 30 (Commission on Higher Education);
- xx. Interagency collaboration and decreased duplication (all agencies);
- xxi. Additional degree program approval factors (Commission on Higher Education);
- xxii. Agency referrals (Vocational Rehabilitation);
- xxiii. Preparing students for jobs, and bilingual needs, of tomorrow (Department of Education and SC Technical College System);
- xxiv. Advantages to hiring a people with disabilities (Vocational Rehabilitation);
- xxv. Substance abuse issues and federal tax credits (Vocational Rehabilitation and Department of Employment and Workforce);
- xxvi. Significant barriers when trying to connect customers with jobs (Department of Social Services);
- xxvii. Space for kindergarten four in public schools (Department of Education);
- xxviii. Technical school graduates' employment (SC Technical College System); and
- xxix. Employment of customers (Department of Social Services)

### **Adjournment**

- I. There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned.