

**JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
TO SCREEN CANDIDATES
FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

SCREENINGS

Date: Monday, February 27, 2017
Time: 12:30 p.m.
Location: 209 Gressette Building
1101 Pendleton Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Committee Members Present:

Chairman Senator Harvey S. Peeler, Jr.
Representative Sylleste H. Davis
Representative Richard C. King
Representative Phyllis J. Henderson
Representative William R. "Bill" Whitmire
Senator Thomas C. Alexander
Senator John L. Scott, Jr.
Senator Daniel B. Verdin III

Also Present:

Martha Casto, Staff
Julie Price, Staff

12:35 p.m.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I call the meeting to order. This is a meeting of the Joint Legislative Committee to Screen Candidates for College and University Boards of Trustees.

I'd like to welcome everyone. Welcome to the members. Senator Alexander and Senator Scott are on the way. If there's no objection, we'll go ahead and get started.

I'd like to introduce Senator Verdin, Senator from Laurens, into the Committee; also Representative Whitmire, Representative Henderson, Representative King, and Representative Davis. Welcome.

With no objection, we'll go ahead and get started. First in front of you we have Lander University, Peggy Makins from Lexington.

Ms. Makins, would you like to come forward?

You'll take a seat, pull the microphone up to your face, and then make sure that green light is burning.

MS. CASTO: Members of the Committee, there is a condensed version of what's in their notebooks in front of you for each candidate.

For those of you on the Committee, you may see as we get further on that the SLED checks -- we did more like what -- this year we did a more in-depth SLED check, similar to what they do for judges and for the DOT commissioners, so you will see a little more information on some of the SLED reports. But otherwise, the information is in the tabs, and there is a condensed version in front of you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: And we'll take our time and go slowly. If you need some additional time to look at your notes and look at the information, we'll certainly do that.

MS. CASTO: Ms. Makins is from Lexington. Hers is an at-large seat, 10 on the Lander Board. Her term expires June 30, 2018. This is an unexpired term. You will remember we received the resignation of Mamie Nicholson back in the summer.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Makins, first I need to swear you in. Will you please raise your right hand.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. MAKINS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Would you like to make a brief statement to the Committee on why you'd like to serve on the Lander Board?

MS. MAKINS: Yes.

First of all, I would like to say hello to everyone. Thank you for having me today. It is an honor.

I would like to serve on the Lander Board for a number of reasons. I graduated from the University in 1981 and have been very active with the University since. I met my husband there the very first day of school, so that was a big plus. He said I was fussing when he met me and I haven't stopped yet.

(Laughter)

MS. MAKINS: I don't agree with that, though.

Lander has been really, really good for my family. Had it not been for the education that I received there, I know that my life would be very different today. I served on the alumni board there and worked hard to try to just move the school forward as best I could do.

I have a big mouth. When something good happens to me, I shout it out all over the world. I tell everybody about it. So Lander is good, and it's given me an opportunity to continue to grow and learn and just be a part of the decision-making for the school.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Makins, are you a retired teacher or principal?

MS. MAKINS: Yes, a retired teacher and administrator, special education.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Where? Which school?

MS. MAKINS: Richland School District 1.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Does the Committee have any questions?

Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Welcome, Ms. Makins. Glad to see an educator is wanting to serve on this board.

You said the -- I'm just reading what you said. Your ideal ratio, you're saying, is 90-percent in-state, 10-percent out-of-state.

What is the ratio now at Lander, if you know?

MS. MAKINS: I think the ratio is about 80/20, maybe a little bit more, but we're trying to get that 90.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: How would you go about getting it up to 90?

MS. MAKINS: Well, what we're doing now, we hired a vice president to go out and handle nothing but recruitment, so that strategy is working because we're going to have the largest enrollment in the history of Lander in the fall.

So we're getting the word out. We're on the road. We're just sounding the alarm. We're working with schools, trying to do everything we can to get the enrollment up.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What's the student enrollment now?

MS. MAKINS: Student enrollment is about 2700, but in the fall I think we're going to be up to about 3000.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I do notice one thing here that is nice to see. Your driving record -- you have nothing in it. We've gone through this, as Chairman Peeler knows, and we've had some interesting folks with their driving records. So that's good to know.

MS. MAKINS: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Anyway, thank you for your service, and welcome aboard.

MS. MAKINS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Makins, you might have to assist President Cosentino to help him keep his job. It was the most remarkable budget presentation I can recall from any university or college president last year.

When Representative Whitmire was talking about this need to -- especially for our regional colleges

to -- and you have very good representation from all 46 counties, as I recall.

But he said that he would forgo his salary if he didn't hit a certain benchmark, and I don't remember what that ratio was. And it took everybody on our budget -- it took our breath away. But it was refreshing just to see the commitment, the renewed commitment for increasing this in-state enrollment, which is very high relative to some of the flagship institutions.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: He was literally putting his money where his mouth is.

Any other members of the Committee?

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate your willingness to serve. I'm thinking back. I've been on this Committee for several years. I know Lander has -- I'll use the word struggle, but I don't really mean struggling. But one of the challenges has been a lowering, a dwindling enrollment.

And then we've had some conversations in the past about the need for the University to kind of redefine where it fits into the statewide higher education opportunities.

It's great to see your enrollment up. What would you attribute that to? Obviously, you said you have a new vice president, but are you promoting certain programs over others? Have you found certain niches of things that Lander can provide that maybe others schools aren't, or what do you attribute that to?

MS. MAKINS: I attribute it to our new president. All of our presidents have been wonderful. Dr. Cosentino, he has this energy that just can't be stopped. He reaches out to the young people. He gets to know them. He gets the word out. So I think him just being a voice to get as many people there as he possibly can is a plus, and also the hiring of the vice president that will go out and do nothing but work on this.

I also think we're just using the resources that we have in Greenwood. A lot of times we're just kind of like a hidden treasure there. We just didn't blow our horn as much as we could have. So I think we're a little more aware of the resources we have there, and we plan to use them in every way, getting through the schools, starting with elementary schools on up to high schools, just getting our word out. So I think all of that is --

And then we're adding new academic coursework to our academic program that's going to be, I think, a catch for a lot of people because

we're trying to look at the future, trying to create courses that address jobs that are not even here today.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Very good. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Verdin said I was on the House side and heard some of the budget hearings and was very impressed when I heard your president speak.

What does it mean for you to have a commitment to diversity at the school, and how have you demonstrated that commitment as a board member, and how would you see yourself demonstrating it as a board member, continuing as a board member?

MS. MAKINS: First of all, that is one of the things that the whole board focuses on. I make it a point to tell students in my schools, where I work, tell them about Lander. I tell everybody about it, but as far as diversity, I try to get people in my family involved. Some have been successful and gone through Lander and graduated. I even tried to get my kids to go, and they said we knew too many people there, so they chose not to go, but they did go to in-state schools.

So it's just me being another piece to just try to recruit as many students as I can. Like I say, I tell everybody about good things that happen to me.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: So you're filling the unexpired term of Ms. Nicholson.

MS. MAKINS: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you see her as a mentor?

MS. MAKINS: Yes, I do. I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'm sure she was incredible.

MS. MAKINS: A great lady.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Move for a favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is a favorable report.

Is there a second?

SENATOR VERDIN: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I hear a second. Any discussion?

Hearing none, all in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it. Unanimous.

Thank you so very much for your willingness to serve.

MS. MAKINS: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Winthrop. Sandra Roberts Stroman from Chester.

MS. CASTO: Ms. Stroman is from Chester. Hers is an at-large seat. The term expires in 2023. You all may remember Winthrop's Board of Trustees seats are six-year terms, not four-year terms. And she is running unopposed. The incumbent, Susan Rex, is not running.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon.

MS. STROMAN: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. STROMAN: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement on why you would like to serve on the University Board of Trustees?

MS. STROMAN: I sure would.

Winthrop is near and dear to my heart. I received both my BA and my master's degree from Winthrop University. My husband received his MBA from Winthrop University back when it first started out as an accredited MBA school.

Winthrop has been a part of my life most of my life. Living in Chester, I knew about Winthrop from the beginning and just never really considered anyplace else to go but Winthrop.

And having served on the local school board in Chester, I feel like that I can be of some help to the Winthrop Board as well. I've gone through some adversity in the local school board, and I know Winthrop has been through some adversity as well, so I think that gets me ready to serve on the board.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I think serving on the local school board will make you prepared for just about anything.

MS. STROMAN: It's a challenge, but it's a good one.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Any questions?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Welcome, Ms. Stroman.

MS. STROMAN: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I want to tell you that Winthrop to me is just an outstanding university. My mother graduated from there. My daughter graduated, got her BA, and then got her master's and is gainfully employed.

[SJ]

But what means the most to me is my wife, who is a University of Georgia graduate -- I couldn't help it. I had to marry somebody out of state.

But she was an elementary principal at three different schools in Oconee County. She was also assistant superintendent for instruction. And she told me when she looked to hire new teachers, she always put Winthrop at the top of the list, she said, because they were always well prepared. They always did an outstanding job in the classroom. So just kudos to a school that does an outstanding job in getting people ready for the education field.

One thing I noticed -- your answers were excellent, by the way.

MS. STROMAN: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What I like a lot is the exposure to high school seniors of the teacher cadet program.

Could you expand on that if you're familiar with it.

MS. STROMAN: I am familiar with the teacher cadet program, having taught at Chester high school. Two of my three children went through the teacher cadet program. However, neither of them became teachers. My daughter went on to Duke University and went on to law school, and my youngest son, Alex, is now in Washington, D.C. He's very political. He went to the University of South Carolina.

None of my children went to Winthrop. Again, it's like the first lady said. It's kind of like, Mama, you know too many people, and it's too close to home.

But yeah, the teacher cadet program is a wonderful program. I taught the AP US History, and several of my AP History students went through the teacher cadet program.

And while serving on the Chester County school board, several of those students came up that we had to approve as teachers, and I was absolutely thrilled. I think one of them went to Lander. Several of them went to Winthrop.

So it's really a great program, and Winthrop gets exposure through that teacher cadet program.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I just want to say thank you for your willingness to serve.

And by the way, Ms. Smalley's husband is my best friend, so I will vote for you.

(Laughter.)

MS. STROMAN: Okay.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

Representative King, is Winthrop in your --

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Winthrop is in my district.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: So thank you. And you know I know you personally, and I know that you would do an excellent job. You represented us well in my hometown of Chester on the school board.

I have just two questions for you.

What is the role of a board member of a college or university, in your perspective?

And then the relationships that you think board members -- or the college, not so much board members, should have with elected officials, i.e. House and Senate members, that may not even be from the majority party, and building those relationships in the community and keeping those members informed?

And I ask that question because that has been a challenge for me as the sitting legislator for that district that represents Winthrop.

MS. STROMAN: Okay. Well, I'll answer that first.

I think relationships are always important, and I think it's always a good idea to have a relationship, no matter if you're on a local school board or if you're on a university board, to keep in touch with and inform your legislators as to what's going on at the University or at the local school district.

The legislature, as you know, passes laws that impact the University and other schools as well, and it's just -- relationships are just always important. And I think I know a good many people who are in the legislature, and I have relationships with many people that are in the legislature, so I think that personally I would be someone who would be a good contact and a good go-between between the legislature and the Winthrop Board.

I know Winthrop faces some challenges, as all smaller universities in the State do, with enrollment and those kinds of things, and I think the legislature can help us with those, and I think just going forward that serving on the board -- having served on the board will help with that.

Also, being a member of a board, you have to have relationships within the board. Now, I generally think that when I think something, I'm pretty right on that. I think that maybe sometimes people disagree with me, and I'm surprised, but I've learned over time that I don't always have the answers or all the answers. My husband would disagree with that.

But it's important to work together with the board and get different perspectives and different ideas and come together as a cohesive unit.

Did I answer your question?

[SJ]

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Well, I know that you would do an excellent job. I saw your work as a board member there in Chester. So I want to thank you for your willingness to serve.

MS. STROMAN: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I've known the Stromans and their son Alex for a number of years, and to repeat the words of my favorite senator, who is not any longer on this Committee, Ms. Stroman and her family have a stellar reputation.

So I would like to move for approval of her nomination -- or appointment to the Winthrop Board.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is a favorable report.

Is there a second?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We have a second.

Is there any discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you.

MS. STROMAN: Thank you very much.

MS. CASTO: Ms. Stroman, you do currently serve on the Chester Board, right?

MS. STROMAN: I do.

MS. CASTO: And you will resign --

MS. STROMAN: That's correct.

MS. CASTO: -- once you are elected to the board.

MS. STROMAN: That's correct.

MS. CASTO: Okay. We just wanted to clarify that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You've got this look of relief. (Laughter.)

MS. STROMAN: Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

MS. STROMAN: I appreciate y'all serving in this capacity as well.

MS. CASTO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next we have College of Charleston, Craig C. Thornton from Anderson.

MS. CASTO: This is a 3rd Congressional District seat. There are two candidates running.

Mr. Thornton is from Anderson. It is to fill an unexpired term due to the death of Edward Thomas. The term will expire June 30, 2020.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon. I will swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. THORNTON: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir. A couple of things.

During the time I was applying for colleges, the College of Charleston was honestly the only school I applied to. It was something about Charleston. My family and I grew up going there and spent a lot of time there.

And the campus was kind of exactly what I was looking for, coming from Anderson, which is a smaller town. Our class sizes were smaller, and College of Charleston tends to cater towards that. That's one thing they do very, very well.

But I guess growing up in Anderson, my father, who is a former Marine, now CPA, instilled a lot of values in me that were -- the idea of volunteering whatever you can and wherever you can and giving back to your community the things that bring value to you and things you feel passionately about.

So the College of Charleston is one of the areas that I truly -- I'm very thankful for the skills they gave me coming out of college. Being a liberal arts school, I think it gives you the capacity to learn and function in any case. You can be very, very adaptable to different ideas and different concepts and I guess kind of think and learn on your feet.

Also, as you mentioned, this is a seat that's been vacated by Dr. Eddie Thomas, who actually was a personal friend of mine. Growing up in Anderson, I knew his sons and actually had the opportunity to play golf with him a good bit. So it would be a very, very big pleasure for me to continue on the things that he was doing before he passed away.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Good afternoon, sir.

I noticed you were talking about -- your question number 4, about attracting students. You said the student population is almost 12,000.

MR. THORNTON: Yes sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: How do you handle that number in an urban situation? Are they day students, or do they live on campus?

MR. THORNTON: You have, I guess, a very good mixture of students that do live on campus. A lot of the freshmen do come in. There have been some new dorms that were built over the last few years. But the majority of students you will find throughout the town and also in surrounding areas such as James Island, Mount Pleasant, Johns Island.

I think a good, big issue going forward is, I guess, with the College Charleston being such a landlocked school, how do you accommodate more students and continue to grow? I think there's some opportunity to possibly do some joint efforts with possibly USC or the Citadel to have some shared space that can be utilized by all.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Yes, because there's just not any -- my daughter graduated from there. Actually, my son did also. And there's just not any room down there.

MR. THORNTON: There really isn't. And also, I guess the cost of construction is going up. Every time you go into town, there are cranes as far as you can see. The town is changing to a point where it's creating traffic issues as well. So I think there are a lot of things that will be coming down the road that will need to be looked at very deeply.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I'm still paying on traffic tickets my son got, by the way.

MR. THORNTON: Oh, yeah. There are a lot of parking tickets.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Oh, yeah.

Thank you for continuing to serve.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I have a couple questions, Mr. Chairman, if you don't mind me asking.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Certainly.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Can you explain your criminal background to us? I see that you have an open container --

MR. THORNTON: Twice.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- twice, and public disorderly/intoxication.

MR. THORNTON: Yes, sir. Actually, I guess I'll speak to the second one. The first one was -- I guess the public disorderly was a dumb 18-year-old kid who traveled with some friends from the College of Charleston to Winthrop University, actually, and, honestly, was at a party I probably was not suited for at my age and walking down the street with the wrong people, who decided to vandalize some property, which I was not a part of. However I was guilty by association. Therefore I was -- that charge did come from that. But like I said, that was when I was 18 years old.

[SJ]

The open container, honestly, the most recent one, which was probably four or five years ago, I was, in all honesty, trying to do a friend a favor. I was at my house and he asked me to come pick him up from a bar.

So I was dropped off at the bar, proceeded to get in his truck and drive him home. On the way I guess a state trooper was actually coming through downtown Anderson, saw him walk out of the bar with the beers, pulls us over and, of course, we both get open container tickets.

So I guess in an effort to do something nice for a friend and then get him home safely, I put myself in danger.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We've got a name for that. It's called, No good deed goes unpunished.

MR. THORNTON: That's exactly right. So that's one thing that's -- it's a very, very valuable lesson, and something that you will never see on my record again, for sure.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: One of the things that concerns me with any of the institutions is diversity, so can you talk a little bit about how you would foster diversity at the universities and grow the diversity with not only the student population but also within the staff, faculty and staff?

MR. THORNTON: Absolutely. Currently, I guess, the diversity of the College of Charleston is like -- 19.3 percent, I believe, make up the minorities at the school, with only 8 percent of that being African American.

And I think that something that's really a matter of digging and in seeing how many applicants are we actually getting from those minorities and kind of digging and then looking to see what percentage of them are getting in.

If we're not getting enough applicants, we need to look at ourselves and figure out why. The State is a great cultural mixture of different minorities and ethnicities, and I think tying into that and finding a way to get more of them to our school -- and I'm not saying that everyone should just be given entry to the school. I think you still want to keep the integrity of the school and have the best candidates you can have, but we need to make sure we're looking at all the pots of people that are out there who can make up that.

You had one more question. I'm sorry.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: No. I was just speaking on diversity. My question was just dealing with diversity, not only with the students but also the faculty and the staff to make sure that you have diversity throughout the institution.

MR. THORNTON: Right. And I guess, speaking of the staff, that really comes down to the board as well, too. When you're looking at candidates or you know -- I guess you can properly plan. You can't always know when you might be losing a professor or having tenure change, but having that mindset of being prepared for it and having some candidates in mind so you're not running out at the last minute trying to find someone. I think you're more able to find the diverse population that you want as long as you're doing the right, proper planning.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And my last question is, What do you think the involvement is of a board member in reference to stability of the institution when it comes to fundraising, and what role will you play as a board member in giving to the institution?

MR. THORNTON: I guess with the College of Charleston I've always given whatever I could as I've been growing up and leaving school, but I think going forward I would like to actually be involved in whatever aspects they allow me to as far as fundraising.

I have no problem reaching out to anyone and asking for funds. I do it regularly for our local YMCA in Anderson, Meals on Wheels, and some other charitable organizations. So it's something I kind of -- nobody really enjoys calling and asking for money, but I think as long as you are truly doing it for the value of it, what you're representing, I think that's a big aspect to it and something that's a very good cause.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Do you see a decade down the road, or even, say, tomorrow, a trio of research institutions in South Carolina or a quartet?

MR. THORNTON: That's a good question. I think it's something -- it could be either. I believe it's -- things are changing, and if you look at the landscape in South Carolina, you see a lot more logistics coming in, everything from manufacturing to warehousing to the inland ports of Upstate South Carolina.

So I think there are some very big changes that will be coming on the horizon from that. I can't tell you exactly how it will play out.

SENATOR VERDIN: I'm just looking at -- I think you had properly identified greatest strength, liberal arts; weakness, value. Everybody's trying to get the STEM.

MR. THORNTON: Right.

SENATOR VERDIN: Of course, I see you and some of the previous -- documents from other candidates, the whole issue of geography, recruitment of students versus -- in the backcountry versus the coast.

And we were talking about value of the facility, the infrastructure itself, downtown location versus -- and I know that there's been a tremendous increase in the development of your North Charleston campus.

But anyway, I'm just thinking of this ever-increasing burgeoning cost of higher education in South Carolina and what some of the debates revolve around, the roles to be played, and who should be doing what.

Of course, I believe in free markets and believe that you should let cream rise, but again, there's that philosophical push that seems to -- and I'm not surprised and wouldn't be surprised that the College of Charleston would have that. They've got longevity, a great location. The student body is there. Add value.

At some point, where do we go with having the right balance of those flagship research institutions? If it's a quartet tomorrow, is it a quintet the next decade? Since it's interchanging, it could change day by day depending on the ideas and values and how they go about doing those things.

I think your challenges are certainly going to be, as are the other institutions, maintaining an affordable education, but one that has value.

I read an article just last week that said 15 years from now, we're going to be paying all these liberal arts-educated students or graduates hefty salaries to help those scientists communicate with the world.

MR. THORNTON: I think I read the same article, actually.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: I do have one question, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This is sort of a summary question because we've talked about a lot of potential challenges for the College of Charleston going forward. What do you think is the biggest challenge?

MR. THORNTON: I think the biggest challenge is -- I just say continue the value. There are a lot of different things the College of Charleston has to offer, but at some point in time, I guess we really need to mill down and look at the core things that we offer and are they still continuing to be the best that we can offer everyone. It's taking a true representation of all the curriculum we have and making sure that each one brings the most value and the best education for everyone we serve.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Let me ask you a question. I was just thinking about this. I'm jumping into a little bit of a hot potato question. So I recall -- I have some friends who are no longer on the foundation board, one constituent in particular. When the board was deciding to hire Glenn McConnell, there was some public comment about the fact that the University was going to use donors over multiple issues.

So I guess my question is just, What has been -- I think he's done a great job, so I'm not being critical. Has there been any change, and what has been the change, not only strategically but from a financial perspective? Has any of that come -- did that ever happen, I guess my question is.

MR. THORNTON: Okay. From what I've seen and everything I understand, I haven't seen any direct financial impact, but I can say that President McConnell is probably one of the best, most intelligent presidents I've met because he seems to know a lot about so many different subjects. He can talk to anybody in the room about anything they want to think about.

And he just does a very good job of engaging everyone and feels like they're really a part of the school, where prior administrations may not have done that. But he really runs everything as a true group, collective effort. So I think it's been a huge benefit.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions? Comments?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Move favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable report.

SENATOR VERDIN: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

Is there any discussion?

Hearing none, all in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MR. THORNTON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, also College of Charleston, A. Scott Ward, Pendleton.

MS. CASTO: This is for the 3rd Congressional District Seat 6 also. This term expires in 2020.

MR. WARD: Good afternoon, sir. CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. WARD: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. WARD: I would. I would.

Just to go back, and as many have spoken, what the college means to you.

I grew up in the small town of Westminster. And the graduating class -- right about a hundred kids that graduated. And out of that class, about eight of us went to college, so going to college was a really big deal.

So the College of Charleston really has been always in the forefront of my career. And I went on after the College and majored in mathematics and got an MBA at Carolina. And believe it or not, almost every interview, it went back to the math degree at the College of Charleston.

And the reason that I'm here in front of you today is, I was meeting with a group of alum, and we were talking about liberal arts. And I was just all over it saying it's just a terrific value. It teaches the person not only a discipline but you also know how to read and write at the end of it because of all the liberal arts that you get with it, which I find really sought after in today's career paths.

And so with that, one of the alums said, My goodness. There is an opportunity on the board. You are just all over it today.

So I was really just high on the College.

So I present myself for you here today. So the College is near and dear to me.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I'm from Walhalla, so we know each other well.

MR. WARD: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Question. I notice that you serve on the Pendleton council. How long have you been living in Pendleton?

MR. WARD: I've been in Pendleton since '04.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. Do you remember the restaurant run by the Allen Family down there? Maybe that's before your time.

MR. WARD: The Crenshaw Allen?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Crenshaw Allen.

MR. WARD: Crenshaw Allen. Yeah. I've been there long enough. The Crenshaw Allen had already moved on. I think it was called Memaw's after that or something similar.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Something like that. All right.

Liberal arts. I had a daughter who majored in liberal arts. She couldn't find a job. That seems to be a problem now, the way the world is going, that you need more of the math and the science and the computer skills.

I agree with you that liberal arts, you need to be able to write and things like that, but how do you explain to graduates that get a liberal arts degree that sometimes the jobs just aren't available for these folks?

MR. WARD: You can explain it that way, but my experience has always been the jobs are there if the person is willing to actually look and to see what is out there in the marketplace as well.

So liberal arts can sometimes be thought of as unfocused, so you're just kind of all over the place. But so many of the recruiters that I have found with the bigger firms look at that discipline in a different way because they are looking for someone with a multiple skill set.

We just toured the Milliken plant in Pendleton as part of Leadership Pendleton, and with that there was a chemistry major, liberal arts, who was actually working third shift at Milliken, running some of their production.

So there is a niche. A lot of times I think that a person gets a little bit confused on really what degree they're getting and what their direction is as well.

So with that, I was lucky because I definitely majored in a science, so in mathematics, I was brought forward as well. But the liberal arts just gave me so much more, along with the mathematics. And it may go back to the point the Senator made earlier as well. With all the engineers out there, you may need somebody to interpret some of the things that are coming as well.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, I just know from personal experience it can be tough. So thank you for your willingness to serve.

MR. WARD: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Hi. Thank you for being with us today.

I also have a BS in mathematics from the College of Charleston. I think I graduated a couple years before you did.

My question is, What are your thoughts on how we can bring more STEM-related career opportunities, majors, studies, emphasis of study, that sort of thing, into the liberal arts education?

MR. WARD: When I look at it, I think you really start with the corporations that are now in Charleston. I know growing up, really, we had the 85 Corridor, and that was thought of as manufacturing. So the

Lowcountry was still in a mode of the port and really not the heavy manufacturing of the old textile industry that we had in the Upstate.

So as that has changed -- I know the College has just put in a project management degree, and they're looking at some degrees that will be directly related to Boeing because I think they're beginning the meetings that Boeing -- you really go to that industry, and you say, What do you need? What are your jobs? What are you trying to fill? And for that, you should be able to, within that curriculum, find a way to actually give that employer what they're looking for.

So you've got the impact of the port, which is all the way across in all of the transportation, which is a discipline in itself.

So that would be the angle that I would approach, that as you cater degrees or stackable coursework -- not much different than a technical school does. They stack knowledge on top of other knowledge. So that's the way I would look at it.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Building on that, I had an opportunity to spend some time with a woman who is the Volvo plant manager and some folks from Boeing. The workforce development issue is obviously a big issue everywhere -- I'm from Greenville -- but big in Charleston, especially because those companies are there.

Do you feel in your experience that the College of Charleston has had its conversation, really a robust conversation, about basically the role -- their role in this? Because what we did in Greenville -- our technical colleges, obviously, are big, but you all are going to have to step up and help provide that because there are only so many engineers in this state.

But do you feel like the school is open to that like those conversations have been happening? I think your background, actually, would be perfectly suited to this type of role. I was just wondering where you feel like they are in terms of their thinking.

MR. WARD: Well, my knowledge will come from really what I've read and from different publications. And I just know they had approached Boeing, and they had begun to think of new and interesting degrees and how that actually transpires into the job in the workforce as well.

I don't know if they're really far up on the curve. My impression is probably they're not. With the other industry that is moving in, the announced jobs that are coming, it is really great to fill those jobs with South Carolinians because we know that people are moving into Charleston in heaps.

[SJ]

So not only are you getting the retirees moving in, you are getting people who just want a quality of life moving in. You have got the weather folks who just want warmer weather moving in. And at the same time, we have really got the opportunity to make Charleston a really robust, strong economy as well so that people are making money there as much as bringing money with them.

I have kind of found that a lot of retirees -- you become service industry folks as people are bringing their retirement income in with them, and I think the College could play a huge role in making a difference as Charleston keeps landing more industry.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Anyone else?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

This will probably be my line of questions pretty much all day.

What does it mean for you and the College to have a commitment to diversity, and how have you demonstrated that commitment, and how will you see yourself demonstrating it at the college or university?

MR. WARD: Diversity. Diversity, and to keep a diverse population in both, as you mentioned before, in your student population and in your faculty, is not easy.

And I will go back just a little bit in the Town of Pendleton, in that we have lost a lot of our diversity in our population. So we have gone, Where are people moving? What are the patterns that folks are moving from small towns to larger towns? And why was it such a large chunk of our diverse population that moved to larger towns as well?

So we have studied the problem just a little bit, and I would think you have to take a different approach than just looking at diversity -- having another college fair somewhere.

You need someone who understands, one, the way the communities work. There is a cultural difference in community. And so going to a church, going to a community center may have a bigger dividend payoff than holding another job fair or student fair at the school or at somewhere else, that maybe you are not hitting the population that you want to go forward.

Also, we have found that you really want to find that strong leader in every community, and when you find that community leader, they can just give you huge inroads, I think, into what you're looking to achieve.

Did I answer?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: In your giving, have you given back to the College, and if so, what have you done in your giving, not just monetary but just --

MR. WARD: In giving to the College?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- supporting the College?

MR. WARD: Well, after my MBA, I left South Carolina and I went to New York City and started my career in finance in New York City.

So when I was in New York, I founded a College of Charleston -- there is a lot of us out there, actually, and this would have been in the late '80s. And so just having a place to gather -- amazing how many folks are everywhere.

I was lucky enough to live all over the world with Merrill Lynch, and so in Hong Kong we did the same thing. Believe it or not, there are folks in Hong Kong as well who graduated from the College.

So I have been active as far as alumni go as well. And I was lucky enough and had the wherewithal -- I established an endowment within the mathematics department. So it is called the Scott Ward award, which everybody thinks is quite funny because the ward of an award.

(Laughter.)

MR. WARD: And so that is for people with excellence in the math department. And I try to build that when I can. I made the initial contribution, and I contribute when I can.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good.

Anyone else?

Hearing none, what's the desire of the Committee?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other discussion?

Hearing none, I will take it to a vote. All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

The ayes have it. Unanimous.

MR. WARD: Thank you.

MS. CASTRO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Ward and Mr. Thornton, this is a contested seat. Both of you have been found qualified.

If you would share with us when they can ask for commitments.

MS. CASTO: We are screening today and tomorrow. There will be a screening report issued, we are hoping by the end of March -- or the third week of March.

I was looking. By law, no election to boards or commissions can be held before April 1. So the first Wednesday of April is -- April 5 is when the election is scheduled.

Once the report is released the week before, there is a 24-hour period, and then you can seek commitments at that time. So it will be towards the end of March, but we will keep you up to date on when we get the transcript back.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We will. And I just wanted to caution you --

MR. WARD: No. Thank you. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: -- that during that time, you need to wait before you can ask for commitments.

Thank you very much.

MR. WARD: Thank you.

MS. CASTO: You can tell people you're running, but don't ask for a commitment or have anybody you're associated with ask for a commitment.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Next, The Citadel. James H. Harrison, Jim Harrison.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Harrison is from the Isle of Palms. This is an at-large seat, the term to expire 2023. It is a contested seat.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon. I will swear you in.

MR. HARRISON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. HARRISON: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. HARRISON: Yes, sir.

As you probably saw on my application, I have been fortunate in my life, and much of that success I attribute to the values I learned at The Citadel, values that have helped me not only in my private life but my public life.

Most of my public life has been devoted to public service. As those of you know who served with me, I spent 30 years in the United States Army Reserves. I had three deployments while I was serving in the House.

Add to that service, 23 years in the House, 40 years practicing law. I think those values that I learned at The Citadel have helped me in all of those areas and will help me if I am lucky enough to serve on The Citadel Board of Visitors.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And excuse me for not knowing this, but are you still with Legislative Council?

MR. HARRISON: Yes, I am.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Okay.

And can you -- because I do not understand this, and I want you to explain it to me. Under the SLED report --

MR. HARRISON: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- can you just tell me what that is, the 1985 -- what that is? I don't --

MR. HARRISON: Yes.

My family has been in the timber business in Greenwood and McCormick Counties for a hundred years. My father had five brothers, and they had about 10,000 acres of timber land that they held in a family trust.

And the decision was made that each family is different, and it would be better if each family could control their own trust. They might have education issues. They might have health issues. They might want to retire early, various things. So it took a court action to go in and ask the court if it would be permissible to split the family trust into six different trusts.

I am a trustee of the trust that was set up in my father's name, and as a result I was named in the action, but it was an action to partition a trust into six different individual trusts.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: You sound like the King family. There's always something going on.

But look at diversity. Can you talk a little bit about diversity and your role as a board member? How will you foster diversity and ensure that there is diversity across the campus there at The Citadel?

MR. HARRISON: Sure.

If you look at the student body at the Corps of Cadets, at the present time, I believe about 10 percent -- maybe slightly less, maybe 9 percent -- are African Americans. If you look at the male/female issue, I think there are about 90-percent male, about 10-percent female.

The Citadel has made a great deal of strides over the last 10 years in both of those areas, but I think both of them can still be improved upon.

I do not know what the perfect number is until I can look at the numbers and say, This is how many applications we have. Are we accepting a fair number from all groups? When you look at those

numbers, you can tell better where we might could make progress down there.

I think one of the things The Citadel can do is use its cadets to recruit, and particularly its female cadets and its African-American cadets, to send them back out into the community because I do not think anybody can recruit for college as well as the students that currently go there. And if you take the best and brightest of the African-American and female students, I think we can probably do a better job and bring those numbers up a little bit.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Is there any type of conflict with you serving in both capacities?

MR. HARRISON: No. In fact I sent the staff a copy of the statute -- and it was passed years ago -- that said the Director of Legislative Council is not considered a constitutional office or a -- I forgot what the term is -- for dual office holding.

So there would be no problem. Any time that I needed to spend on Citadel matters, I would take annual leave to do that. But legally, there is no problem in serving on both bodies.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

MR. HARRISON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Staff, would you share with the Committee.

MS. CASTO: I will.

There is a section in Article 6, Section 3 of the Constitution dealing with dual office holding and who is considered to be in dual office holding. Then there is a statutory provision in Section 2-13-70 -- it was put in in 1987 -- that says the position of code commissioner does not constitute an office referred in the dual office holding statute of the Constitution.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Hi. Thank you for being with us today.

I have a son at The Citadel. He is a junior. And although I graduated from the College of Charleston, The Citadel is my favorite college. I just have to say that up front.

And one of the things that I like so much about The Citadel is the discipline, the leadership that is instilled in the students, the regimented aspect of the school.

And so I wonder, over time, how do you ensure that there is not a dissolution of all of those wonderful qualities that make the school

unique in one aspect, but in another aspect, also makes it sort of an unwanted -- not necessarily a target, but maybe so, if you will? How do you see handling that?

MR. HARRISON: Ms. Davis, there is a dispute or there is an argument among Citadel graduates as changes occur in society. And The Citadel has to make some of those changes along with society to remain a viable institution.

But there are those who finished with me who believe The Citadel has given up too many of those values over the last 14 years, and there are many who think, No. If The Citadel is going to continue to grow and be viable, there are some of the things that The Citadel has done over the years that you might have to be a little more liberal on. And The Citadel's success right now is going to be dependent on balancing those two groups.

I am a firm believer in -- what I went through 40 years ago, it was a tough system, and I learned from the tough system, but I also understand that at times, things have to change a little bit.

I think I would probably side more with those who believe the way The Citadel did it in 1970 is maybe a little better than they are doing it now, but that is something you have to look at as issues are presented and make a decision on what's best for the institution, what's best for those cadets who are there at the present time, and how can the Citadel continue to grow and prosper and receive the recognition it's received from various publications.

U.S. News and World Report, for one, has ranked The Citadel as the number one public college or university in the South for the last seven years. Its engineering school has been rated in the top 13 in the country this past year.

So The Citadel is doing an awful lot of things right, and it is a matter of keeping that balance to ensure that it can continue to be the institution it is today.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Good to see you, Chairman Harrison.

MR. HARRISON: Good to see you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I do not know if you remember, but when I first came in as a freshman representative, you were sitting right behind me, and every so often, I would hear that --

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Choo-choo.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- train whistle go off.

MR. HARRISON: Well, when I left the House, I bequeathed that to Rick Quinn, and he has not done it service --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: He has not done it justice like you.

MR. HARRISON: -- since then.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All right. A couple questions for you.

I noticed that in-state is \$23,000. That is not cheap. As we know, The Citadel is not for everybody.

Do you have an idea the freshman enrollment versus graduation numbers that you have at The Citadel? Is it similar to other schools, or is it less?

MR. HARRISON: No, I do not have the number, but I believe I read over the last couple of years that The Citadel's graduation rate, based on those who entered as a class and those who graduate as a class together in four years, is the highest in the state, maybe because Citadel cadets have to finish in four years, or 95 percent of them finish in four years, where sometimes at Carolina and Clemson and the College of Charleston, they might take a little bit longer. But I believe its graduation rate is one of the highest.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, it is such a unique institution. Like I say, it is not for everybody, so I would think if you're going to go to The Citadel, you're planning to finish in four years.

MR. HARRISON: You want to finish in four. Actually, that first year, you want to finish in three.

(Laughter.)

MR. HARRISON: After that it gets a little -- a little more fun.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That is what I hear.

When you are talking about -- question number 8, they talk about weaknesses you refer to as a challenge, and that is how to continue to find and develop private funding sources. And obviously, with the cost of the Citadel, how would you go about that as opposed to what you are doing now?

MR. HARRISON: I do not think you can do it any different than you do it now. From what I -- John Rosa, the current president of The Citadel, was a classmate of mine. We were on the football team for a couple of years together before I found out I wasn't any good and he was pretty good.

It's my understanding, talking to President Rosa, that he spends 80 percent of his time fundraising. I knew it was a high amount, but it surprised me it was that much. And I believe all college presidents spend a great deal of their time fundraising.

[SJ]

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, you know, living so far away from The Citadel -- 300 miles or 250 -- I didn't realize the camaraderie and strength of The Citadel brand until you go to your barbecue every year. Obviously it's a special place, and everybody takes a lot of pride that graduates from there.

So I thank you for your willingness to serve in this capacity.

MR. HARRISON: Thank you. Those of us who finished there think it's pretty special, and families who have had sons and daughters who graduated from there, even though they didn't graduate from there, think the same thing. We want to keep that tradition and that experience as close to what we've got as we've got it today.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, you know, I've never had a chance to go to your Friday afternoon parade, but I hear that is really something to see.

MR. HARRISON: It is for the visitors and the spectators.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Someday I'm going to get down there.

MR. HARRISON: When the no-see-ums are out, and you're standing in formation for an hour with them crawling up your legs and biting, it gets pretty bad. And then in August and May, it's pretty hot out there in those uniforms too.

