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**Sample Letter to State Legislator**

The Honorable….

Dear Representative or Senator

I sincerely hope this email finds you and your loved ones well and safe in these fearful times.

As a SC Higher Education professional and member of the American Association of University Professors, I am gravely concerned about the ensuing economic crisis facing our state’s colleges and universities. Financial effects of the COVID – 19 pandemic will likely undermine the missions of our institutions by

* reducing or eliminating academic programs and colleges;
* limiting or weakening curricula;
* causing reactive changes in academic policies;
* reducing or eliminating staff and faculty who are vital to serving students;
* effecting the closure of some institutions; and
* reducing the number of residents with a Bachelor’s degree or higher.

As an indicator of how this threat to higher education may affect SC’s economy, the *South Carolina 2019 Economic Analysis Report* shows data and analyses that quantify them. Figure five of the report displays information on education and economics gathered over a five year period between 2013 and 2017. It states:

Over time, lower percentages of the population, aged 25 and older, have an education of less than a high school diploma, and higher percentages obtained more than a high school education. In 2017, 87.4 percent of the population aged 25 and older had a high school education, and 28 percent held a bachelor’s degree or higher. The increasingly educated population bodes well for the state economically. (p.13)

I very strongly urge that you and your colleagues to approve of the Higher Education recommendations made by the Governor and his accelerateSC-Resources Team. I believe they will be vital stabilizing, preserving, and enhancing higher educational opportunities for our citizens as we persevere to survive and recover from the devastating financial effects of the COVID – 19 pandemic. Monies allocated to higher education are monies that will return compound gains for public *and* private interests.

Respectfully,