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## Legislative Technology Agenda 2003

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The South Carolina Technology Alliance was formed as a 501 (c) (3) private/public corporation with a board of directors that represents many of the state's leading technology companies and research universities. Funding has been provided by a combination of public and private dollars, including government grants, corporate and personal contributions. The Alliance is now working to build a strong economic base of technology companies across South Carolina. Generating a larger base of rapidly growing, locally owned technology companies will jumpstart the state's per capita income levels and enable workers to experience outstanding employment opportunities. Along the same lines, the Alliance is working with our research universities to enhance South Carolina's ability to incubate and grow technology intensive companies. This initiative includes working with universities and our technology colleges to set up incubators for fledgling technology companies statewide. Our Incubators will provide staffing, volunteers, and other resources to assist new companies in getting off the ground faster. In addition, the Alliance is working with venture capital companies and our state leaders to provide and/or ensure that the seed and angel capital necessary for these new and expanding companies to grow their businesses. Other goals and objectives for the South Carolina Technology Alliance are as follows: 1. Prepare a technology-capable workforce, 2. Create a business environment that is friendly to technology-intensive companies, 3. Invest to expand the base of rapidly growing companies and start-up businesses and 4. Invest in world-class university research that directly impacts our states economic development.

### **Action Areas:**

To provide our legislative leaders with the information, knowledge and creative thinking necessary to support the South Carolina technology community and the Alliance, to present a technology agenda rich with opportunities and to ensure that we exceed our goals and commitment to grow the per capita incomes of all South Carolinians and to work together as we "*Create South Carolina's Future Through Technology*". The Alliance will continue to develop, monitor, compare, track and report on our states progress in implementing "*The Invented Here: The 2002 Southern Innovation Index*" which was developed by our states technology leaders and the Southern Technology Council. We plan to use the *index* as our report card that placed on our website ([www.sctech.org](http://www.sctech.org)) and will be updated regularly to highlight our progress and results as they become available. This will allow us to create and measure our successes that are unique to South Carolina's challenges and resources.

### **Situation:**

Other states have passed technology legislation that has leapfrogged them well past our state. They have also passed legislation that established venture funds for growing high tech entrepreneurial businesses, and have created funding sources for their high tech initiatives that ensure their success as a high tech state. To compete in the Next Economy our state must be vigilant and courageous in our technology decision-making, if we are to gain any ground on the other states. Hopefully, our technology agenda for 2003 and this *Index* will demonstrate our strong aspiration as a state to make enormous improvement as cyber friendly state.

### **Legislative Agenda:**

- Provide state supported venture funds and matching funds from state and federal grants received for high tech business economic development and implement state incentives for companies and individuals that invest in qualifying start-up companies. This will be a non-profit foundation designed to increase economic growth and help diversify the economy of South Carolina into knowledge-based businesses. Some of these grants will be in the form of recoverable draws or loans on against future success.
- Establish Rural Technology Zones with high-speed communications and training to promote the growth of small high tech entrepreneurial technology businesses in our rural areas. Create Technology Villages across our state to ensure creative centers (entrepreneurial councils) for our high tech entrepreneurs. The economic well being of many of our rural areas will depend on access to broadband Internet connections.

- Enact “E-Gov South Carolina” bill that ensures that our small technology businesses across our state have the preferred vendor status in all bids, and that an up to 15% price difference be given to South Carolina locally owned businesses. Require our Material Management Offices and other government organizations to publish a monthly report on the results of all bids where South Carolina businesses were not selected as the provider.
- Amend legislation to allow university research personnel to benefit from commercialization of their ideas and intellectual property, while allowing the universities to benefit from the royalties, patents, and recognition. Also, introduce a plan to standardize technology transfer policies that result in transferring the intellectual property of our universities and colleges into patents and commercial markets that are being developed by our professors, students and inventors.
- Create the position of South Carolina Secretary of Technology, reporting directly to the Governor, with the responsibility to assist the Governor and the legislature to study, develop, enact, and assess public policy, legislation, and regulatory issues so that we can be perceived as a technology state and tech leader. This should be a cabinet level position similar to our neighboring states of Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia and Kentucky who have a Secretary or Senior Advisor to the Governor who are helping to address the vast, and ever so rapidly changing, issues surrounding science and technology.
- Develop new criteria and higher standards for our research universities knowledge based high tech incubators to be more inline with other “best in class” incubators found at the top research universities that are the standards setters like MIT, Caltech, Stanford, Duke and the UNC/NCSU centennial campus. Our incubators must follow more closely the newly created cluster managers and our Research Centers of Excellence models and our new drive for true knowledge based companies. This can also be tied to some of the lottery over flow dollars.
- Draft legislation that would allow municipalities to invest in Venture Capital Seed funds (i.e. City of Columbia has 100 million dollars in the water fund, which is currently yielding only 2.2 percent). This bill should allow the use of these under utilized cash reserves to be invested in venture capital opportunities paying more than (ROI) and/or growth rates of more than 10-20%.
- Introduce a bill that will help to control and/or eliminate Internet and e-mail spam that has become a serious problem. This is wasting time and causing numerous problems and costs for our e-commerce businesses and citizens all over our state. This has become a more frustrating problem than the mass-market phone calls to our businesses and homes. South Carolina could demonstrate national leadership in this area. Our state could call for national action on this serious problem. A call to action to stop spam and save millions of hours in wasted time, as well as, wasted time for the citizens of America.
- Introduce a bill that establishes a “Governor’s Commission on State Government” efficiency and effectiveness, particularly as it relates to technology infrastructure, telecommunications, networking and procurement across our state. Develop recommendations for making our governmental services anywhere, anytime, and now! Streamline, consolidation and reducing agencies and services that do not support our citizens.
- Introduce the idea of Open Source Software and request legislative action that requires our state agencies to evaluate possible saving using open source software. Open source software will require a unique paradigm shift in our IT development. The saving realized by our state could add up to millions and millions of dollars in savings to our state. This is another area where our state can be a national model for implementing open source software. Current examples of open source are Linux operating system, Apache web server software, Samba filing sharing programs, MySQL data base software and programming languages such as PERL, PHP, and Python.

Any questions regarding The South Carolina Technology Alliance Legislative Agenda should be directed to:

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