Thank you very much.

SENATOR VERDIN: I've heard the sand gnats come back in September.

MR. HARRISON: They already are.

SENATOR VERDIN: The sand gnats were on King Street SEWE with the wind blowing.

MR. HARRISON: They're out now.

SENATOR VERDIN: I'm one of those -- I'm paying my ninth semester. I've got a son that's successfully squeezed eight semesters into nine.

MR. HARRISON: Into nine?

SENATOR VERDIN: think it's a little lower, actually, than 95 percent, at least on what Whitson tells me.

But I am intrigued by the whole idea of private investment. Just think about the uniqueness of that. You've got a high out-of-state population even though you've got tremendous camaraderie and collegiality, and it's the strongest network, probably, in America.

I still think -- my son, for example, he probably won't set foot on campus for ten years, not because he hasn't enjoyed it and doesn't value it. It's just -- and that's an overstatement.

But I do think that it's -- when you think about the uniqueness of a third of the Corps going into -- or a third of the class going into service, and then a large out-of-state population -- and I know that there's a lot being done in the non-corps student body, as far as enhancement of degree programs and whatnot.

But I too appreciate the fact that we have a unique history, unique challenges. And as it relates to what -- everything's a -- even though it's a continuum, the school is 1842 or whatever to today, I don't think today's society or today's population really, societally, was equipped for what you were equipped, say, in the '70s.

So as you see that student body and then those standards or those criteria move, it's not so much a reflection on your institution as it's a societal reflection.

And I commend The Citadel. I'm probably as much of a throwback as there ever was, but I do appreciate that we have a fluidity within society that even -- you can change the parameters, but the descriptions are always there.

I view The Citadel today as as much of a conservative, traditional institution as it was in your day, but I am going to reflect it and relate it to today's societal structure as opposed to what it was 40 or 50 years ago.

MR. HARRISON: And Senator, that is why I said The Citadel does have to change over time.

SENATOR VERDIN: Sure.

MR. HARRISON: And as you look at your traditions, you look at which traditions are necessary to continue to develop principled leaders and which ones of them are just traditions for the sake of keeping a tradition. And those that are just for the sake of keeping a tradition need to be on the chopping block to keep it viable to today's young people and still be able to develop principled leaders.

SENATOR VERDIN: He will be back within 10 years. That was just -- I know it is a morning graduation, not an afternoon -- it is an afternoon, not a morning graduation. It is early in May. I know that we'll all be there with bells on. But it might be a while before we get back.

MR. HARRISON: And many of them say that. The next year they're back at homecoming. And then I had classmates that I thought would be back every year, and I don't see them for 40 years, and all of a sudden, they're back again now and reconnected with the school. And I have seen people who thought they would be connected from day one that never come back.

So once you get out, you've got a family and you've got a professional life, but I think most people see it as something that is important to them

and got them where they are, and they want to go back every chance they get.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

What's the desire of the Committee?

SENATOR VERDIN: Move for favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable report.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

Any discussion?

Hearing none, all in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

The ayes have it. Unanimous.

MR. HARRISON: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MS. CASTO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Tee Hooper from Greenville.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Hooper is running as an at-large candidate with the term to expire 2023. This is another six-year term. He has been on the board since 2011.

Is that correct?

MR. HOOPER: Right.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir.

MR. HOOPER: How are you doing?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. HOOPER: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. HOOPER: Sure.

I feel like Mr. Harrison does. The Citadel has meant a tremendous amount to me, and I attribute some of my success to having been at The Citadel. I love the school. I love to be there.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Could you speak up?

MR. HOOPER: I'm sorry. Am I not close enough? Is that better?

MS. CASTO: That's better.

MR. HOOPER: Okay. Sorry.

Anyway, I love the school, and I appreciate what it stands for and what it has done.

I really believe, having been pretty close to the school for the last six years, that it's not any easier to be at The Citadel than it was when Mr. Harrison and I were there a long time ago. It's different, but the discipline that you have to have and the time management that you have to have is even greater now because the physical fitness piece has ramped up, meaning that you really -- you have to be tested to graduate. So it's not -- that wasn't the case when I was there.

I think the curriculum is tougher. As you may know, there is a leadership group, a leadership program that now has -- part of the curriculum is a course every semester. When we were there, you kind of were supposed to get the leadership through osmosis because of the rank and everything, but now it's a curriculum course every semester.

I think it's -- The Citadel brand is very strong right now. We had the highest number of applicants we ever had last year and the highest number of freshmen coming into the school this past year, and it looks like this coming year will outpace that. So there are people who really believe that The Citadel's a good place for their kids to go to school.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You've been on the board for six years. Six years ago, when you were appointed or elected to the board, what has been your significant impact on the board? What have you done specifically to change the face of what you thought may have been a problem six years ago to make it a -- bring about solutions to it today?

MR. HOOPER: It would be hard for me to say that I individually have made a change in The Citadel. I think as part of the board and part of the -- what's been done is creating a strategic plan. When I got there, there was no strategic plan. I was a party to creating the strategic plan.

And it is an effective plan. It's not a plan that was put together and put on the shelf and never looked at again like in so many businesses. It has really been followed through on, and we're in the process of creating another strategic six-year plan called LEAD 2024. The present one is LEAD 2018, which will end next year.

But the goals are set, and each of the schools within the College is held accountable for reaching the goals they've set.

I'd love to be able to say I did something special, but I really was a participant with other board members in helping create a strategic plan, and I think it's very valuable to the school.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: What does the College do to increase the enrollment of South Carolinians at the College and in fostering

relationships with high schools and trying to have those students, once they graduate, to attend The Citadel?

MR. HOOPER: Well, the first thing that The Citadel does is every qualified South Carolina applicant is enrolled. If they want to come, they can come. They are accepted. Every qualified South Carolina resident is accepted.

So right now, we are about 56-percent South Carolina, 44-percent out-of-state. And that's changed in recent years. It used to be a little bit closer to 50/50. As you know, the tuition and fees are dramatically higher for out-of-state students, so we hope to keep that balance.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Welcome, Mr. Hooper.

MR. HOOPER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I noticed number 8, where you say your biggest weakness at The Citadel is the ability to financially fund the programs that are necessary to educate today's young men and women in the values and principles for leadership and life success.

I noticed that you mentioned housing, infrastructure, et cetera. We talked about trying to do a bond bill a couple years ago. We are talking about it again. If that falls through, how are you -- when you've got buildings over 50 years old, how are you going to address that?

MR. HOOPER: Well, right now the foundation is the strongest it's ever been in the last four or five years under General Rosa. Mr. Harrison mentioned how much time he spends in fundraising activities. We have a lot more alumni who are putting up larger amounts of money.

So we have a business school that's being financed primarily by individuals and by the foundation, and we've just had architectural drawings for a new business school, a new Capers Hall, which -- about 60 percent of the students will be going through Capers Hall in some way or another. And that's on the boards to be replaced in 2019, 2020.

So we'll keep asking for help from the state. The school has to have it. But they are not counting on it.

A lot is going on. They set records this year. The foundation set records in terms of the money, both in long-term funds, memorial-type gifts, and cash. So there's a lot being done to address the financial issues.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Right. You are not the only school that's going through these pains, as you well know.

MR. HOOPER: You're right. You're right.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Maybe the Senate will fix it for you.

MR. HOOPER: One good thing that is going on at The Citadel now is financially. Part of the strategic plan included a financial plan, and The Citadel is solid financially now. It has eaten up a lot of the debt service debt over the previous years, and so the amount of debt service has reduced significantly. It probably is going to go back up with the addition of these two new buildings.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And that's good to hear.

MR. HOOPER: And the barracks is -- if you could see the battalion, it's terrible.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You haven't been chairman for quite a while of Patriots Point, but I want to give a shout-out to them.

I'm the chairman of the subcommittee that heard their testimony on the budget. I was extremely impressed with the way they are handling it. And I guess that goes back to your time. So whenever you see those people, you can tell them that they did an outstanding job.

MR. HOOPER: I'll do that.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And it's nice to know that they were the only agency that didn't ask for more money out of 13.

MR. HOOPER: As you know, the record with Patriots Points has changed dramatically.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Right.

MR. HOOPER: They filed for bankruptcy, and I was the first chairman coming out of bankruptcy. So we had some challenges.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: They seem to be on a solid foundation now.

MR. HOOPER: They're very solid. It's a great organization.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And one personal question.

Did you used to play for the Greenville High School tennis team back when they were really good?

MR. HOOPER: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, I'm going to vote for you anyway, but you beat the heck out of us. I just want you to know that.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: No commitments. No commitments.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Tee, I feel obligated to thank you for giving me a little work 38 years ago or so about the warehouse at Modern Office Machines.

MR. HOOPER: You're welcome. Thank you.

SENATOR VERDIN: Question 26. I feel like I'm reading it right, talking about the late filing. Was that -- you weren't a year late filing your statement of economic --

MR. HOOPER: No.

SENATOR VERDIN: It was just one time.

MR. HOOPER: Yes.

SENATOR VERDIN: Okay. All right. I was reading that, and I was thinking, Surely, surely, not a whole year.

MR. HOOPER: No. No.

SENATOR VERDIN: All right.

MR. HOOPER: It's just I was late filing.

SENATOR VERDIN: I was speaking with Perry Earl just a few weeks ago, in which he -- we were talking about the gridiron prowess and success. And he was repeating to me how he was looking forward to the day that the tennis --

MR. HOOPER: The tennis team. Yeah.

SENATOR VERDIN: -- the tennis team was getting all the accolades.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Hooper, for your service.

I have been a big fan of Mr. Hooper's in Greenville for many years. He has got a long record of service to our community through the United Way and many other organizations as well as his huge success as a business person in Greenville.

I respect you quite a bit.

Also, I won't bring up the roads, but we will notice that he was chairman of DOT.

There. We can blame you. No. I'm just kidding.

But anyway, I just want to thank you for all the service that you've given to the State and to Greenville, and I would also like to make a motion that we approve his application.

MR. HOOPER: Can I make one other comment --

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Yes.

MR. HOOPER: I wanted to address the African-American...

The current population of the total Corps is 8 percent, and this year we had more enrollees, African-American, than we've ever had, and the same for women.

One thing that The Citadel does, which I'm very proud of and people who are aware of this statistic should be very proud of, is there's a predictive graduation rate. And a predictive graduation rate, if you take

the GPA and financial background, there's a predictive rate as to how many of these kids would graduate.

I'm sure you are familiar with the Pell Grant. The Pell Grant helps families under 40,000. The Citadel achieves 37 percent better than its predictive rate for the Pell Grant recipients, which I think is a pretty remarkable statistic in terms of -- once you get there, there's a huge effort to take care of you.

That didn't used to be the case. We used to try to run kids out of school. That's changed dramatically in the last several years to where they work extremely hard to keep kids in school.

If it's an academic issue, there's peer accountability to where there's an academic officer in each company, and the academic officer tracks freshman grades, and if they are deficient, it's not optional. They have to go to tutoring. And if they don't go, they'll be escorted to tutoring.

So I think the State has a good school who really works hard to graduate the kids that go there. And that includes African Americans. And I think the graduation rate -- and I can't remember who asked the question before, but it's in the 60s, low 70s and 60s for the schools at the top in four years. The Citadel was second to Clemson, but Clemson has the bridge program which helps them on their four-year graduation rate.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I appreciate you elaborating on that and divulging that information. I have two cousins that are at The Citadel right now. They are twins from Chester. And they are impressive, as well as their parents are impressed with The Citadel. So thank you for what you all are doing down there.

MR. HOOPER: I think one of you asked how we can increase the African-American population.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Well, diversity in general. When I speak about diversity, I'm speaking of women, African Americans, Hispanics, the makeup of this state. You know, how can we reflect what our state looks like in diversity?

MR. HOOPER: And I think the best way to do it is produce solid graduates, African-American and women, female students, and they bring other students back. You know, we're new at the game with women, but things have turned in the last couple of years with women. And so using -- as I think Mr. Harrison said, using the students to recruit, I absolutely agree with that.

But the other thing, the graduation rate against the predictive rate is, I think, a dramatic message to applicants and parents of the applicants that were going to get your kids through school.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions?

Motion is a favorable report by Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded by Representative Whitmire.

Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

The ayes have it. Unanimous.

MR. HOOPER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, sir.

Members, we are a couple minutes ahead, so before we get to Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School, I'd like to take a five-minute, a hard five-minute break. Be back here in five minutes.

(A recess transpired.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School. Four at-large seats and four candidates. D. Stewart Cooner from Lexington.

MR. COONER: Yes, sir.

MS. CASTO: There are four seats. Three of these that you will be screening are -- the first three are incumbents. The fourth one is a new candidate.

Mr. Cooner it is from Lexington, and these are all at-large seats with a term to expire June 30, 2021. He's been on the board since 2005.

MR. COONER: Yes, ma'am.

MS. CASTO: Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon. Thank you for your patience.

MR. COONER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. COONER: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. COONER: Yes, sir, please.

I believe that every child deserves a future filled with opportunities and possibilities. I believe that every child deserves a future filled with hope.

Each school year, Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School has the opportunity to instill that hope in the more than 400 at-risk young men

and women who enroll in its three 14-week programs. These young men and women receive the confidence of a military discipline, the strength of educational advancement, and the support of four occupational skills that will prepare them for the future. This is the platform of hope.

Today, 84 percent are either working, enrolled in technical school, enlisted in the military, or enrolled in a four-year college. In its 95 years, Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School has had the opportunity to serve more than 31,400 students.

I believe that Dr. Wil Lou Gray would be proud of the school that she sees today. It continues to uphold her motto, Why stop learning?

You, the members of this Committee, alongside your fellow members of the South Carolina General Assembly, make all of this possible. You undergird this hope. The general funds you appropriate comprise almost 84 percent of the budget of this school.

Through the partnership of the Office of the Governor, the South Carolina House of Representatives, and the South Carolina Senate, the Board of Trustees and especially the faculty, staff, and administration of Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School are able to provide students with futures that they might not have otherwise had. Thank you for the foundation you built for the students.

You might ask why I want to serve on the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Board of Trustees. Who would refuse the opportunity to serve these deserving young men and women? Not me. I want to be a part of the promise of their future.

Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Good afternoon, sir.

MR. COONER: Hello, sir. Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I had an opportunity to listen to Wil Lou Gray when they made their testimony on the budget to the House. Outstanding.

MR. COONER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: All I can do is give you accolades for your school.

MR. COONER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: When you have your luncheon here, the young men and women, they are just first rate.

MR. COONER: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And so I just want to congratulate you on that.

MR. COONER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Question 3. In what areas do you think the school can improve?

The first factor you've mentioned is a perception by the education community that a referral to the school results in a negative reflection in dropout rates.

Can you explain that a little bit to me? What part of the education community are you talking about?

MR. COONER: Actually, sir, when a secondary school makes a referral to Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School, if the school actually makes the referral, then it's included in their dropout rate. So the schools really have a disincentive. Even though a student might not be progressing and they might not have the resources that are appropriate for that particular student, that are catered to that student, there is a disincentive for them actually to refer to Wil Lou Gray because it's included in their dropout rate.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: So they lose that money for that student.

MR. COONER: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay.

MR. COONER: There is a workaround, and it is an opportunity for Wil Lou Gray, but the school has to support that workaround and has to educate parents on the opportunity with Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School. And in fact, that workaround is that the parent can refer their child to Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School, and it doesn't negatively impact the dropout rate.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, that would seem to be, to me, the answer to your problem --

MR. COONER: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- because I can understand the school's reluctance --

MR. COONER: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: -- especially in tight budget times. But you're serving kids that need help.

MR. COONER: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And so thank you for that.

The second part is you mentioned about you don't have enough female candidates apply. Is it because males get in more trouble, or what?

MR. COONER: It's difficult to market to females, sir. I'm not sure of the cause, and that's something that the school is still working on.

We actually have three male dorms and two female dorms. Right now, we are only able to recruit enough females to utilize one female dorm. So in what I consider financial wisdom, Executive Director Pat Smith has actually leased that fifth dorm to Vocational Rehabilitation so that the school can benefit financially and Voc Rehab can also benefit from having the space because they are co-located on that lot, sir.

I know that the school is working on campaigns to try to recruit additional females. It just seems to be much more difficult to recruit females than males. But I don't think it's indicative, necessarily, sir, of them getting in more trouble.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, I wouldn't bet on that.

(Laughter.)

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Just going from my -- I taught school for quite a number of years, and I can tell you, not many girls got in trouble. That's just the way it was.

How many total students do you have?

MR. COONER: We actually just finished graduation. Normally we have about -- I think in 2016 we had a record number of applicants.

Let me get you the numbers real quick. I have them right here.

We had a record number of applicants of 1342. We accepted 527 and enrolled 431. We actually had a capacity of 420, but there's usually some attrition, even after application acceptance. Even on orientation day, not everyone shows up.

In fiscal year 2016, 303 completed the program. 192 actually earned GEDs. All of those numbers are the highest in the history of the school. So new orientation --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: That's excellent.

MR. COONER: I'm sorry, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I'm just saying that's excellent, because I think a lot of these kids probably would be dropouts and wouldn't have a job, and the State would be taking care of them. In this way, there is a lot of hope for these kids. So once again, I just love what you're doing. I wish every school in the state could do this well.

MR. COONER: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I have a quick question.

MR. COONER: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Are you familiar with the John de la Howe School?

MR. COONER: I am, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Could you tell me the difference between a Wil Lou Gray student or client versus a John de la Howe student or client.

MR. COONER: My understanding, sir -- and I'm not as familiar with John de la Howe, but John de la Howe deals with individuals who have developmental disabilities, and that's not necessarily the case for those at Wil Lou Gray.

Normally Wil Lou Gray will accept an individual who could possibly be in jeopardy of being truant from school, may not have a home life that's conducive for the learning environment, may not be able to make the transition from school to workforce, may be -- as Representative Whitmire said, may be in jeopardy of dropping out, but there are not necessarily developmental issues associated with the individuals at Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School, which is -- my understanding is that's sort of the focus of John de la Howe School, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Any other questions?

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Developmental or behavioral?

MR. COONER: And you're correct, sir. It could be developmental or it could be behavioral. There could actually be -- my understanding -- again, I'm not as familiar with the school, but there could be mental health issues as well.

SENATOR VERDIN: I know where the Chairman is coming from. He wants to hear great things about John de la Howe, I'm assuming.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Good luck.

SENATOR VERDIN: Did you say, Good luck, Representative?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Yeah.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, you know a lot of things -- we talked about the blessings of geography with some of these colleges, and that's the challenges of geography, finding people that want to work out there.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You're right. It's out -- way out there.

SENATOR VERDIN: That's my neck of the woods, and it's not on my beaten path.

But anyway, I appreciate your service and your commitment here. I really appreciate the -- you are talking about the strength and stability to innovate.

MR. COONER: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: Wil Lou Gray was from Laurens County. I just have these pictures -- in the Laurens County Museum, there are these

pictures on the wall of the Young's Schoolhouse with these teams of wagons and T-Models piled in there with these adults that have come straight from the field to better their life. And I believe that was her first established alternative night school or whatever. But it's in the Laurens Museum, and I'm sure that story's told there on campus.

Anyway, I appreciate the work you all do.

MR. COONER: I believe there's also a historical marker there now for Young's School.

