Dear Campus Colleagues,

It is going to be a wonderful week for USC Aiken with many guests on campus and opportunities to demonstrate the many ways we “live our mission.” Please find, following this message, a few of the highlights taking place this week.

Meanwhile, I wanted to provide some good news on the progress of the state budget. While it is still too early to celebrate (and to paraphrase Frost, “miles to go before we sleep”), the Senate Finance Committee budget is shaping up. Special thanks are due to Senator Peeler for making a case for higher education and to Senator Setzler for championing USC Aiken during the Finance Committee meetings. You will note that the Finance Committee’s recommendation to the full Senate has a welcome addition in new operating funds.

**Highlights from the Senate Finance Committee Recommendations**

USC campuses receive new recurring operating funds for tuition mitigation
- USC Columbia $4,566,081
- USC Aiken $397,858
- USC Beaufort $397,858
- USC Upstate $397,858
- USC Lancaster $100,000
- USC Salkehatchie $100,000
- USC Sumter $100,000
- USC Union $100,000

Capital Reserve Fund (Unchanged from House budget)
- USC Aiken - $3.5M Penland HVAC
- USC Beaufort – Library/Classroom Expansion - $1,750,000
- USC Beaufort – College Security Enhancements - $192,000
- USC Beaufort – Technology Upgrades - $556,434
- USC Upstate – Smith Science Building Renovation - $3,500,000
- USC Lancaster – Maintenance and Renovation - $1,800,000
• USC Salkehatchie – Maintenance and Renovation - $1,200,000
• USC Sumter – Science Building Renovation - $2,250,000
• USC Union – Maintenance and Renovation - $841,000
• USC Union – Technology and Classroom Upgrades - $359,000

While this is all good news, we do expect more stress on our budget due to that there is a desire to pass several costs to the institutions. This includes an increase in the portion of health insurance premiums paid by the university and an increase in the institutional commitment to retirements (as you know, the state pension is underwater, so more of the costs are being shifted to the institutions).

We expect the full Senate to take up the budget this week, so we will continue our lobbying efforts at the statehouse with the hopes of keeping the increase in funds and the capital reserve funding for the Penland HVAC.

Meanwhile, please be aware of these exciting events on the campus this week.

Leadership Aiken County Visiting Campus- April 10
Student Leadership Awards Banquet- April 11
Scholars Showcase-April 12-13
S.C. Humanities Festival-April 12-14
Semi Toned Concert-April 13
COPLAC Undergraduate Research Conference-April 13-14

Sincerely,

Sandra J. Jordan
Chancellor