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June 27, 2003

The Honorable Ernest F. Hollings
United States Senate
125 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

VIA FACSIMILE

Dear Senator Hollings:

On behalf of the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, we would like to express our full support of the Congaree National Park Act of 2003. The Board of Directors would like to commend you and your staff on dedication and commitment to Congaree National Swamp Monument.

The Congaree National Swamp is the finest remaining example of an old-growth southern hardwood forest in North America and home to a variety of rare ecological, geological, archaeological, scenic, historical, and wildlife treasures. The Congaree Swamp is a tremendous asset to this region and this designation would not only further preserve this ecosystem but also increase its and our regions visibility internationally. Over 120,000 visitors visit the swamp each year. This proposed designation would place the Congaree Swamp on par with Yellowstone, Yosemite and the Grand Canyon and would certainly increase tourism to this area.

On behalf of the 2500 members of the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, we strongly support the Congaree National Park Act of 2003. Again, thank you for your leadership and commitment to protecting and enhancing our natural resources and the regions quality of life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Blackmon'.

Scott Blackmon
Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ike McLeese'.

Ike McLeese
President & CEO