

A RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA PROVIDING THE S.C. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION THE FUNDING NECESSARY TO RETIRE THE DEBT OF THE PORTION OF I-185 KNOWN AS THE ‘SOUTHERN CONNECTOR’ ALLOWING FOR REMOVAL OF THE TOLL.

WHEREAS, Greenville County is dedicated to the growth and prosperity of the residents of South Carolina and strives to consistently create opportunities for investments and jobs that allow our community and state to grow; and

WHEREAS, internationally known for its exceptional business climate, Greenville County is home to 40 Fortune 500 companies, 155 headquarters, and more than 700 national and international manufactures do business in Greenville County or in neighboring counties; and

WHEREAS, a key feature of Greenville County and the rest of the Upstate region’s success is the outstanding accessibility provided by major highways; and

WHEREAS the 16-mile “Southern Connector” was built through the state’s first and only public-private partnership and opened in March of 2001; and

WHEREAS, the connector is located within Greenville County’s borders but serves the entire state providing south-to-north access to Greenville, Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee counties as well as north-to-south access to Laurens County, the Midlands and the coast; and

WHEREAS, the area adjacent to the “Connector” is ripe with economic potential featuring land suitable for industry complimented by local communities with a built in workforce and infrastructure, and this includes areas in and around SCTAC, a global breeding ground for innovative research, and advanced manufacturing; and

WHEREAS the state Department of Transportation owns and maintains the road, with the “Connector” being managed by Connector 2000 Association which uses tolls to pay for maintenance and satisfying bond obligations; and

WHEREAS, the tolls collected are used by the state DOT to maintain the road, with no tax dollars having ever been spent on the road, however, toll revenues have not been enough for Connector 2000 to meet its bond obligation; and

WHEREAS, in June of 2010 Connector 2000 Association filed a Chapter 9 bankruptcy petition for the purpose of debt adjustment, allowing the Connector to continue to operate as normal; and

WHEREAS, traffic on the Connector has risen each year and on average more than 18,000 vehicles per day use the roadway, but usage is below expectations and tolls are seen as being a significant disincentive to use the road; and

WHEREAS, the removal of tolls on the Connector would create significant economic development in an area of our state primed for growth;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Greenville County Council respectfully requests that our Greenville County delegation, Upstate delegation and all State legislators use state funding to invest in our economic growth by paying off the approximate \$150 million debt on the “Southern Connector,” which would lead to removal of the toll and creation of tremendous economic growth greatly benefiting the state both financially and in quality of life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Greenville County Council believes such action taken immediately would continue our state’s current economic progress as it greatly enhances the connection between the industries of the Upstate and our coastal ports securing future growth and new development for the State of South Carolina.

DONE IN REGULAR MEETING THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2018.

ATTEST:

Herman G. Kirven, Jr., Chairman
Greenville County Council

Regina McCaskill
Clerk to Council

Joseph M. Kernell
County Administrator