SENATOR VERDIN: Yeah. Yeah.

Thank you.

MR. COONER: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any more questions?

What's the desire --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable.

SENATOR VERDIN: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

Any discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you very much for your willingness to serve and for what you do at Wil Lou Gray.

MR. COONER: Thank you, sir, very much.

Thank you all.

MS. CASTO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Angela Hanyak, North Charleston.

I hope I'm close to your name. I hope that's how you pronounce it.

MS. HANYAK: You did a good job.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

MS. CASTO: You will remember you all screened her last year to fill an unexpired term, a one-year unexpired term, so now she is back for a full four-year term.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MS. HANYAK: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Would you like to make a brief statement?

MS. HANYAK: Yes.

So as you just detailed, I filled an unexpectedly vacated position last year, vacated due to death. I am currently one of the youngest members of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Board, and it has been a delightful experience for me. I've really enjoyed the experience, and I'm hoping to be granted another full four-year term so that I can continue with this work.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions?

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your service and coming back again this year.

I'm just curious how you got interested in getting involved with this school. You're from North Charleston, fairly young, and I assume don't have any personal experience at this school. But I'm just -- thanks for your service. I'm just kind of curious of your story and how you got involved with this school.

MS. HANYAK: Absolutely.

I went to a high school -- I'm originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I went to a high school there. And much like every high school these days, there's a lot of tracking for students. So I was quickly placed on the honors track, whereas my younger brother, who is a year younger than me, he was basically placed on the general curriculum track.

And I watched him struggle with school in a way that was really inspired just by apathy. He wasn't interested in things. And by the time that he was done with school, he was exiting school with a GED. I went to a Catholic school in a somewhat upper-class area, so a GED was seen as beneath what most people could aspire to in our area. But he has since gone on into a trade, and he has a very successful career as an electrician.

So I've seen firsthand how the right education for the right student can really make an impact, and I think that that's what Wil Lou Great Opportunity School is all about.

The school came to my knowledge, really, the way that I think it comes to most people's knowledge, through its advertising. And I got more and more curious about it. I looked into the process for becoming involved. And that was really what spurred my interest.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Good afternoon.

MS. HANYAK: Good afternoon.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And you are a young lady to be serving on this, but thank you for doing it.

I noticed on your question 3, What areas do you think the college or university can improve, you are talking about the year-to-year improvements of GEDs. Is that ongoing now, to your knowledge?

MS. HANYAK: Well, we did have a very successful year last year, so we really maxed out capacity of the school last year. Now this year I don't think that we have increased, but the only reason for that is that last year was a year that was really at capacity.

So I think that what we would all like to continue to see is that high achievement on the school level. Annually, we receive between 1200 and 1400 applications. We can take about one in four of those students.

So really seeing that we have the continued interest in the school by way of applications and really making sure that those metrics of attendance and attrition after orientation, making sure that we have acceptance rates where kids are showing up. Ours are some of the highest out there. I think that they are currently about 85 percent.

So it's a pretty good attrition rate, when you consider a student who got cold feet at the last minute or simply don't want to leave home. So what I'm seeing is a continued excellence. I think a lot of that is attributable to the staff there as well as the executive director.

So yes, to answer your question, I do see that that is continuing.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Do the students who leave, do they leave immediately, after a week or two, or -- surely they don't last halfway through the year and then give up.

MS. HANYAK: No. A lot of times they don't even make that afternoon of orientation. So for a lot of them, I think that they decide they don't want to leave home, or they promise their parents that they'll be good, they'll be good, and Mom and Dad kind of listen that time.

But it is a life-changing experience, to be sure. And I think that, as with any form of self-improvement, it can be very terrifying at first.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I would imagine the discipline that Wil Lou Gray epitomizes, they may not get that at home or a lot of other places.

To me, as an educator, one thing I noticed, when I first started, it seemed like just about every student had two parents. When I retired, it was down to one or, a lot of times, none. And I'm assuming these are the type of students you get. You just don't have the home environment.

MS. HANYAK: Yeah. And they truly aren't bad kids. They really aren't bad kids. And that's why I think that the mission of the school is

so important. And it goes back to that idea of the right education for the right student. For a lot of these kids, it's just the home environment.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I agree.

I noticed you mentioned the biggest weakness was lack of legislative funding.

MS. HANYAK: No. That could potentially be an issue. And I'm -- I graduated college in 2008, so that era will always be on top of mind for me.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Right. Well, for your information, with a limited budget, we try to help Wil Lou Gray on the House side, so now it's up to these guys to follow through.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Be nice.

MS. HANYAK: Thank you for that support.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Yes.

Going back to your admissions rates that you talked about earlier, you said that the school admits about 25 percent, one in four, of the total applicants.

What restricts the school from accepting more students? Do those other 75 percent just not meet the criteria, or are you limited because of space or because of number of teachers? What is the limitation there?

MS. HANYAK: My understanding is that there are a good number of applicants who are being referred to the school because there may be some issues that parents or caretakers don't want to address. And unfortunately the school is not a psychiatric hospital. It cannot really facilitate the education of people that have severe issues, whether they are behavioral or learning. So that is a huge chunk of those students.

I think a lot of people have the perception that the school caters to that community, whereas it truly caters to students who have the potential but simply don't have the home environment or the discipline to succeed. So that is a large piece of the puzzle.

Another piece -- all of the students who come to Wil Lou Gray, we conduct interviews with them. So if, in the course of an interview, we can see that a student is not truly interested in the program, that's going to affect their ability to be accepted. And I think that's really important because when we are talking from a funding perspective of making an outlay for a special program like this, we want to make sure that those students are committed to their own success.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I don't want us to get away without invoking the funding aspect. I really think that the Senate and the House, for that matter, compared to a lot of other agencies, have been pretty good over the years. So I don't want that perception to be out there unless maybe we need to reduce their budget.

I'm getting heads shaking no down there, so I think they will acknowledge that we've been pretty good to you all over the years because of the mission and the work that's being done there.

MS. HANYAK: Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Move favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The motion is favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

Any discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you so much for your willingness to serve.

MS. HANYAK: Thank you so much for your time.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Russell Hart, Roebuck.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Hart is an at-large candidate too. He has been on the board 21 years.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir. Aren't you from Union originally?

MR. HART: Originally from Union, Pea Ridge.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I hear you. There are a lot of Harts around there.

MR. HART: You knew my brother.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I did.

MR. HART: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. HART: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. HART: Yes.

I have been on the board now for 20-something years. I got interested in the board when my brother served as the interim director there for a

while, and then he served on the board. I've been working with youth all my career and teaching and coaching in public schools and YMCA work and Parks and Recreation.

I have a desire to see the young men and women of our state have an opportunity of hope and continue to come and do something for them. I'm probably the oldest board member there.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you, Mr. Hart.

Any questions?

You could probably ask us a lot.

(Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: But don't.

MR. HART: Well, I'd just like to say, number 7 there, don't consider that a weakness. Right now I like to say we have two counselors, one social and one crisis. Almost every student we get there has a crisis in their life with their background and everything. And we could use at least one more crisis counselor.

And I know you've been real good to us, and we have no quarrels whatsoever with the legislature on that. We appreciate your support. But that's why I say it might be one of our weaknesses.

The staff does an excellent job there. I think under the direction of Pat, there's been a tremendous improvement in the school there. And we appreciate each one of you and the support you give to Wil Lou Gray.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes, sir.

Mr. Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I just want to say, Thank you, Mr. Hart, for 21 years of service to an outstanding school. As I've reiterated to the other candidates, we are very fortunate to have Wil Lou Gray here in our state. We've got a lot of young people who need help, and it's being provided to them.

MR. HART: Yes, sir. We appreciate your support too. We couldn't do it without you.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Now, I just have a really simple question. You don't look like you're 86 years old, nor do you act like it, so I would like to know your secret to the fountain of youth.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Tell her you drank Peeler's milk growing up.

(Laughter.)

MR. HART: I grew up on a farm. Hard work.

(Laughter.)

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: There you go. Well, thank you for your continued service.

And I move for approval of his appointment to the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. The motion is seconded for a favorable report.

Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

MR. HART: Thank you, and thank you for your support again.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you so much for your service, Mr. Hart.

Next, Jerome Wyatt from Roebuck.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Wyatt is your new candidate to the board. It's an at-large. The incumbent decided not to run this time. It's an open seat.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman, I can't wait out this question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. Well, let's swear him in first and put him under oath.

SENATOR VERDIN: Oh, yeah. He needs to be under oath before I ask him.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir. Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. WYATT: So help me God.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

The Senator from Laurens, Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Did Mr. Hart drive you down here?

MR. WYATT: Yes, he did.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, maybe he'd carry you over by the school on the way out of here.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin, you've got to let us in on the joke, now.

SENATOR VERDIN: Oh, well, first of all, I salute my elders. I really appreciate both of you, your past service and your willingness to serve. I think it's something commendable, growing in grace as you age. You certainly have a lifetime of service behind you, and I only see a lifetime

of service ahead of you, and I appreciate that. It's something discomfiting when you see someone in their autumn years either self-serving or less than gracious. So I admire that.

So when I'm poking fun, the fact that Mr. Hart is 86, and you're not quite 86, but he drove you -- I was just studying the two of you sitting back there, and I noticed that you're both from Roebuck, and I also noticed that your only visit so far is a website visit. So that's the reason I made the tongue-in-cheek remark about getting him to drive you out there.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Any other questions?

Did I ask you whether you wanted to make a brief statement? I interrupted your thought process.

SENATOR VERDIN: I messed up, Senator. I apologize.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If you would, give us a brief statement.

MR. WYATT: I'm thankful for the opportunity to come before you today in reference to this lady and what she's done. And I'm really one of those people that probably slipped through the crack, and that could have been a program that I could have been part of. And you pardon me because I do get emotional sometimes.

I worked with young people all my life. I started out as an assistant coach with the Salvation Army Boys Club. Mr. Jack Rhodehamel was our director there at the Salvation Army. I later became the athletic director, had the opportunity to coach a number of great students. In fact, I had the opportunity to coach on an all-star team a young man that was the quarterback for the 1981 champions, Clemson Tigers, Mr. Steve Fuller.

I coached baseball, and that was the deal. I had a couple of guys that -- he was as good as our men, and our men were as good as he was. But I worked with students for many years, about 15 years, before I went out of athletics. I seen the website and was reading about Wil Lou Gray and thought that it might be an opportunity for me to maybe coach someone, to give them some experience that I've been through.

After that I was a truck driver for 30-some-odd years, over the road and on the road.

I used to work in Columbia running what's called a pickle run. I worked with a lot of the independent drugstores here in Columbia, also with the prisons and the State hospital. And with my experience with kids that I've grown up with, I would love the opportunity to serve on the board if you see fit.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions? Comments?

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: I appreciate that display of emotion as well, so I would be honored to move for a favorable report.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And no no's means --

Thank you, sir.

MR. WYATT: Thank you. God bless you.

MS. CASTO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: God bless you.

Next, Coastal Carolina University. Oran P. Smith, Batesburg-Leesville.

MS. CASTO: Dr. Smith is the 2nd Congressional District, Seat 2, the term to expire June 30, 2021. He's been an incumbent since 1993 and is running unopposed.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll swear you in.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. SMITH: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

DR. SMITH: The only statement I'd like to make is what a pleasure it's been to serve. I'm the longest serving trustee at Coastal Carolina. Larry Lyles from Anderson and I were elected at the same time as Coastal became an independent university.

My focus has been academic affairs. I've been the chairman of academic affairs since the year 2000. And because of that, promotion and tenure is a key part of my work, reviewing all the requests for elevation from one level to the next. Academically, academic programs, even commencement speakers, anything that falls under academics. And I've been really pleased with the quality of Coastal in the academic area.

We just presented, over the last week, on Thursday, a new class of promotion from assistant professor to associate with tenure and then promotion to professor. And the level of research that's being

accomplished at a college and a university that does very well with teaching I think is outstanding. And it's been a pleasure to serve, and I look forward to continuing that service if you would be so kind.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Good afternoon, sir.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you for your service in several fields.

DR. SMITH: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I notice you're talking about the strategic plan calls for 12 to 15,000 students as a maximum.

Where do you stand now?

DR. SMITH: We've just crossed over 10. And we heard a report from admissions at our last board meeting just this past Friday. And we are growing between 1 and 2 percent or so a year, and we're just right at 10,100, 10,200. When I went on the campus for the first time, we were at 4400, so that's a lot of growth since July 1, 1993.

But our strategic plan calls for nothing greater than 12,500 or so, so at that point, it might be a little challenging for our facilities, even though our facilities have grown a great deal, much of that due to the penny sales tax, where the citizens of Horry County have contributed to our capital needs in a very grand, strong way and have helped us get to 10 from 4400.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You're not landlocked in any way, are you there?

DR. SMITH: Well, yes, sir. It's getting that way. We have 544 on one side and 501 on the other and Horry-Georgetown Tech on the other. And then there are some properties that are still probably going to be available eventually. But there's a housing development right at the fourth quadrant there of the campus. So it's tight.

Now cut the Atlantic Center, which is an old industrial site that the county has acquired much of that, that's available on the other side of 501, and we've expanded both academic facilities there. That's where the Center for Wetland Studies and Burroughs and Chapin Center are located.

We've also expanded athletics to that area. A new soccer stadium was recently approved, and we also have tennis and some other athletic facilities.

So I'd say the direction we'd like to go would be across 501.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: But originally, I would assume, you were kind of out there, and the road just overtook you pretty much.

DR. SMITH: I think so. In 1954, when we were founded originally by the College of Charleston as a branch of the College of Charleston, there wasn't a whole lot between Conway and Myrtle Beach.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I remember. I used to go down there.

And, by the way, congratulations on your baseball team.

DR. SMITH: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Quite an honor for the State.

DR. SMITH: Well, thank you. I had the unique pleasure of being a student at Clemson when we won the national championship in 1981, and I'm one of three Clemson graduates on the board, so we passed a resolution just Friday congratulating Clemson because Clemson passed one congratulating us. So we reciprocated, and very glad to do that.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I hope you can be in the State House tomorrow because I hear it's going to be a wonderful day.

Thank you, sir.

DR. SMITH: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for your distinguished service and your willingness to continue to serve and the passion for there. And hearing your other comments and then reading -- and you talk about that challenge. I really sense in your comments on a couple of these questions your concern for the retention.

What kind of a yearly retention number -- I thought it was interesting. You say that certainly the proximity to the beach had certainly impacted, maybe, the retention.

But how do you address that?

DR. SMITH: Well, yeah. It has a lot of different -- it's almost like a spider. It goes a lot of different directions.

One was, we didn't have as many majors as we ought to. So a student comes there to study one discipline and then decides they are not interested in that discipline anymore. They want to study something else, and we don't have it, so they go someplace that has it.

Another is, we had no adequate student union on campus, so there was no -- the temptation was not to stay on the campus very much already. It was to leave campus and to leave the confines of academic life and go somewhere that might not be, let's say, quite as academic. So that was a challenge.

But we have a new student center with some amenities they are to help keep students on campus, and we added a number of majors. So those have helped. We've also added an incentive. We made it very clear to the faculty that when we were considering their compensation, that the retention rate for the campus would be factored into their compensation.

That gets back to advising. If a student -- and this is the same for K-12 as well as baccalaureate colleges. If students feel that they've been advised properly and they feel they have some direction, that professors are taking time with them to help chart their academic path, it tends to make them feel more welcome and want to stay. So we actually factor that into the compensation.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you for your work in that area.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your willingness to serve. I'm not sure if you know Josh Crump, who is on the baseball team there, but he is my church member --

DR. SMITH: Oh. Fantastic.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: -- installed as my pastor of the church I attend in Rock Hill.

The school population. What do you all look at in reference to the diversity of the school population with students as well as the faculty and staff in keeping with what we'd like do here in the state of making sure that we have -- all our colleges and universities have a very diverse population?

DR. SMITH: We have various programs on campus that are dedicated to increasing diversity, but probably the most successful is just a simple, unwritten rule that the president has stated a number of times, and that is any qualified South Carolina student will be admitted.

We obviously do really well with out-of-state students and have a lot of interest. I think after this baseball championship starts to kick in, we're going to have even more interest.

But that provides some opportunities for recruitment of in-state students, Horry County, Waccamaw region students, Pee Dee students, a diverse racial mix. All of that comes with more interest. And we're going to make sure a South Carolina student that shows interest can attend.

In fact, we as trustees -- I don't know how many universities do this, State universities do this, but we as trustees are charged -- maybe not

charged -- suggested that we attend some of the local events for recruiting students.

So the Embassy Suites hotel here in Columbia has an event every year for recruiting Coastal students. I go to show that not only the president and the admissions office but all the way up to the trustees, we want you. We want you to come to Coastal.

So that's something that may be a little outside the box for a trustee to do, but we are part of that selling process and want to get South Carolina students to come to Coastal.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Good afternoon.

DR. SMITH: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: I would say Coastal has done an absolutely wonderful job. I think you all are probably the most diverse school in the State. Do you remember what your numbers were or your numbers are now for diversity? I know your numbers were pretty good.

DR. SMITH: I would say we are probably above average, but I don't think we're really where we want to be, frankly. I think we want to --

SENATOR SCOTT: What's your percentage, if you remember? Last year when we screened some folks from Coastal, you all had some real impressive numbers.

DR. SMITH: You know, I don't have that number off the top of my head, but I do know we've had -- you know, something that we've discovered at Coastal is the students that we spend more time with are the ones that are more successful.

And our athletes do really well. In fact, this is a fact that you may not hear about the baseball team that won the national championship in the College World Series. We have the highest academic average of any team in the College World Series, number one of the eight. And that's something we're very proud of.

And athletic diversity and college diversity sometimes go hand in hand, and we certainly are not done yet as far as increasing diversity at the University.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Where do you stand with your conference alignment, and how is -- and I'm thinking immediately of the football impact and facilities.

DR. SMITH: Well, you know, we could see the Big South starting to go away. And football in the Big South is in trouble because there is a

group within the Big South that wanted to go with non-scholarship football, and now Liberty has become an independent.

Well, all of that our athletics director could see coming. So we made a study to determine what the possibility was of conference realignment and chose to go with the Sunbelt. Actually, they chose us. They had one slot left, and it was down to us and Eastern Kentucky, and they chose us over Eastern Kentucky, and we got that slot.

But one thing that's good about that is, you wonder when you change conferences how you're going to do in the new conference. Well, because of the nature of football, we have not played a Sunbelt season yet, but we have played the other sports, almost every other sport, and we won women's volleyball, and we won men's soccer in the first year. So I think that says a lot for our preparation.

As far as facilities go, we have excellent -- probably some of the best baseball and softball facilities in the State; track facilities, both indoor and outdoor. The missing piece was football because of the number of seats required for Bowl Subdivision, which we are in the process of fixing, and we received bids for the first phase of the expansion of the football stadium last week, and they came in under what we had projected, so that was good, and will be breaking ground, Lord willing, for that soon.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you.

There's been a lot of talk recently about aligning not only K-12 but higher ed, the majors available, with the emerging job opportunities, emerging job markets. And being a Representative of Berkeley County and living in the Charleston area, I have a fairly good understanding of the industries that are emerging in that area.

