

Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman
August 2011
SCAC Annual Conference

Welcome, each and every one of you, to Hilton Head Island.

Allow me to begin by thanking the South Carolina Association of Counties for selecting Hilton Head Island and Beaufort County as the location for the annual conference again this year. This makes the 23rd year, since 1988, that you all have made this wise choice.

You like us! You really do! And I can tell you sincerely and without hesitation that we most certainly like you. Thank you for visiting us here in the beautiful Beaufort County Lowcountry once again.

I don't have to tell you that during this economic downturn our visitors have become dearer to us than ever before here in Beaufort County. I'm sure you understand full well the value of tourism in your individual communities. It is essential to the health of the statewide economy and to every city, town, and county in South Carolina. Here on Hilton Head Island and in Beaufort County as a whole – our tourism industry is thriving despite the challenges other economic sectors face. You are part of the reason we are doing so well. Not only because of the dollars you will spend while you are here, but because of the successful advocacy you provide County governments, the strength we build when we, as County governments, work together.

Remember this as you visit our many attractions where you will be spending your money. Whether it's at one of our dolphin tours on a waterway, or at a local golf course, restaurant, art gallery or shopping center, your dollars will come back to you through your investment in South Carolina's greatest industry. Please enjoy every opportunity to make the most of your visit. It will help us here locally, and it will be fun! I promise to do the same when I visit your part of the state.

The important thing is, as County leaders, we continue to support one another, find ways to solve our mutual problems, and face the challenges presented to us with a united front. We may not always agree on every solution, but we work cooperatively, as partners. It is my wish that during our time together here on Hilton Head Island, we will renew our enthusiasm for the tasks and responsibilities we have chosen to shoulder and find the inspiration necessary for furthering our commitment to serving our respective constituencies.

Please relax during your stay. Enjoy yourselves. It will revitalize your purpose and the results will show in your good work for all the counties and all the citizens of our state.