

Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman
March 6, 2008
Employment Security Commission Opens New Facility

Ladies and Gentlemen it is my pleasure to be here today representing your Beaufort County Council. Congratulations to all of you for your good work in service to the people of Beaufort County and throughout the Lowcountry region.

Allow me to read to you the mission statement of Beaufort County Council:

Beaufort County government exists to serve the people of Beaufort County in a cost-effective manner, so all our citizens may enjoy and appreciate a protected quality of life, natural and developed resources in a coastal environment, a diverse heritage, and economic well-being.

It is the last part of our mission statement, “economic well being” that marks the significance of this day. This new center represents a strategic effort among several partners at all levels of government. It offers a multi-pronged approach to sustaining our economy through multiple services to job seekers and employers. These coalitions and partnerships help secure our economic well being and are vital to our council mission.

We must all continue to work together to drive the economic engine of this region. It takes all hands. We must continue to strive to meet the needs of industry and our workforce. Your Beaufort County Council has been moving forward with developing new partnerships and new incentives for attracting, promoting and diversifying industry in Beaufort County. This includes joint funding with the City of Beaufort in support of redevelopment, an agreement with the Town of Bluffton for an industrial park and developing opportunities through Multi County Industrial Park zones as well as working closely with the Lowcountry Economic Network to the offer incentives and infrastructure necessary for attracting businesses to Beaufort County.

Economic diversification is one of the major goals of your Beaufort County Council. It’s a complex issue. Everyone wants clean industry with good wages and low environmental impact and we can’t attract high quality, new industry without a ready workforce. This means training, education and opportunity. It means good transportation infrastructure and appropriate zoning regulations that support industry and protect the environment. We are making progress and the thousands of job seekers and thousands of employers that will be helped by this new center will contribute much to our effort.

The Beaufort County Comprehensive Plan has identified the needs of industry and made recommendations. The comprehensive plan is not just the work of your county council – it represents partnerships and multiple agreements between the county and municipalities. I am

extremely pleased of the accomplishments we have all made by working together as we face the future. This new workforce center, like the comprehensive plan, is a product of multiple partnerships and cooperation...two ingredients necessary for success in economic development today. It is the most effective way to ensure progress and the economic well being of our citizens. Again, my heartfelt congratulations.