I'm wondering, is the job market changing in the Grand Strand area? Do you see new businesses emerging, new industries emerging, and are you aligning your curriculum, your academic programs and majors with those new job opportunities?

DR. SMITH: Well, that is a great question.

I wish I could remember all of the T's of Horry County, of how you knew what industry you were in, because it was timber, tourism, tobacco, turpentine, and maybe one other. I don't know that we are really doing a lot with turpentine, but as far as tourism, we definitely are involved with tourism and have a division of our business school that tracks tourism.

I think we can do more with the alignment of not only jobs to curriculum but also strengthen our relationship across the street with

Horry-Georgetown Tech. We have a really -- we have probably the best relationship we've had with Tech in a long time because the presidents get along very well personally and created some ways to bridge the gap and to become almost one institution in some areas.

I notice that some of our sister institutions in the State are putting up some really amazing numbers, and this is a private school, so it's not fair, perhaps, but I think Furman University was showing 99 percent of their graduates are working or going to graduate school within a year or two of their graduation. That's just absolutely overwhelming, Representative Henderson from Greenville.

But we would like to be able to report those kinds of numbers and track them and better align our career services with our academic services, though we have done an analysis as far as what majors are cost-effective for us to offer, and we had to drop a couple of majors that just weren't carrying the load. They weren't paying for themselves. So on that side, we've made some adjustments that we're pleased with.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you.

DR. SMITH: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions?

SENATOR VERDIN: Move favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

Is there a second?

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Second's heard.

Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

The ayes have it. Unanimous.

Thank you so very much for your continued service.

DR. SMITH: Thank you.

I wonder if I could leave something behind with you. This was just handed to me today, but it's trends in undergraduate in-state tuition and fees, the change in tuition and fees over time, and also an analysis of instructional versus administrative spending.

I'm probably going to get killed by my fellow universities for providing statistics, but these are national statistics that might be helpful to you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: You can give that to Julie.

DR. SMITH: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

MS. CASTO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: D. Wyatt Henderson from Greer.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Henderson is running for the 4th Congressional District Seat 4. The term expires June 30, 2021. He is the incumbent and has been an incumbent since 2009. Running unopposed.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir.

MR. HENDERSON: Good afternoon, sir.

How is everyone?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. HENDERSON: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. HENDERSON: It's just a pleasure to be here. This is my fourth time coming against this -- coming before this Committee. I've been chairman now for six consecutive years at Coastal Carolina. I think our record speaks for itself.

Usually when I come before this Committee, I tell you all the great things that we're doing to improve our fiscal and financial accountability, but I just want to tell you today what we've been able to accomplish just from a tuition standpoint.

When I first became chairman six years ago, we put a freeze on tuition for two consecutive years. When you then take a look at where our housing funds were at that time, being held by the Housing Foundation -- being a CPA by trade, I'm always thinking about numbers -- I said, why don't we bring those funds back in-house, and let's refinance at a much, much, much lower interest rate. By doing that, we were able to commit to our students that we would not raise our housing costs for the next decade.

When you look at the total cost of attendance for a student going to Coastal back in 2010 versus today, if you look at it in 2017 dollars, it actually costs less for a student to go to Coastal today than it did six years ago, and that's something that we are very proud of.

So I'm just looking forward to continued service, and it's such an honor to be here today.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions?

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Henderson, for your service.

And even though he is from Greer, we are not related.

MR. HENDERSON: Not related.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: I just want to thank you for your service because I know that you've accomplished great things as chairman and your board. I was just looking at the fact that in your answers, during the time you've been on the board -- and obviously not all to your credit, but just your board in general has cut \$7 million from your operating budget, you did not lay off any employees, and you kept tuition frozen at the same rate, which is pretty amazing, all three of those things. And I wish that we could say the same about some of our other public colleges and universities.

What would you attribute that to? How is it that you all were able to accomplish that?

MR. HENDERSON: I think you have a committed board, and I think you have a committed administration, and I think you have a president who runs the institution -- and I know this kind of doesn't sit well with a lot of people, but he runs the University as a business, and we look at the bottom line, and we know when the funding is tight in Columbia. And so we don't -- being the lowest funded public institution in this state, we just make sure that every penny we spend is spent wisely.

And I think that the business model that we run and having a president and a board -- I was looking around at the board just this past weekend, and I think we have 11 people of our 16-member board right now who are small business owners, and they know how to make money.

And so I think it's attributable to the fact that you've got a committed board, a president who knows how to run a business, and then it was just a commitment across the board that we were not going to lay anybody off, that we were going to hold the costs down, and it was just time to cut. And there were some tough cuts that we made, but in business, to survive, you're going to have to make those cuts. And it was a tough choice, but it paid off in the long run.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: What percentage of the sales tax money does Coastal Carolina receive from Horry County?

MR. HENDERSON: We get 3/4 -- and don't quote me because I don't have the stats in front of me. I think it's three quarters of 1 percent. Over the 15 years --

SENATOR SCOTT: The dollar amount, what is it?

MR. HENDERSON: The dollar amount, we get about 9 million a year over the life of the -- before it sunsets after 15 years. We are slated to get in the neighborhood of about \$180 million.

SENATOR SCOTT: You're getting about \$9 million a year?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes.

SENATOR SCOTT: What's your annual budget?

MR. HENDERSON: Our annual budget that the board controls is about 145 million.

SENATOR SCOTT: So you get about 10 percent, roughly.

MR. HENDERSON: And that's for -- that can only be used for building. It can't be used for operations. It's restricted to --

SENATOR SCOTT: \$9 million?

MR. HENDERSON: And it's academic buildings. It can't be used for anything in athletics whatsoever.

SENATOR SCOTT: \$9 million?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: So you get an opportunity to kind of move some money around?

MR. HENDERSON: Well, it's very controlled. We can't -- you can't move funds from that specific one-cent sales tax money.

SENATOR SCOTT: But from your general appropriations, you get to move those monies.

MR. HENDERSON: Absolutely. Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: And looking at your statistics, you're 19.5 percent total diversity and African-American 3.6. What do you attribute that to?

MR. HENDERSON: Again, we just -- we're open to any student who wants to apply. And I think that our minority community has found a home at Coastal, and we're just very welcoming. And I don't attribute it to any one factor. I think it's a model that's developed over the years.

SENATOR SCOTT: Are most of your students in-state students?

MR. HENDERSON: We have about 50-percent in-state and 50-percent out-of-state.

SENATOR SCOTT: What about your percent in-state of your diverse population? Is most of that diverse population in-state, or is most of it from abroad?

MR. HENDERSON: We found the majority of it is from in-state.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. HENDERSON: We do recruit heavily now from the I-95 Corridor.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

MR. HENDERSON: But yes, sir. Most of our minority students are from in-state.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you. Sorry about that.

A couple of things here. If I read correctly, you serve a six-year term as chairman of the board.

MR. HENDERSON: Well, no, sir. When I initially became chairman, the chairman's term was only two years. After the two years, the board then voted to make the chairman's term to be two consecutive two-year terms, and then when those four years expired, they voted again to make it three consecutive two-year terms. So I'm in my final year as chairman. But it's two-year terms, and you can serve three consecutive terms.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So it would be not unusual for -- anyone that comes to be chairman could serve up to six years.

MR. HENDERSON: They could. Now, before this -- before me it was -- Billy Alford had served for four years as chairman, and we had just changed the bylaws at that time. So until then, it was two years. In 2009-10 it was changed to four years, and then in 2015, it was changed to six years.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So I'm just curious. What is the thinking behind -- I mean, that sounds a little bit long from a -- I mean, is that --

MR. HENDERSON: It is a long time.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yeah.

MR. HENDERSON: It is a long time. Actually when we go back into session in May, I'm going to push to have it move back to four years because I have found that serving six years as chairman, if you do it the right way, it weighs heavily on your family, and it's a huge demand on your time.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay.

One other area that you mentioned -- and I want to make sure I understand because I think in years past, the mix of Coastal -- are you saying that you all have now 50/50 in-state/out-of-state?

MR. HENDERSON: It's about 50/50 when you look at the common area market, when you can bring those students in. Let's say in Jersey, they may not offer marine science, and so you can come to Coastal under the common market and take it as an in-state school.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Well, what if you're not in a common market?

MR. HENDERSON: It doesn't vary that much. It may be 48/52.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: So I think just a few years ago, you all were like at 40-percent in-state and 60 out, so you're saying you all have made significant changes to that?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, sir. We just had -- the report that we had on Friday, our in-state applications are up 25 percent. Our out-of-state applications are up about 12 percent. Our in-state admissions are actually up about 30 percent. So we're seeing not only more in-state students but we're seeing a better quality student.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to come back to the academic common market thing. So I thought that was Southern. I thought that was the -- what is it -- the Southern Regional Education Board or whatever. So you are saying that you can actually do that nationwide?

MR. HENDERSON: Any state that subscribes to it. It's sponsored by the Southern Area Colleges -- whatever it is.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Right.

MR. HENDERSON: But if your state subscribes to it, then you then get the benefit of it.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: So you are saying that, in your opinion, one of the factors for the reason why your out-of-state -- and I think, if I'm not mistaken, in the past decade or so, you traditionally had a higher out-of-state. So you're now leveling that out?

MR. HENDERSON: We are.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: And you're saying some of that is just because of academic common market?

MR. HENDERSON: I think that's a small reason for it. I think right now what you're seeing is just because of -- our applications being where they are and being up 20 or 25 percent, I think, has got solely to do with the College World Series.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Yeah.

MR. HENDERSON: I think South Carolina in-state students have figured out that Coastal is now in the big three in the State. And we were looking at what it meant in advertising dollars if we had to buy what ESPN gave us over the summer. And it was something ridiculous, something like \$120 million in advertising.

And so we've seen our applications go up. We've seen the academic profile of our student increase. And I think a lot of it has to do with going into the Sunbelt and then winning the College World Series.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: So when are we going to have a Chanticleer Day at the State House since we're having the Tigers tomorrow, Mr. Chairman?

MR. HENDERSON: Well, we did have a Chanticleer Day.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Oh, we did?

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, ma'am.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: I must have missed it.

MR. HENDERSON: The day after we won, they did raise the flag and have the Chanticleer Day.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Well, thank you.

I will then make a motion for a favorable report at the appropriate time.

SENATOR VERDIN: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay. A motion and second, favorable report.

Any discussion?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I just have one quick thing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I noticed that you got a -- just recently added a Ph.D. program in marine science. I hear good things about it, but I'm going to be honest with you. Living about 250 or 300 miles from Myrtle Beach, I don't know much about marine science. What does that entail?

MR. HENDERSON: Well, the primary focus of our marine science is looking at the biological and the wetland areas off the coast and mapping the wetland areas in the bottom of the ocean. We do a lot of mapping research. We are getting ready to have our first Ph.D. student graduate, I think this May, so we'll have our first graduate in that program.

But marine science is kind of a -- there's this huge umbrella. It's everything from mapping the sea bottoms to forecasting the hurricanes to the study of marine biology, swimming with the dolphins, whatever it may be. It's just a huge umbrella.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: How about your fisheries? Does it do studies on the likelihood of some fish types going down?

MR. HENDERSON: Well, we've actually applied for a grant to do just that.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. All right. Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: It's very interesting.

MR. HENDERSON: It is. If you've never had an opportunity to tour our new science building and see the vessel which the General Assembly was kind enough to appropriate \$1 million for, you need to take a trip down to Myrtle and just take a look at that vessel and just see our new science building.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I'm going to come visit your entire campus.

MR. HENDERSON: You should. Let me know when you're coming, and I'll set you up.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: As a follow-up on Mr. Whitmire's questions, you've heard the term beach re-nourishment or the term I use, pumping sand into the ocean. We had a public hearing of the Senate Medical Affairs Committee. We had heard from all the stakeholders on beach re-nourishment, beach erosion.

I would add that into the curriculum too. I thought surely there was a better way to address beach erosion than pumping sand into the ocean, but so far, I think that's the only alternative is to keep putting sand back out there.

Does that make sense?

MR. HENDERSON: As a homeowner, I would say it makes a lot of sense.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well, I'm not adding to your curriculum. I'm trying to figure --

MR. HENDERSON: Yes, sir, it does. Yes, sir, it does.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator from Laurens, you have an astonished look on your face.

SENATOR VERDIN: I don't have a question for the candidate, just a question for the chairman.

Would you just repeat yourself.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR VERDIN: Okay. Well, it's on the record. It's on the record.

Well, I just want a solution, Mr. Chairman, for the consideration because historically, I was right there with you. But I think the scientific evidence on that front is more and more compelling, and we hit those new numbers in South Carolina on the tourism. I see 20 B, 20 billion here, impact.

Anyway, Mr. Chairman, actually, I do want to relate this back to the other fellow back there on the front row.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Oran?

SENATOR VERDIN: Yeah, Mr. -- Dr. Smith. I can't find it in a hurry. But anyway, he had a traffic -- he had a traffic violation. It was called -- it was a -- it made me think he had committed a U-turn.

MS. CASTO: Turning unlawfully.

SENATOR VERDIN: Turning unlawfully. So I'm thinking maybe the chairman from Gaffney, Cherokee -- I think both of you all are -- I need a nod, Dr. Smith. Was that a U-turn?

DR. SMITH: That's what we code it as. Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Okay. Well, you just heard a U-turn right here.

DR. SMITH: Citizen's arrest.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Well, my point is, seriously, I think you should study that.

MR. HENDERSON: I'll certainly send that over to the dean.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If you don't, you're going to have some oceanfront property there at Coastal Carolina.

MR. HENDERSON: I completely understand. I agree.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: And if anybody's interested, I did bring the latest breakdown of our tuition versus every other university in the State. And we're 8 out of 12. We're just above Francis Marion and South Carolina State.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion was heard and seconded. Favorable report.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you.

MR. HENDERSON: Thank you so much.

MS. CASTO: Julie will get the tuition.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, John H. Bartell, Lake City.

MS. CASTO: Is it Bartell or Bartal (phonetic)?

MR. BARTELL: Bartell.

MS. CASTO: Bartell. Okay.

Mr. Bartell is from Lake City. His is a 6th Congressional District with a term to expire June 30, 2021. He is a new candidate. The incumbent, Marion Lee, did not file to run.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, sir.

MR. BARTELL: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. BARTELL: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. BARTELL: Yes, sir.

My name is John H. Bartell, Jr.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: If you could, speak a little closer to the mic so we can hear you.

MR. BARTELL: My name is John H. Bartell, Jr. I was born and raised in Williamsburg County on a farm. I attended Clemson University. I was in the Naval Reserve on active duty for 14 months. I went to work for the Ralston Purina Company for three years.

After that I went to work for the State Probation, Parole and Pardon Services, and then I went to work with the State Law Enforcement Division, better known as SLED.

I worked there until Governor Haley appointed me the sheriff of Williamsburg County. I was there approximately a year until they elected a new sheriff, and I stayed on in the transition phase. And by that time, I had 40 -- a little over 40 years in law enforcement, and I decided to retire.

I just thank the Lord every night I never -- didn't have to shoot anybody and nobody shot me, and I think that was a good time to leave.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Questions or comments?

I'll give folks a little time to look at your notes.

SENATOR VERDIN: I want to get a report on Bubba Snow.

MR. BARTELL: I knew him well, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'm assuming you can shag.

MR. BARTELL: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VERDIN: Where are we going to eat when we get down there?

MR. BARTELL: Well, we can eat at Brown's Barbecue.

SENATOR VERDIN: Crossed all the dots in my book.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott, you have a question.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Batell (phonetic) -- Bartell.

MR. BARTELL: Bartell. Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: Tell me about your experiences with SLED when you were over the division. What did you actually do at SLED?

MR. BARTELL: I was a criminal investigator assigned to the Pee Dee region in Williamsburg County. And I can say I just moved to Lake City, which is in Florence County, two years ago after I resigned or retired from the sheriff's office.

SENATOR SCOTT: Were other folks under you?

MR. BARTELL: No, sir. I --

SENATOR SCOTT: Just worked as an individual?

MR. BARTELL: I worked all cases. I worked mostly on white-collar cases. I can give you some of the cases you might be familiar with if you're interested, like School District 17. We had \$6 million or \$8 million. We stopped that.

SENATOR SCOTT: So in essence, what you bring to the board is your experience in safety for the children.

MR. BARTELL: Yes, sir. I feel that that is a positive. I sure do. I've worked with a diverse group of people in SLED and investigations, all sex, race, however, and I always had a good relationship with SLED, and I loved my job at SLED until I retired.

SENATOR SCOTT: Given the dynamics of most people, they send their children off to school. They want to make sure they're in a good, safe environment and that Junior doesn't spend all his time having a good time but actually learns something, so in four years he can get out and go home. So I anticipate you serving on one of the committees to help with both management as well as security.

MR. BARTELL: Yes, sir, and I think probably housing is an important part at Coastal Carolina, where you can keep a watchful eye on the students and where you can look out for them. I learned a lot by listening to the prior two candidates.

But I have toured Coastal Carolina numerous times. In fact, a gentleman retired from SLED -- he's head of the Department of Public Safety for Coastal Carolina and Horry-Georgetown Tech. And I've been on campus many times and toured the facilities and all with him, so I'm real familiar with it.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Given your background with SLED and sort of your security view on things, do you think that there are any specific security issues with that college campus, given its locality and its proximity to Myrtle Beach?

I know there's a lot of traffic, tourist traffic and sort of transient-type folks that are out of that area. Do you think that there are any specific, unusual, or special security issues there?

MR. BARTELL: I think there are some security issues, but from what I can understand in talking with Chief Roper, a lot of the stuff that's in the paper occurs just on the outlying areas of the University, like at some of the housing developments, some of the shootings and drug dealings. The campus, per se, I think is a lot safer than it appears to be in the media.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Do they have a criminal justice or any related programs of study there at Coastal?

MR. BARTELL: Not to my knowledge, sir. I couldn't be sure.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, sir.

MR. BARTELL: None that I know of.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Move favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable. Do I hear a second?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Second is heard. Any other discussion?

Hearing none, all in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

MR. BARTELL: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you very much for your service.

MS. CASTO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Carlos C. Johnson, Roebuck.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Johnson is running for the At-Large Seat 8, with the term to expire June 30, 2021. He currently is serving as the Governor's designee on the board, designated in 2011. But he chose to run for this at-large seat.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Have a seat, and make sure your green light's burning.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, sir.

Thank you all on the Committee.

I'm excited to be here today. As stated, I am Carlos Johnson. I have served since April 2011 on the Coastal Carolina University Board of Trustees as Governor Haley's designee.

In my profession, I practice law in the Upstate. My office is based in Spartanburg. Our practice encompasses a great many areas, but one that has been especially useful to me in my service at Coastal Carolina is that our office represents several public school districts, and they are a few municipalities in the Upstate, some special service districts as well in the Upstate.

And so I'm very familiar with the administrative structure of the University. I'm familiar with the funding sources and our obligations in that regard. And I have put that to use in my service to Coastal Carolina University.

As I said, I served for approximately six years on the board. The past three years, I have chaired the Finance Planning and Facilities Committee. Two years prior to that, I was the vice chair of that committee.

I think we've done really good work there at Coastal during that time. We've expanded the campus footprint to some degree. We have added several buildings and increased our capital infrastructure and programming and facilities for our students there at Coastal Carolina University.

