

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 97-18

WHEREAS, Tourism is an important industry worldwide and the second leading industry in South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the concept of stimulating economic development through Heritage Tourism is a nationally recognized practice and has been quite effective in the Mid-West, New England, and the Mid-Atlantic regions, and the State has recognized Cultural and Heritage Tourism as a highly effective strategy for rural economic development in South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism undertook the creation of a heritage tourism program for economic revitalization in South Carolina (the "Heritage Tourism Program" or the "Program"), pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order No. 94-15; and

WHEREAS, the State has expended funds and has committed substantial facilities and personnel to the Heritage Tourism Program and the establishment and implementation of the concept of heritage tourism as a successful economic development tool; and

WHEREAS, in February 1996, pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order, an Advisory Task Force completed the South Carolina Heritage Corridor Planning Study (the "Heritage Corridor Plan"), coordinated by PRT and funded in part by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Appalachian Regional Commission, U.S. Department of Transportation, and the South Carolina Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Heritage Corridor Plan embraces multiple opportunities inherent in the Heritage Tourism Program and in the creation of a heritage corridor in fourteen South Carolina counties, from Oconee to Charleston (the "Heritage Corridor"); and

WHEREAS, in the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor Act of 1996, Congress officially established the Heritage Corridor as the "South Carolina National Heritage Corridor"; and

WHEREAS, State government is committed to coordinating the implementation of the Heritage Tourism Program, including funding and management requirements of the Heritage Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the significant cost of fully implementing the Heritage Tourism Program necessitates the creation of an independent, tax-exempt public benefit corporation (the "Corporation") which will lessen the burdens of government with respect to the management and implementation of the Program and assume many, if not most, of the activities that government is carrying on with respect to the Program; and

WHEREAS, because of limited funds, government will not be able to complete the Heritage Areas Program, as contemplated in the Heritage Corridor Plan, without the Corporation's assistance.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of South Carolina and pursuant to the Constitution and Laws of this State, I do hereby direct the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism to establish the South Carolina Heritage Corridor as an independent, autonomous, public benefit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, which corporation will assist the Department of Parks Recreation and Tourism, and other key State agencies, in supporting the goals and objectives of the Heritage Tourism Program, and in coordinating, funding, implementing, and managing the operations and requirements of the Heritage Corridor.

**GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, THIS
16TH DAY OF MAY, 1997**

DAVID M. BEASLEY
Governor

Last Updated: Tuesday, July 7, 2009 at 11:18 A.M.