

For Immediate Release

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA ADOPTS 'CITIZEN-CENTRIC' APPROACH TO FINANCIAL REPORTING

Timely information key to holding elected officials accountable, says Governor

Washington D.C. August 26, 2008 --- South Carolina has become the latest state to publish a Citizen-Centric Report as a means of communicating clear and understandable government financial information to its taxpayers, and encouraging citizen-involvement in the state's budgeting process, the Association of Government Accountants (AGA) announced today.

The Citizen-Centric Report, recommended by AGA, is a four-page document produced annually, that clearly expresses the state of government finances in a way that avoids complex, off-putting technical detail and presents information in a visually appealing, clear and straightforward format. AGA's initiative is an important element of its *Advancing Government Accountability* initiative, which has seen increasing adoption of the Citizen-Centric Report by state and local governments as well as by federal government departments.

South Carolina's report follows the suggested format, with the first page laying out community information, the second, a performance report on key missions and service, the third cost and revenue information and the fourth, a look forward to the year ahead.

"For our system to work, citizens need access to timely information about government outcomes so that they can hold their elected leaders accountable for what they are or are not doing," Governor Sanford said. "This report gives citizens another tool for accessing that information and I want to credit Comptroller General Eckstrom for recognizing this and moving us forward on this front."

South Carolina Comptroller General Richard Eckstrom, CPA, explained the thinking behind South Carolina's decision to publish a Citizen-Centric Report, "I believe that the citizens of the 21st century rightly demand increased levels of accountability and transparency from their governments. Our Citizen-Centric Report is intended to present easily understandable information that serves to ensure that citizens understand how their government is serving them. For that reason I see our Citizen-Centric report as vital."

Relmond Van Daniker DBA CPA, Executive Director of AGA commented, "Both Governor Sanford and Comptroller Eckstrom recognize the enormous value of financial reporting that citizens can easily understand. Traditional financial reporting of reams of financial data, though necessary, has little value for the average citizen. I congratulate South Carolina on taking this important step towards increased government accountability and transparency."

South Carolina Citizen-Centric Release August 26, 2008

South Carolina's Citizen-Centric Report is available online at <http://www.cg.state.sc.us/>. It will also be made available to citizens through the forty-six County Treasurers' Offices and each County Library. **ENDS**

Notes for Editors:

About AGA's *Advancing Government Accountability* Mission: Our mission is focused on developing the very best new thinking and practices in government accountability and transparency and promoting their value to the public and to those in government. AGA's mission strongly promotes the value of government financial information that is clear and understandable; updated regularly and often; delivered to all and easy to locate; and is honest in breadth and technically accurate in detail.

About AGA: The Association of Government Accountants is a 15,000-member professional association that serves government accountability professionals by providing quality education, fostering professional development and certification, and working in the public interest to for higher standards of government accountability and transparency. www.agacgfm.org.

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