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Robert Q. Williams*

South Carolina House of Representatives

P.O. Box 11867

Columbia, S.C. 29211

Telephone: (803) 734-3022

Fax: (803) 734-9926

The House Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Environmental Affairs Committee supports the John de la Howe School for Agriculture in their reopening of their school in August.

The John de la Howe administration formed a COVID-19 Task Force to create a plan to protect students and staff for the school's first year as a residential high school for agriculture. The task force gathered information through surveys from staff and parents of accepted students for the upcoming school year. Some of the findings include: 92% of the parents would send their child to school if plans were to reopen 100% in person, 82% of parents do not have concerns about about face masks requirements for their child. Parents and staff also voiced their concerns that the virtual option would lack the hands on learning that is needed for an agriculture school. The staff's top priorities for opening face to face are enhanced cleaning, adequate cleaning supplies, and strict social distancing in common areas.

The plan consists of the students moving in their residential housing on August 15, 2020 and classes beginning August 17, 2020. The students will be on an A/B block schedule throughout the 5-day school week. This schedule will reduce the class sizes during in-class instruction. The school is also planning to hold a large portion of student learning outside, utilizing the school's 1,300-acre campus.

Our committee supports the reopening of the John de la Howe School for Agriculture, and trusts that the school will follow the Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Centers for Disease Control guidelines for schools. Please reach out to our committee office with any questions concerning our support of their reopening at 803-734-3022.

Sincerely,



Chairman David Hiott



Representative Lucas Atkinson



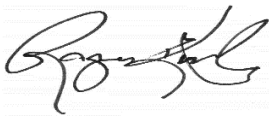
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Representative Cal Forrest



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Representative Randy Ligon



Representative Rick Martin



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