We currently have a strategic path for enrollment growth at the University to match what Coastal is and what Coastal can be.

We are a regional university. We are excited to be a regional university. We want to be sure that we were also a full-service regional university. We want to provide all that -- those who are interested in attending and gaining their education at Coastal, we want to provide all that they may need and that they may desire.

I think during my time on the board, I think I've been effective because I'm able to offer the knowledge that I have from my profession, but I also bring a perspective I think that's different. Being from the Upstate and not having a prior connection to Coastal prior to my appointment, I'm not necessarily overly or exceedingly biased toward Coastal. But during my time on the board, I have developed a great passion for the success of Coastal Carolina University.

So during our meetings, I am not shy to speak up when it's time to speak up, which I do pretty frequently. I remain engaged on pretty much all points during our board meetings, and I think that I create a balance.

In fact, I was congratulated by a fellow trustee after our meetings. We just met last week. At the conclusion of our meetings, a fellow trustee, knowing that I would be here before you today, did offer me his well

wishes and congratulations and did say that specifically, that he thought -- since his time on the board came on after I did. But he's a local trustee. He's from Conway and actually is a Coastal alum. And he said that himself, that he thought I offered a great balance to the board.

And so I would like to continue that. I am seeking this seat to allow myself the opportunity for a more -- hopefully a more stable position on the board so I can continue to be a part of the positives that are going on at Coastal Carolina.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Do we have African-American members or minority members on the board?

MR. JOHNSON: At this time, there are just two. Mr. Sam Frank is also a gubernatorial appointee.

SENATOR SCOTT: Out of 15 members? There are 15 or 17 members on the board?

MR. JOHNSON: 17 members.

SENATOR SCOTT: 17 members.

Tell me a little bit about your work with improving the racial and cultural diversity, especially among the faculty at Coastal.

MR. JOHNSON: Well, that's actually something that Trustee Smith, Dr. Smith who just spoke to you -- that's something that he and I started talking about last fall, that we thought that there should be more effort in that regard. I was able to -- Dr. DeCenzo asked me to serve as a trustee representative on the strategic planning committee, of course undergoing a strategic plan last year. And so during that time, that was something that we specifically addressed or identified as an issue.

And so we do that. I also have good relationships with several of the administration and the deans, but I have made a point to introduce myself and get to know some of the minority faculty. And I've been --

SENATOR SCOTT: What's the faculty breakdown?

MR. JOHNSON: I don't know the exact percentages, Senator Scott, but I will tell you that in our discussions, we found that it was not as good as it should be. It's not as good as it should be considering that our student enrollment is -- we have a very high percentage of minorities in our student enrollment.

SENATOR SCOTT: 20 percent when you do the other minorities.

MR. JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: You get a good, high mark for that, but when we talk about staff, the faculty is where the real issues are.

MR. JOHNSON: Yes, sir. We're lower than that 20 percent in our faculty and staff, but that isn't an issue -- it hadn't been identified as an

issue that we worked on for several years, but we did identify it last year, I believe in our fall meeting, so that may have been in October, I believe. That may have been when we identified that as an issue that needed to be addressed.

And so I personally won't let that fall by the wayside.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In what ways do you feel it's appropriate to incorporate topics related to diversity?

MR. JOHNSON: When you say, In what ways, do you mean like the various possibilities of bringing it to the attention, or do you mean things where we need to be sure that we are focused on diversity within the university system?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: In its entirety. Answer it both ways.

MR. JOHNSON: Well, I think the best way to focus on issues of diversity is when there are questions about diversity, to speak up and identify them. I think that's the best way. And then from there, depending on what facet you are discussing, you develop a plan to address the issue that you have not identified, the issue that you see arises.

One area where I was instrumental in somewhat of a diversity issue that we faced on campus during my tenure -- it's been about three years ago now. But we were looking at some cost-cutting factors.

And one of the things, we had asked our athletic department to present some cost cutting for us, and so they were looking at cutting one of our sports teams that I thought would change the diversity of our athletic program dramatically.

And so I spoke up then, and I thought that would be unfair to those athletes and those students. We, of course, would have allowed them to continue their education at the University.

But I thought having that particular program remain within our athletic department, I thought, was important not only to those who were in the program at the time but because, as I said, we do have great connections with K-12 schools in the Upstate. And I'm familiar with what they do and try to be involved with their students in mentoring programs and that sort of thing. I was also aware that students looking to come to various universities, that that would have been a factor for them.

And so in speaking up in that regard, we required our athletic department to go back and reassess their suggestions, and they came back preserving that program. They found other ways to cut. I was very vocal in regard to that particular situation.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: And my last question is -- it's good to serve, and I applaud your service.

What role do you think -- or how important do you think your role is as a member on the board to give to the institution which you serve, give back to the institution, and if so, in what manner have you given back to the school?

MR. JOHNSON: I think it's highly important, not only as serving at the university level but also the local nonprofit boards that I have currently or previously served on. I've always spoken very fervently about that.

To be honest, during my tenure at the University, I haven't given much. There's been some financial donation, but much of it has been my time. But I do currently have a pledge. We have a Teal 1000 program that we do that would be a \$1,000 per year pledge. And so I've pledged to participate in that, and my time to fulfill that pledge is coming up, and so that fulfillment will be made, and I'll continue that pledge if nothing else.

But I do think it's highly important. The opportunity to serve I think also comes with the commitment to support. I believe very firmly in that. The capacity hasn't been as perfect as I'd like it to be, the capacity to give, and the number I would like to give hasn't necessarily been there -- quite what I want it to be. But good things are growing within my law practice, and I see brighter days coming in that regard.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: I know that on many boards, college boards and university boards, by setting an example from the board down of giving, it impacts the giving of the college.

I have family members who have served on private institutions, HBCUs and institutions across the country, and that is an obligation by board members. So I've always wanted to understand the obligations that you all make to the institutions in which you serve that are public institutions. And so that was the reason why I asked that question. That's all.

Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: And we don't have a minimum obligation amongst the board. We encourage it. Our philanthropy officer is with us every day -- not every day, every meeting. And he always has new ways of encouraging us to give.

(Laughter.)

MR. JOHNSON: I will say, though, that during my time on the board, I have not taken any per diem or any mileage reimbursement during my entire time on the board. I do want to make that point.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any more questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Johnson, for your service.

Let me ask you a question. So you are from Roebuck, which is Spartanburg County, and I'm noticing here...

You said there are 17 people on the board. Is that -- did I hear that right?

MR. JOHNSON: Yes, there are 17 people.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: So how many of you are from places outside the Coastal region there? Do you know off the top of your head?

MR. JOHNSON: I don't know off the top of my head, but beyond our congressional districts --

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Maybe that.

MR. JOHNSON: Right. The at-large people -- I didn't look at that, but I think the at-large seats are -- I can think of two immediately.

MS. CASTO: We had checked the at-large because there are seven congressional districts. So you have the 7th Congressional District that's on the coast, and of the at-large, there were only two out of the seven that were not from Horry County.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Well, thank you.

Yes. That is one of my personal concerns, that we have -- that it should be a little more mixed up, representing different parts of the State. So that's why I asked.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR SCOTT: Motion favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is a favorable report.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded. Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you so much for your willingness to serve, sir.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, sir.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I hope I get your last name correctly. Edward Tkacz?

MR. TKACZ: Tkacz. Tkacz.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Tkacz?

MR. TKACZ: Yes.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Tkacz is from Myrtle Beach. He's running for the at-large seat also, At-Large Seat 8, with the term to expire June 30, 2021. He is a new candidate.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. TKACZ: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. TKACZ: Yes, I would.

I graduated Coastal Carolina in 2001 with my degree in computer science. I moved on to Maryland and got my first job in industry, working at the Department of Defense. I'm one of the lucky few that have not had a military background that was able to get a clearance through the U.S. government, specifically the Department of Defense.

After leaving Maryland, I got to travel the world. I lived in Germany. I went to Iraq for a year. I lived in Qatar, England. I've worked in Japan. I've worked in Israel, all with the military and only with my Coastal Carolina degree.

So I'm very thankful for the education that I received from Coastal, and I credit my success because of that degree. That's the only degree I've had.

So my choosing to run for this board -- essentially for two reasons. One, I feel indebted to Coastal. I feel that they provided me the proper education to succeed. And secondly, I feel like it would be a great learning experience. I have my own business now. I started my company about six years ago. We've been doing very well.

For me it's a constant learning experience, learning new things about business, so being in charge of something like the board -- being on the Board of Trustees, I think that would be a great experience for me to have. I think I could learn a lot through the members that are on the board and just all the initiatives going on on the coast, I think it's a great school. I'm just so happy to be back in the area now. I've been really enjoying going to the events. And it's just a great place to be.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

What do you see as the most challenging aspect of an increasingly diverse academic community, and what steps will you take to address such challenges as a member of the board?

MR. TKACZ: That's a good question. In terms of diversity, I guess making sure that -- I understand that the in-state and out-of-state ratio right now is about, what, 48 and 52. I think it's 48 in-state and 52 out-of-state.

I would say that the importance of that is -- in order to come up with a solution for adding more diversity, is that what you were trying to ask? I'm sorry.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: (Nodding head.)

MR. TKACZ: Bringing diversity to the University?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Yes.

MR. TKACZ: That's a good question. I don't know what the initiatives are now, so to speak, as I'm not on the board, but this is a learning experience for me. As I said, I'm not sure what all the main issues are right now at Coastal. I would like to be a part of the solution, obviously. That's all I can say.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Good afternoon.

I'm looking at your driving record. That's a little concerning to me. You're 37 years old, and you've racked up quite a string here.

Would you care to expound on that?

MR. TKACZ: Yeah. I travel a lot, especially on the East Coast, driving. I go up to Virginia quite a bit. I go to Maryland. My parents live in Maryland now.

I understand that my record hasn't been the greatest in driving. Speeding tickets, I get on average one every two years, it seems. I am trying to get better at that.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What I don't understand is that you had your license suspended for failing to pay the tickets.

MR. TKACZ: This is recent, right?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, it's 2011 and 2010, and you didn't pay insurance in 2013. That's three suspensions.

MR. TKACZ: Yes. I was out of the state. I apologize for that. I did get that reconciled when I got that back. I was in Afghanistan from 2011 to 2013. I was over there. So some of my mail was not being forwarded properly. I got a little behind. That is true. But I was not driving around the States because I was over there. So yes, there were some mistakes made there.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to oppose it, but I do have a real concern about that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: So noted.

Any other questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: I have one.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Ms. Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: I was in computer science for 20 years myself, and so I kind of understand some of your comments here about computer systems and how we find ourselves in situations where we are paying for software development that's not being developed and they're missing deadlines, and we've got systems that we're trying to integrate, and the integration's not working. So I kind of understand where you're coming from there.

But from a position of being on a Board of Trustees for a university, how do you see your experience, your IT experience? How would you capitalize on your experience as a contribution to the board?

MR. TKACZ: I consider myself a process improvement kind of guy, and I usually do that through the use of software. Working with the military, I automated some very interesting and unusual problems, I guess you could say.

So you can apply that type of thinking to almost any organization, really. I'm sure that Coastal has a very good set up in terms of their IT infrastructure, and I'm sure they do some things automated, but I'm sure there are some things they can do better. And that's where I'd like to apply some of that knowledge to those problem sets.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman, thank you.

And thank you for your willingness to serve. And listening to your comments in your opening statement, talking about your degree from Coastal, that you've been able to be successful with your military career, is there a program that you could see that would be beneficial to them either expanding or starting that would give other individuals the opportunity to not only follow in your footsteps but also expand the opportunities of those students in their military service?

MR. TKACZ: I think with what I do -- my career with the military, working with the military, I've provided practical solutions to unusual problems.

Coastal is great for computer science theory-wise. I learned a lot of theory, academically. A lot of that stuff -- I haven't used probably 80 percent of the stuff that I learned at Coastal. I took the 20 percent that I could really use in the field, and I applied that to the best of my ability.

So I think the problem-solving you do in computer science is way beyond anything that we would do in the practical world. So some of the problems that you find in the real world are more people-driven, more process-driven. Hey, we've got this unautomated process. We're collecting paperwork still, manually. How do we digitize this process? Something of that nature.

So I think what Coastal should focus on with the computer sciences is to keep that strong theoretical background but also have something where they can learn how to apply the knowledge that they have to more practical problems. That's how I see computer science evolving in the next ten years.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Any other questions or comments?

What's the desire of the Committee?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Move favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

Is there a second?

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

Any other discussion?

Hearing none, let's take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

(Members respond.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

The ayes have it. Thank you.

MR. TKACZ: Thank you, Senator.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next, Samuel J. Swad, Myrtle Beach.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Swad is running for the At-Large Seat 10 with the term to expire 2021. He is an incumbent running unopposed.

How long have you served on the board?

MR. SWAD: I served two terms.

MS. CASTO: Okay. So eight years.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon.

MS. CASTO: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. SWAD: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

MR. SWAD: Yes.

This will be my third -- assuming I pass muster, it will be my third term on Coastal.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Please sit just a little closer to the mic.

MR. SWAD: I first set step on the Coastal campus when there were three buildings there. Now it's a big, sprawling campus with a lot going on.

After the first three of our guys have testified, I kind of feel like George Gobel. He was on the Johnny Carson show with Bob Hope and Dean Martin, and he said, I feel like the world's a tuxedo, and I'm a pair of brown shoes. Those guys are stars. They are outstanding candidates and have really done a great job helping Coastal and leading their committees. I'd like to continue serving to help with that work. And that's about all I have to tell you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, sir, for your willingness to serve. I'm more than delighted when I hear that you identify the stars, but you still want to serve. And I know you're going to be a star if you're not already a star at Coastal.

Tell me a little bit about where you are in the eight years that you've been there, especially as diverse as Coastal is, and I'm really proud of its intake system, but in terms of also what you've done in the eight years to try to help the staff and faculty become more diverse.

MR. SWAD: Well, we've taken a direct approach on that. We have actively tried to recruit minority faculty. Our president has a great interest in that, as does the board. We like for the faculty and the student body to resemble the community. And again, with our president, that's an active goal.

SENATOR SCOTT: What would appear to be one of the biggest problems with recruiting of faculty and staff? Is it not having an abundance of it, not being able to pay enough money? Everybody wants to live at the beach. It's a beautiful place to be.

MR. SWAD: Yeah. We have several minority board members. I can't tell you specifically why we have a lower ratio of minority faculty. I don't know if they are not available or if other schools pay more. I have a brother who's a professor at Cal State, and he wouldn't even get out of bed for what we pay at Coastal.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Mr. Chairman, I have a question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative King.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

In furthering the conversation of diversity -- as you can tell if you've been sitting here, Senator Scott and myself want to ensure that the institutions that are represented in this state have a great representation when it comes to the diversity of the community that you will represent there at the school.

Tell me what your plan is or how you can help as a board member to change what you see now at the institution in which you are on the board, or what have you done when it comes to diversity, diversity in the staff, faculty and staff as well as the students.

MR. SWAD: I can't say that I've done anything personally to change it, but I think the way it changes is for the board to let our president, faculty, and staff understand that is a goal and that we need to actively pursue that goal.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Has that been a concern of yours?

MR. SWAD: On the board it has. We have only two minority members out of 17. As board members, I'm not sure we can change that makeup. That would be more up to this Committee, I guess, who you choose to be on the board. But yeah, I think that we do need more diversity.

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Thank you.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman, one quick question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Mr. Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Does Coastal have a diversity officer?

MR. SWAD: Yes. I think that's mandated by either an accrediting agency or the State. I'm not sure of that.

SENATOR SCOTT: Does that person or individual bring you a long-term plan of what the plan should be for the school, giving the board the opportunity to adopt some of the plan and try to initiate some ongoing changes?

MR. SWAD: He may to a committee. I'm not aware of that.

SENATOR SCOTT: Well, it should come back to the full board, because it normally goes to the committee and instructs the committee to bring it to the board either as an optional policy so that the board itself can adopt a policy or provide through your funding source the opportunity to get a plan or consultants to help you with this.

Are you familiar with that process?

MR. SWAD: I can't say I'm specifically familiar, but I can't say that it doesn't exist either.

Mr. Johnson may know.

Carlos, do you know if we have a specific diversity plan?

I can't answer that for you right here.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just looking back through the brief summary, and we may have had responses back to staff since this was prepared.

PDQ Question Number 10.

MS. CASTO: No, sir. We have not gotten any responses.

SENATOR VERDIN: Are you a registered voter in South Carolina?

MR. SWAD: I'm sorry.

SENATOR VERDIN: Are you a registered voter in South Carolina?

MR. SWAD: Yes, sir, as far as I know. I voted in the last election.

SENATOR VERDIN: All right. Well, we just had some -- in your questionnaire, there were either some blank -- well, I'm reading here just some mistaken numbers.

For the voter registration number, I think you listed your driver's license.

MR. SWAD: Oh. Maybe I did.

SENATOR VERDIN: Of course, a lot of people are going to the polling places with nothing but their driver's license these days. I think that's what they did in Horry County when they couldn't find their voter registration number.

And your professional medical degree, from where?

MR. SWAD: University of South Carolina. I have my business degree from Coastal Carolina University.

SENATOR VERDIN: What was your year of graduation from medical school?

MR. SWAD: I'd have to ask my wife.

MS. SWAD: '94.

MR. SWAD: '94.

SENATOR VERDIN: Family practice?

MR. SWAD: Family practice.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions or comments?

What's the desire of the Committee?

SENATOR VERDIN: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Favorable. Is there a second?

REPRESENTATIVE KING: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

The ayes have it.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MR. SWAD: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Next we have Delan Stevens.

But Mr. Stevens, if we could, we'll take another five-minute break.

(A recess transpired.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We're still on Coastal Carolina.
Delan Stevens.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Stevens is from Conway. His is an at-large -- he's running for At-Large Seat 12 with a term to expire June 30, 2021. He is an incumbent running unopposed.

And you were elected to the board four years ago. Is that right?

MR. STEVENS: Two years ago.

MS. CASTO: Two years ago. All right.

MR. STEVENS: Yes, ma'am. I took an unexpired term.

MS. CASTO: An unexpired term. That's right.

MR. STEVENS: Yes, ma'am.

MS. CASTO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

MR. STEVENS: Okay.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Do you swear to tell the truth,
the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. STEVENS: Yes, I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief
statement?

MR. STEVENS: Yes, sir. May I be seated?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Certainly.

MR. STEVENS: I just want to say that it's been an honor and a
privilege to serve on the board these last two years.

I was born and raised in Conway, and I attended Coastal Carolina. I
know many of you, when I tell you I graduated in 1979, you all will think
I look younger than that, I'm sure. But it's been a long time since I
graduated.

But a lot has changed at the University, and I'm proud to be a part of
the board and serving and looking at the changes and maybe having some
positive influence on the change that's being made. And I look forward
to continuing to serve and trying to make some changes that will benefit
our University and our State.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you for coming before us, Mr. Stevens.

Tell me a little bit about the kind of changes you think need to be made outside of what Coastal's already done with the students, that can really make Coastal really be -- continuing to move up the ladder. I think you all have a 1314 rating of the most diverse schools in the country. But I think those numbers are only about the students. Tell me a little bit about the faculty and other things you think Coastal needs to be doing to move forward.

MR. STEVENS: Yes, sir.

A couple things first to your question on diversity. I think at this point, we do have some minorities in leadership roles. We have some women in leadership roles. I think we are attempting to do that.

We're in the process now of hiring someone to become the diversity officer for our school, which I think will be a positive force because, as you had mentioned earlier, it will help us as a board and as an administration going forward to set goals that we need. So I think to have that officer there to help us as far as setting goals, to attain them will be very helpful.

I think another thing I would like to see at the University is, I think -- we have grown. If you look at our growth, about 130 percent over the last 10 years. We've really grown pretty fast, so I would like to see us grow more on an academic standpoint. I would like to see us increase maybe to a top 25. I think we might be around 63 or something like that currently. So academically wise, I would like to see us improve in some areas.

And here again, going back to diversity, accomplishing that may accomplish the other goal. So I think those are two big factors which I see moving forward that I would like to put some emphasis on.

SENATOR SCOTT: I know that some of your sister schools around you -- Clemson last year brought on their diversity officer. USC, I think, two or three years ago brought on their diversity officer. So you likely have some individuals who actually specialized in those areas, creating some cultural diversity, some sensitivity. So as these folks move from school to reality, it's easy for them to make those adjustments, especially the students from the international students.

And so I hope that you all get a plan and move forward very rapidly to get that done. The previous person that was up, I think he thought you all had one. I'm thinking if he's sitting on the board and he doesn't know that, that's a pretty tough call for that.

MR. STEVENS: And like I say, I agree, and we do have a pretty good mixture of international students. So you're right. It's not just about our

[SJ]

students locally or within this country, but there are a lot of other things that we need to look at.

SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

What's the desire of the Committee?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Favorable.

SENATOR SCOTT: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable and seconded.

Any discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MR. STEVENS: Thank you

Thank you all.

MS. CASTO: Mr. Chairman, we are running a little ahead of schedule.

If you all will turn to Tab U in your notebook, Dr. Gordon from Orangeburg. He's been here for a while. He's from the Medical University of South Carolina. His is the 6th Congressional District, the medical seat. And this term will expire in 2018. He is filling an unexpired term for Dr. Ragin Monteith, who moved out of the 6th Congressional District. She moved a couple of streets over, and it was out of the district, and she resigned. Dr. Gordon is from Orangeburg.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon.

DR. GORDON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. GORDON: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

DR. GORDON: I'll tell you a little bit about myself.

I practice dentistry in Orangeburg. Originally I am from Williamsburg County. I grew up on a farm there. I went to high school at Benedict College, finished there, left Benedict, worked a couple years over at Greenwood. I worked a couple years up at Greenwood as a

schoolteacher, and from there, I went to dental school up at Howard University.

After Howard, I went into the military, and I served 2 years active duty and retired from the Army reserves as a colonel after 26 years. And I've been practicing dentistry in Orangeburg for the last -- since 1971. And I have a daughter who has also joined me as a pediatric dentist, and we share the same office. So that's kind of been my story.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: That's a long transition from the classroom back to dentistry. What happened that -- did you change your mind, or you just couldn't make up your mind which occupation you wanted to be in?

DR. GORDON: Well, you have to be accepted, and then you have to have funds to go to school.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Since you are a new candidate, I feel like I need to ask you about this. You had a pretty serious charge against you. Would you care to expand on that a little bit and what happened?

Do you want me to call it out to you?

DR. GORDON: Yes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature.

DR. GORDON: Oh. Okay. Well, that was a case with a patient who actually sued me for something that went on in the office. That's what happened. That's what that's about there.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: What happened? How was the case resolved?

DR. GORDON: The case was resolved -- I think we settled it out of court with a monetary --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Okay.

DR. GORDON: \$1500 I think was what it was.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, since you are new, I felt like I needed to ask you about that.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions or comments?

SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

Any discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you for your willingness to serve, Doctor.

DR. GORDON: Thank you, sir.

MS. CASTO: If we can go to Tab T, Dr. George Cone from Greenwood. And this is MUSC's Board. It's the 3rd Congressional District. It is a contested race. It's a medical seat with a term to expire in 2018. And this is a seat that became vacant when Dr. Stanley Baker resigned from the board.

Dr. Cone looks familiar to you. His brother, Tom Cone, is Legislative Council who now is back working in the House.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in, please, Dr. Cone.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. CONE: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement?

DR. CONE: I have served the last 14 years, I guess, on the board at Piedmont Tech, Piedmont Technical College. And I think that's given me a lot of experience in dealing with all kinds of board related, education related items.

I have wanted to be on the board at the Medical University in the past, but I was not willing to challenge Dr. Baker, who ably served this group with no problem at all. And I had no quarrel with him, so I wasn't going to challenge that. But since he has resigned, I would like to see if I can't add what I know about the last three or four years of medical practice to the voters in Charleston to see if I can help us with the transition that's been going on in medicine for seven to ten years.

We've seen more change than medicine has seen in probably 50 or 60 or more years. And it's been kind of a rough time, but I've played in both parts now, and I think that I would bring some useful information and some useful advice to the board.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I appreciate your service there on the board at the technical college.

Is there a correlation that you see specifically in the area of health that can help with the Medical University from that standpoint, as far as that experience or what you glean from those opportunities? Are there other ways that they could partner together better, not just at that technical college but just the technical college system in general?

DR. CONE: Well, I think so. There are a couple things that Piedmont Tech has done quite well. We are, I think, number 13 or 14 on the diversity list that comes out. The Medical University is about halfway down, and our two major universities are on down toward the bottom. So we certainly have had a great deal of success in that area.

The next thing is that we have done a lot in the process -- it's called the lean process that I'm sure a lot of you all know a lot about. But Piedmont Tech has gotten awarded some accolades from various places for some of the things we have done to improve the service to students, to improve dealing with staff and improving the process of advertising ourselves to the community.

And I think just over the last 14 or 15 years, observing that process go on and being involved I think would give me some ideas about how we would go about doing that same sort of thing on the board in Charleston. It's been quite effective, and I would certainly recommend it to anybody.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions?

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Thank you.

I noticed you said your biggest weakness is where it's located. I don't see that changing.

DR. CONE: It isn't. The weakness is that it's on the coast, and we are three and a half hours away, and we're not the farthest place in the State away.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: No. I am.

(Laughter.)

DR. CONE: Well, actually, we're about as far as you are.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, I'm actually about, probably for -- wouldn't you say, Senator Alexander, about four and a half or five?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Yes.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: It depends on how you drive.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I drive the speed limit.

(Laughter.)

DR. CONE: Well, if you're coming from Whitmire and I'm coming from Greenwood --

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I'm coming from Walhalla.

DR. CONE: Oh. Walhalla. Okay. No comment.

(Laughter.)

DR. CONE: But it is a long way, and it has been a problem for us because we have patients who need to be referred to larger institutions, and Charlotte is two, two and a half hours away from us. Augusta is about an hour away. Atlanta is two and a half hours away. So three and a half hours is something of a problem.

One of the things that I've seen beginning to occur is that Charleston is moving or becoming closer aligned with the hospitals up in Greenville, and that's going to be, I think, a real help, particularly if they start getting faculty and so forth from the Charleston area up there or can arrange for people to spend a certain amount of time up there doing consultative work and so forth.

I see that as a plus. At least we would have the State bracketed with Columbia kind of in the middle.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: You're exactly right because for elderly patients, that's a long way.

DR. CONE: It's a real problem.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: It really is.

The other issue -- and this is not just at MUSC. It's all higher education, but MUSC particularly is the debt that these physicians-to-be incur. We're talking, what, a quarter of a million dollars almost for some of these people?

DR. CONE: I would say unless they are well funded behind them, yes, I'd say you could get out of MUSC with your degree and still owe \$250,000.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Do you have any ideas or suggestions?

DR. CONE: Well, I have several that I've kind of watched over the years, particularly counties and towns like Greenwood and Walhalla. We don't have a lot of people coming and looking at us and saying, Boy, we'd like to move there because they've got so much culture and they've got so much that sort of thing.

One of the things we might be able to do would be to have some sort of a fund that these towns could contribute to, put money in, that would be scholarship monies. There's actually such a fund available in the Greenwood area right now that we could consider.

Perhaps the hospital or doctors could talk to this group and help fund some of this stuff, help fund medical education for specific students who would then agree to come back, pretty much like the Army does, and serve us a space of time.

One of the other things that's been my experience, that when we have doctors who are born in South Carolina, raised in South Carolina, they tend to stay in South Carolina. When we have folks who are born in Pennsylvania and educated in South Carolina, they tend to go back to Pennsylvania. And since we as taxpayers are picking up a fairly significant amount of the cost of that education, even with them owing \$250,000 when they get out, I would certainly like to see us have a little more prejudice in the direction of educating people born and raised in this state. And we would be digging into the Southern background of being linked to the soil.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And you made a good point about the smaller towns. Now, Walhalla is much smaller than Greenwood, but I can remember when I was a boy we had four or five physicians in town. Now we've got one clinic that's actually out of the town, and there are just no prospects for physicians to come into a small town now. And of course, you've got a lot of people who are in need of those services.

DR. CONE: Well, one of those things that I was thinking of along the same lines in the past, if Charleston is expanding its clinical base out in the Charleston area, they could do the same thing in the Upstate and help with that same sort of process and perhaps in that fashion also link these folks back at least into the Charleston system, if not in the Charleston area.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, I'm just wondering. I know in the education field, they offered to forgive some of the loans if you'll go work in an area of the State that maybe struggles education-wise, and maybe that might be true --

DR. CONE: The Army has done it for years. If you sign up to go and get your medical education in the Army, they'll give you three hots and a cot and a little beer money and whatever it takes to keep you there and pay your salary.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: My father-in-law went into the Navy, and that's how he paid for his medical.

DR. CONE: And these folks then owe a significant amount of time. And the length of your training determines how much time you owe back.

And I think that would be something we could look at because one of the other problems that you mentioned had to do with the cost, the amount of money these folks owe. We can't keep people who owe a lot of money. They want to come in. They bid up things so that the hospitals sit there and have to -- we say, We'll pay off your debts. They'll come in, use up that money, pay off the debt, and leave, and then our hospital is out the money that they paid to pay off their debts.

Right now I think the length of time on that is about seven years, and then we also sometimes forget to tell these folks that as we forgive your debt, you also pick up phantom income to pay tax on that you can't deduct. So you'll have these fellows thinking they are in good shape, and suddenly they'll have an extra 20, 25, 30, \$40,000 in income for the year that was just the money that was paid off on their loan. So that also becomes a problem.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, thank you for your willingness to serve.

DR. CONE: Thank you, sir.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: I have a question.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Yes.

You spoke earlier about the transition that you were saying in the medical field, and a transition like you hadn't seen before in your career.

I was just wondering if you could expound on that and sort of describe to us a little bit what you mean by the transition.

DR. CONE: Yes, ma'am.

When I started practice, the majority of the doctors were individual practitioners, some of whom would work in groups, none of whom worked for hospitals, none of whom worked for corporate entities. And medical insurance as an item had just come to the surface and was -- it had been around for three or four or five years by the time I went into practice. And many patients still paid for their healthcare out of their own pocket. But the prices were going up, and the insurance industry itself, by paying larger amount for things, resets the price.

They say an appendectomy cost \$20, fine, but if they say it costs \$300, then everybody wants to charge \$300 for an appendectomy. So the poor fellow who's working on his farm or has a small business and has no insurance, suddenly instead of 20 or 30 or \$50 he's now going to pay 300. And that number, of course, has gone up dramatically since that time.

That has forced everybody to have some form of insurance. The only people that don't have it are the folks who are now on welfare or, unfortunately, that group of people who are small business owners who work hard and are some of the back bone of the growth and business in our state. They can't afford the darned insurance. They are not a member of a group that will give you a really inexpensive sort of a premium, and it has changed dramatically the way we practice. It really has.

We are now becoming all -- I'm currently employed myself. I was self-employed at my own practice up until four or five years ago when -

- I'm now the senior man in my group, and my cohort said, We are going to need to join up with a hospital. Otherwise, we can't afford all of this stuff coming on, the new computer system, new software requirements, and so forth.

And I let them vote, and because of my position, I abstained, and they voted to join. And I've been working in that system now. And it's different. It's not the same thing. And if you run your own business and then have to go to work for a corporation, there is a little getting used to it.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman, I can't help --

I hate to interrupt you because I'm fascinated by your narrative, but I was just reading your body language, and something tells me that you are worried about your dad or your granddad rolling over in their grave.

DR. CONE: That is a distinct possibility. Both my dad and my grandfather went to the Medical University, and both of them practiced medicine the old way. My granddad made house calls all over the place, and my dad didn't get to go to World War II, though his brother did, because he had a bleeding ulcer, and they wouldn't let him in. And poor fellow, he actually got the worst end of the deal. As anyone who's been in the military knows, you spend a lot of time sitting around playing checkers and so forth for a few minutes of terror here, there, and yonder. And the doctors in war had a little bit of that sort of experience, usually a lot of time moving around but not actually that much time doing the MASH stuff that you see on TV.

My dad, on the other hand, was left with the other group. They actually drafted half the doctors in the country to serve a 13 million-man army. But lo and behold, they left 150 million behind to be served by half of the remaining doctors.

My dad was in Orangeburg when he went into practice, and he was covering Orangeburg County, and that County is a hundred miles wide. And so he'd make a house call up in the Four Holes community, and then he'd go back and make house calls in Neeses. But it was some really interesting house calls since it was the only time in his practice that he ever knew that he actually had a gun pulled on him while he was in there trying to help somebody. He says it really kind of inspires you to do a good job.

(Laughter.)

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, the follow-up, in a perfect world -- we know that we are not in a perfect world as far as medical service delivery now. And if we had a perfect world a generation ago, we obviously didn't keep it. We've morphed and we've moved.

In a perfect world where you pay for services rendered, there's no service that you can't afford, and you have increasing lifespan and availability of life-extending services in medicine, how are we going to get back there?

DR. CONE: Well, I don't know that we want to get back there. I think we need to change to somewhere else. The back there meant that people got medical care for a whole lot of money, but then, if you didn't have any money, you just kind of didn't come see the doctor. So a great many people didn't go to doctors, or when they went, by the time they went, you could tell what they had because it was growing out of their chest or whatever. They just didn't get tended to in time for it to be helpful. That was not a bad way to do it.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, I'm thinking about doctor-patient relationship being intimate versus regulated by a government or an insurance company.

DR. CONE: It is. And I agree a hundred percent with that, and we've seen tremendous problems just in hospitals where suddenly all the doctors are now hospitalists, if anybody has had any experience with that.

You don't pay your doctor in the hospital. You pay the hospital. The hospital pays the doctor. Before, you paid your doctor, and the doctor was working for you, not the hospital. Right now, the hospital is working for the hospital, not for you. And that's subtle, but it is a striking change. You go and you say, Look, I want to stay an extra day because I'm feeling so bad I don't think I can go home. You're not paying his bill. He says, No. You've got to go. The hospital says you've been in here two days. You've got to go.

It's a difference in doctor-patient relationships.

Well, you sit around and you look at patients, and you talk to them. Over time, you learn a lot of things about them. And our current system has lost a great deal of that because you go to the emergency room, you see the ER doctors. You go to the hospital, you see the hospital doctors. Come back to your private practitioner, you may know him well, but then when you go in the hospital, he's not the one taking care of you.

And I practice in all of those worlds. I've done military practice for two years. I've done just straight-up private practice for probably about 25 -- well, I would say 30 years. And for the last seven or eight years or a little less than that, I've been practicing corporate medicine. And it is very different.

If I had to pick a way that would work, I would change our whole system. Nobody's going to do it, I don't think, but I would sure change it. And the system that I've seen that makes the most sense to me is the

one that I see appearing when you travel over in Germany. It's the German system. It's a single-payer system. You don't have insurance companies fighting over anything. The government is a single-payer system.

They do fix fees, but the fees are not determined by the government but by a group of business people, physicians, patients, who make the determination as to what will be paid. And it's changed periodically. The doctors -- as opposed to the British system where everybody's a member of the National Health Service.

That's not what happens. In Germany, you're put in a charge of a patient. They send you the bill. They send you the paperwork. Each doctor puts in his charge. The government sends the payment back to them. The doctor doesn't really work for the government. He's not a government employee. He may work -- a lot of them are private practitioners like we have now. A lot of them are government workers who work at the Reichshospital. A lot of them are people who work like for Kaiser -- well, it would be like Kaiser Permanente, but this would be IG Farben company and BMW, this sort of thing that we'd call commercial-type medicine.

All that's available. You have little groups, big groups, large group practices, and the doctors are paid on what you would call a fee-for-service basis, so you don't have the waits like you do in England, because the more patients a doctor sees, the more he makes. So that's a stimulus.

Second thing is you've got -- let's see. Another thing --

SENATOR VERDIN: Are you changing continents?

DR. CONE: Huh?

SENATOR VERDIN: Are you going to change continents on us?

DR. CONE: Well, a little bit. I do that. I ramble, and I apologize.

But the other thing that the Germans did that I think is great is, they let the German government become the purchaser, wholesale, for medication. Any pharmacist in the country can buy those medicines at the same price, anywhere.

What we've seen is corporate pharmacies coming in, dropping prices, and it's run almost all, if not all, of the small pharmaceutical or small drugstores out of business. They're not here anymore. And all of a sudden, we're just about four or five corporate businesses, and they keep gobbling each other up.

There was a kind of a gobble that was attempted last week. I don't think it completed itself, but that was Walgreens trying to gobble up Rite-Aid. I don't know exactly where that stands. I haven't been keeping up with the paper for the last few days. But that's a problem.

But in Germany, the government buys it and everybody has access to it, so that means you can have big pharmacies, little pharmacies, mom-and-pop drug stores, and so forth, and it keeps the cost down.

I would see something like that as my idea of the way medicine ought to be in the end.

Is that good for doctors who like to make a lot of money? No. But I'm in internal medicine, and I never have made a lot of money. So it wouldn't change my situation around much at all. I know there are doctors out there that make a million and \$2 million a year. I'm not one.

But it does have its problems, but I think it works better. It maintains the doctor-patient relationship. It maintains the patient's ability to see doctors because the doctors want to get paid more so they see more. You don't have the British system where somebody's waiting three years to get a coronary bypass. It's a system that seems to work. We've had a little problem with the Germans over the years, but they do things real nicely when they get it right.

So it was -- in answer to your questions, I think that's it.

SENATOR VERDIN: Oh, you're in trouble because there's nobody behind you yet except your brother.

(Laughter.)

DR. CONE: I don't want to hear from him.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions or comments?

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Henderson.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Well, I want to ask a question.

My concern is -- and MUSC does it too -- the whole trend toward basically non-doctors wanting to be or practicing medicine when they are not doctors.

We go through this fight. I know that you've been there, Mr. Chairman. I spent five years on Medical Affairs. Physicians assistants, APRNs, whatever, wanting to be able to have the ability to basically practice medicine on their own. And even pharmacists, if you look at the National Pharmacy -- I've followed this because I do this and I'm on another national board. It's all about now training pharmacists to have this full patient relationship thing where they are the first responders. They are the front lines.

And my fear is that that is where we're going with this lack of doctors going to rural areas. I sat through two hours of it last year. Well, the APRNs just want to have that because they serve people in communities where doctors don't want to go.

Is that the reason why we should give them the ability to see patients and diagnose illnesses and prescribe scheduled, controlled substances and all those other things that they want to do? In my opinion, no, but I think it's coming from the schools, and that's why I wanted to ask you about that.

DR. CONE: Well, that's one of the things that I've watched happen over the last 42 or 43 years. And I will say that there's a great deal about medicine that, when you've got a cold and a runny nose, it's not a big deal. You can get your medicine from the pharmacist. You can go to the nurse. You can go to the nurse practitioner. You can go to the doctor. Most anybody can do that. And I suspect many of you all have actually taken your children and put Band-Aids on their cuts. You probably did it for a little less than \$60 a Band-Aid. But you can do it.

Medicine is not magic. It really isn't. Anybody can practice a form of medicine. In the old days, if you wanted to be a doctor, you just hung out your sign and said, I'm a doctor. There were no requirements, no educational stuff. And some people are pretty good at it. They really are.

I don't think that we don't want to have folks like that, but somewhere along the way, you need to have somebody who knows that the patient who came in with belly pain didn't have just a bad belly, just a bellyache, just ate too much.

I had a patient like that about three and half weeks ago, four weeks ago now. A patient in their 70s came in with sudden onset of abdominal pain, but it wasn't right. It wasn't crampy. The patient wasn't having that sort of problem. The patient didn't have any fever. The patient wasn't vomiting or nauseated. They weren't hungry. They just had this belly pain.

I conjured over that for a bit and got some blood work, and nothing kind of showed up. The patient went home. The belly pain went away. They came back in confused and hadn't been confused before.

It turned out -- because at that point we put the patient in the hospital, and the patient had an infection on a heart valve, and these infectious particles had been breaking off and going to her belly, probably to her spleen or liver, and she was having a small infarct in her liver or spleen producing the pain she was having, which would make it a really strange pain.

And then in the hospital, she was found on CT scan to have a head full of little spots that were emboli from that thing.

Now, how do you get the nurse practitioner or the physician's assistant to find that? It's tough.

But I served my time in the Army at Moncrief. We kept the Vietcong at arm's length. They never got close.

But up there they had an arrangement where any trooper who was in basic training who had a temperature of 100.6 or higher would be admitted to the hospital. And they did that because if you admit about 50 patients to the hospital, maybe 75, with a cold and a little bit of fever, one of them has meningitis. The question is, Which one? The symptoms are the same to start it off.

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Well, the reason I ask that is because the medical universities are the ones that are promoting this. They see it as a degree field where they can get students -- and I'll just finish with this.

Dr. Paul Catalano is a good friend of mine. He's the chairman of admissions at Greenville Medical School. And we were talking about it one day, and he said, My biggest question that I get from students that are applying here is, Tell me why I shouldn't just go be a PA, because I can practice medicine as a PA and not have one-third of the debt. And our educational system is promoting that.

I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. I'll make a motion for a favorable report for Dr. Cone.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion and a second. Any other discussion?

Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: The ayes have it.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MS. CASTO: Thank you very much.

We're going back to Coastal Carolina. If you will turn to Tab R, Patrick Sparks from Myrtle Beach.

The skinny on him is on Page 17. He is running for the At-Large Seat 15 with a term to expire in 2021. He is a new candidate running unopposed.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. SPARKS: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you. Take your seat and make sure your light's burning.

If you would like to make a brief statement.

MR. SPARKS: Happy to be here. And honestly, I think it's a fantastic opportunity to represent Coastal Carolina University. I'm a graduate and support our Coastal Carolina University both in my time and charitable contributions. My wife and I and my daughters attend a lot of the events at Coastal, and if chosen to be a part of this, I think my service to the school would be a benefit.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll give you a few minutes to catch up on your notes.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I noticed you said the biggest weakness is the age of school endowment.

When did Coastal -- maybe you know or maybe you don't. When did Coastal separate from USC, if you're familiar with that?

MR. SPARKS: I am. As a matter of fact, I was there. And had I had the opportunity my freshman year -- had I been eligible to graduate in my freshman year, I had the opportunity to look at it and say I either wanted to be a USC degree or a Coastal Carolina degree. So I graduated in '96, so that would have been -- it was either '88 or '89 for them to have that separation. Originally we were a charter institution off the College of Charleston.

So going back to your original statement about the age of the University and us being a four-year institution that originally started out as a two-year institution under the College of Charleston -- and then subsequently under the umbrella of USC, and then on our own for the past, roughly, 22 or 24 years.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, I'm assuming, since Clemson and Carolina have been around so long, the older graduates are usually the higher donors to the school because they've been more successful in business for a longer period of time.

Is that why you don't have as big an endowment, or is there some other reason?

MR. SPARKS: Well, you mentioned it first when you said the age of the institutions. Absolutely. Clemson and USC have been around a lot longer. We are just moving into Division I this year. Athletics has a lot to do with it. That's the exposure to the institution. Quite honestly, USC and Clemson have a lot more exposure simply based on being in Division I and being successful in what they've done in the past.

And quite frankly, we've got a lot of USC and Clemson graduates in Myrtle Beach, and their dollars -- Myrtle Beach, Horry County, surrounding areas. But their dollars tend to go back to the institutions they graduated from.

[SJ]

So we kind of fight an uphill battle. We're in a transient area where a lot of our people have moved into the area, and they know about Coastal, but they are fans of Ohio State or Penn State or other universities.

I've worked some with the Office of Philanthropy, and they are doing a good job trying to raise dollars for the University, but going back to the original statement, our endowment isn't where some of the other institutions are, simply based on age and exposure.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I imagine as time goes by, it probably will go up a good bit.

MR. SPARKS: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon. Thank you for your willingness to serve.

You're with Sparks Toyota. Is that correct?

MR. SPARKS: Correct?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Are you the owner there or manager?

MR. SPARKS: It's a family business. I'm an owner, yes.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And how many students does Coastal graduate on a yearly basis, kind of talking about the growth of the alumni and things from that standpoint?

MR. SPARKS: We crested at 10,000 last year for the first time in terms of enrollment --

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Total cost is roughly 2500 or thereabouts?

MR. SPARKS: Right. We were around 23 this past year.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Okay. And I think you talk about the ideal ratio is 75/25.

MR. SPARKS: Probably more of a gut opinion. I don't know that I have statistics to 100-percent back that up. We do have a lot of out-of-state cotton and of course out-of-state folks help pay the bills, quite honestly, so from our perspective, that's what the numbers are. I'd like to see it a little bit differently, and so that's why I gave that opinion.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And does the University pretty well give deference, though, to in-state, that virtually every -- if they meet the qualifications, if they are in-state, are they accepted at Coastal?

MR. SPARKS: Absolutely. Absolutely. As a matter of fact, we've got a couple charter programs with Horry-Georgetown Technical College, which is literally probably one-half mile in front of where Coastal's campus is. There are some charter programs there for some students to be able to go in the summertime to get their grades to where they could possibly meet entrance exam scores.

So there are a lot of programs in the works like that to try and help get more of the students into the University.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions, comments?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Move favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

Seconds heard?

REPRESENTATIVE HENDERSON: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any discussion?

We'll take it to a vote.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MR. SPARKS: Thank you for your time.

MS. CASTO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Welcome, sir.

Medical University of South Carolina. Richard M. Christian from Greenwood.

DR. CHRISTIAN: Correct.

MS. CASTRO: Dr. Christian is running for the 3rd Congressional District, a medical seat, with a term to expire 2018. He's filling the unexpired term -- running to fill the unexpired term due to the resignation of Dr. Stanley Baker.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Good afternoon, Doctor.

DR. CHRISTIAN: Good afternoon.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

DR. CHRISTIAN: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to make a brief statement on why you'd like to serve on the Medical University Board of Trustees?

DR. CHRISTIAN: I think just because I've been involved in medicine all my life. I'm interested in where it's going in the State. I support the State. I support the University. I graduated from the Medical University. I've been in private practice in Greenwood. I have a lot of young people that I am around who are interested in medicine. We rotate with the residents through the hospital in Greenwood. So just to continue to improve the medical care of the people of South Carolina.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEEELER: Thank you.

Any questions or comments for Dr. Christian?

How bad was the traffic coming in, Doctor?

DR. CHRISTIAN: Not bad.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Going out, it will be worse.

DR. CHRISTIAN: A little bit worse than Greenwood but not bad.

SENATOR VERDIN: Did you come across the -- I'm just going to follow up on the logistics. Did you come across 34, or did you come down --

DR. CHRISTIAN: I came 34 to Newberry and then got on 26.

SENATOR VERDIN: Well, you've probably made that trip many a time.

I remember our poor colleague -- well, our colleague, former Senator John Drummond, was always talking about that dead of winter trip back home and the fact that the sun set right on the yellow line on 34. And usually he was looking at nothing but logging trucks coming at him the other direction.

DR. CHRISTIAN: I'll tell you what. When you come off of 26 and get on 34, you're looking straight into the sun. You've got to pause for a minute and make sure you're okay.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Davis, do you have a question?

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: I do. Thank you.

I was looking over the information that you sent to us, and you said that you felt like one of the ways to improve the school would be to implement some more aggressive -- to be more aggressive with the latest technology.

DR. CHRISTIAN: I do.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: What do you mean specifically by that comment?

DR. CHRISTIAN: I think that definitely medicine has changed just in the 25 years that I've practiced. And I think it's important for -- especially the -- I'm more related to the common practice of medicine, so I would worry about the residents with what they are to face in the future. There are all of the medical records that we are now having to use. There are hospital acquisitions versus being in private practice.

I was lucky enough to serve on the Board of Visitors for the Medical University and was able to see a lot of new, innovative products that are coming out and the teaching methods that they use for the residents now. It's a booming place now, and hopefully we keep it that way, and we keep the residents and the people who were being trained, keep them in the State of South Carolina.

[SJ]

As we all get older, we want the best doctors possible in all the communities that we want to retire to. So hopefully it stays that way in South Carolina.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Is there any specific technology that you are thinking about?

DR. CHRISTIAN: Well, I'm in orthopedics. Orthopedics changes dramatically all the time as far as the technology. Students are so much more adept to the technology now than what we had. They grow up using stuff that we weren't using when I was growing up. So I know that they taught a lot of the students just with mannequins so they could reproduce things that they saw in the field, which I thought was very interesting. I think a lot of it has to do with trying to get them educated businesswise too because medicine is a business now, which we lacked completely when I was in school.

So anything that makes them more apt to be able to be successful in the field.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Okay.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Representative Whitmire.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Good afternoon.

DR. CHRISTIAN: Good afternoon.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And good luck going up 26. It's not going to be fun, I can tell you.

You mentioned about trying to keep more of your students that graduate in South Carolina. I totally agree with that. I'm from a rural part of the State in Walhalla. We are having a real hard time getting anyone interested in moving up to be a physician in the area. I'm sure a lot of other small communities are the same way.

Do you have any ideas about how we can attract -- the same thing is happening in education too, where it's hard to get -- maybe not where I live but in certain parts of the State, getting quality educators to come also.

Do you have any ideas how we might attract more physicians to our area?

DR. CHRISTIAN: First of all, I think they've got to want to live in the small community, and then I think they have to have a draw to the community. So they have to have a very successful hospital, medical community.

I know that a lot of the practices in South Carolina are being bought by the hospitals. We were bought about a year ago, and it has been -- you relinquish all your autonomy, but you are also protected in certain ways. So there has to be a very strong hospital to support you. And then

they are looking for shorter hours and more money. So the hospital has to be willing to pay them like they want to be paid.

And I think -- I couldn't be happier in Greenwood. I grew up in Greenwood, and I was not going to practice in Greenwood, but my wife told me I was going to practice in Greenwood.

But the most important thing to me was the community and the doctors that were there. When you work hard, you spend more time with your partners, so you have to have good partners to be able to go through the daily life of being a doctor.

And I think that we lose a lot of those to the bigger cities because there's more to do in the bigger cities. So I think that you have to surround good doctors with good working conditions. And that's about the best I can do.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: I agree. It's a fact of life. You are going to make more money in Greenville or Columbia or Charleston than you would in Walhalla. And you, and Dr. Cone before you, seem to be that type of physician that we just don't seem to have much anymore, that's a member of the community as opposed to just going where the dollars are.

DR. CHRISTIAN: You have to offset it with your life. What are your goals? What do you want to do? Do you want to be able to have a 20-minute ride that you see a couple of cars when you ride in at 6 o'clock in the morning, or do you want to be in traffic?

When I started off, there was an orthopedic practice in Greenwood, and my partner and I broke away from them and started our own group. And now we've consolidated all the orthopedics, so there's one group in Greenwood, and we've tried to surround ourselves with really good people and good partners to where everybody kind of is individualized and enjoying what they do.

So it's been a really great experience for me. And being from Greenwood, I'm used to a small town. I trained in Greenville, and Greenville has changed completely from when I was there. But there has to be an attraction for them to come. The hospital has to be technology sound, willing to provide the needs of the physicians, and a good working relationship.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And you know, you're talking about hospitals. Our local hospital in Oconee recently went in with Greenville.

DR. CHRISTIAN: Right.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Didn't Laurens do the same thing?

And I'm not sure that's such a good thing that you get this huge conglomerate because you kind of lose that human element, in my opinion, that you used to have with the smaller ones. But I know it's a financial thing.

DR. CHRISTIAN: It is. And Greenwood is staying alone right now, so we are not really associated -- I mean, we're associated with Greenville in certain ways, but we are not bought out by a large group.

The larger hospitals can provide certain things that the other smaller hospitals are not. And that's great. If I have pediatric things that my partners don't feel comfortable with and I don't feel comfortable with, then Greenville is happy to take them, which is perfect.

But the small places have to survive. I really believe that. We work very closely with Abbeville, and it's a small community. So I think the lifestyle that I have in Greenwood -- there's not a whole lot of people who can live on the lake and have 20 minutes to ride back and forth to town and feel like you're in solitude once you get out there. So it's been a good fit for me.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Well, the medical practice definitely has changed. My father-in-law was a practicing physician, and my wife used to tell me she'd ride with him when he was young to go visit patients. That won't ever happen again, obviously.

DR. CHRISTIAN: It happens a little bit. I still will go see my patients. And I'm not trying to say anything, but there's definitely people that you feel like you can help by just checking on them. So it still happens a little bit, not near like it did.

My father was a physician, and he's been in lots of people's houses and everything else, so he probably knows more about their living conditions than maybe he needed to. But there has to be the human element. And it is.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: And I agree. I just feel like we are losing that. Maybe that's just me. But it's almost just become a corporate type of environment.

DR. CHRISTIAN: And that's one of the things I want to see. I want to see where the people go. If they go off to be trained, do they come back to South Carolina, and do we have needs that we can't take care of in the smaller communities? Because I love the smaller communities.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMIRE: Sorry I took so much time, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: No problem.

Any other questions or comments?

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I do.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Alexander has a question.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

From the information you provided here, you were on the Board of Visitors. How long were you on the Board?

DR. CHRISTIAN: It was a two-year term.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Just one two-year term.

DR. CHRISTIAN: Yes, sir.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: How was your attendance? Did they meet once a quarter?

DR. CHRISTIAN: Twice a year.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Just twice a year. Did you make all of those meetings?

DR. CHRISTIAN: I did.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Anything within your practice that you are doing now that would prohibit or be a constraint of you being able to attend board meetings, or is that something you have the ability to adjust your schedule?

DR. CHRISTIAN: I think if I'm going to run, I'm going to be committed completely. I think you don't need to be on the board unless you're going to show up.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: And one thing as you sit here, one of the biggest weaknesses is that they need to teach business practices. So they currently don't. And I agree with you, but those need to be taught to doctors, and they don't do that at MUSC now. There are not any courses that you are aware of.

DR. CHRISTIAN: Not that I'm aware of. And it is a business.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: It is.

DR. CHRISTIAN: You come out, and you buy a building. You have 40 employees. You don't know anything about managing employees, managing the person who is going to manage your office. There are all kinds of needs with X-rays and all the equipment that we use in the office. We have an MRI unit. We have physical therapy in the office. So it is a business.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: I agree. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

Any other questions?

Senator Verdin.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman, Dr. Christian answered the questions I would have had.

I was curious about your family history. You said it was a medical family, so it was your father --

DR. CHRISTIAN: My father was an internist, and all of my uncles were physicians. All of my aunts were nurses. My sister is a physician. I have another sister that's a lawyer. She's the black sheep of the family. (Laughter.)

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: What made you want to go into orthopedics?

DR. CHRISTIAN: You know, I think that -- we lived on a little, small lake. We were supposed to live in the country. We lived four miles out of town. And the doctor that was one of my father's best friends was an orthopedic surgeon. And just his lifestyle.

It was really the only thing that I wanted to do. If I had not matched in orthopedics, I don't know what I would have done. My uncle was an orthopedist, and Dr. McQuown, who started the orthopedic practice in Greenwood, was basically the person I felt like I wanted to be like. So that was my whole path the entire way. I wanted to be an orthopedist. Thank goodness I was able to do it.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Verdin, I cut you off. I'm sorry.

SENATOR VERDIN: No.

I was also assuming that your practice -- Lakelands, you said you sold. I'm assuming that's in Self now.

DR. CHRISTIAN: We did. Part of it.

SENATOR VERDIN: I thought it might possibly have been some other system, and I'm curious about that because we now have GHS down in Laurens, and we have an outpatient clinic with Self in Laurens as well.

DR. CHRISTIAN: We have a physician who goes to the satellite in Laurens once a week. Self is pretty aggressive.

SENATOR VERDIN: My hat's off. Before the affiliation, I was jealous of Greenwood, still am, just because it's progressive and cutting edge and committed to our lower Piedmont counties that you all have been under the Self umbrella. I'm thankful and appreciative you're there, and I look forward to your services.

DR. CHRISTIAN: We go to Saluda, Edgefield, McCormick, Abbeville, and Laurens.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions?

Do you perform a procedure where you put cement in a vertebrae?

DR. CHRISTIAN: I do not. That's taken care of by the neurosurgeons.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Okay.

DR. CHRISTIAN: You haven't had that, have you?

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Yes, sir. I have. I fell and fractured my L-3 vertebrae, and two weeks ago or three weeks ago, they put the cement in there, and it was a miracle.

DR. CHRISTIAN: Yes, it's almost -- it's a pain relief.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I could dance the jig the minute I came to.

DR. CHRISTIAN: Great.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any other questions or comments?

SENATOR VERDIN: Favorable.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

SENATOR ALEXANDER: Second.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

All in favor say aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Opposed, no.

And the ayes have it.

Thank you for your willingness to serve, Doctor.

DR. CHRISTIAN: I appreciate the opportunity. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Have a safe trip back.

DR. CHRISTIAN: It should have lasted a little bit longer. I'm not sure I want to go get back in it.

(Laughter.)

DR. CHRISTIAN: I appreciate it. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

MS. CASTO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: We will recede until 10:30 in the morning when we will take up Daniel Moore, the Coastal Carolina University At-Large Seat 14, and I think that will complete our screening. So I will see you at 10:30 in the morning in 4...

MS. CASTO: 407.

CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: 407.

You all have a good evening.

(The Committee stands in recess at approximately 4:07 p.m.)