May 11, 2020

The Honorable Henry McMaster
Governor of South Carolina
SC State House - 1100 Gervais Street
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: Open Letter from SC’s Charitable Nonprofit Community Re: Equity in Recovery

Dear Governor McMaster and Members of the accelerateSC Task Force:

As charitable nonprofit organizations, we are dedicated to serving our state’s great people, protecting our beautiful environment, uplifting our vibrant arts and culture and so much more.

Like all of you, we want to make our state even better for all who call South Carolina home.

And, we are deeply concerned about the catastrophic impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on the people of our state, particularly those who were already marginalized.

As you take on the daunting task of reopening and rebuilding our economy, we urge you to make equity a top priority. Equity is, simply, ensuring that all people have what they need to thrive.

Because of existing, underlying inequities, the COVID-19 pandemic is hurting some members of our community much more deeply than others, especially people of color, women, economically insecure people, people without housing, people who are disabled, immigrants, the LGBTQ community and our aging residents.

Right now, a commitment to equity demands that we prioritize the needs of ALL people who are most affected by the pandemic and whose lives and livelihoods are literally on the line. As we recover and rebuild, we ask you to ensure the needs of these historically marginalized communities are explicitly considered.

We have an opportunity to build back better and ensure that South Carolina is a state where we can all be healthy and prosperous. An inclusive and equitable economic recovery will require intention and sustained action. We encourage you and accelerateSC to take the lead by:

1. Issuing a statement that South Carolina’s reopening plan will prioritize equity
2. Collecting and disseminating data that includes disaggregation by gender, race, age, socio-economic status, and disability status; and
3. Promoting guidelines, policies and plans that clearly consider how reopening and the ongoing recovery will meet the needs of people who are most affected by the pandemic.

The nonprofit and philanthropic community is working alongside people who are hurting right now. We are counting on your leadership to make their lives and well-being a priority.

We stand ready to help as you take action and to share with all the great work you are making happen.

Your Allies for Good,

Together SC and the 100+ Organizations
Listed on the Back
Nonprofit Organizations Joining Together SC in Issuing this Letter

ABLE SC
ACLU of South Carolina
Agape Family Life Center
Angels Charge Ministry
Audubon South Carolina
Beaufort County First Steps
Beaufort County Open Land Trust
Beautiful Gate Center
Belmont Baptist Church
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Lowcountry
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Upstate
Black River United Way
Camp Discovery
Cecil Williams Civil Rights Museum
Charleston Area Therapeutic Riding, Inc.
Charleston Jazz
Charleston Legal Access
Charleston Promise Neighborhood
Cherokee County First Steps
Child Abuse Prevention Association
Children's Advocacy Center of Spartanburg, Cherokee, and Union Counties
Children's Trust of South Carolina
Communities In Schools of the Midlands
Coastal Community Foundation of SC
Coastal Conservation League
Columbia Children's Theatre
Community Medical Clinic of Kershaw County
Congaree Riverkeeper
Conservation Voters of South Carolina
Dorchester Children's Advocacy Center
Early Learning Partnership of York County
Eat Smart Move More SC
Enough Pie
Fact Forward
Family Promise of Beaufort County
Feed & Seed Co
Florence County Disabilities Foundation
Fort Lawn Community Center
Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation
Good Neighbor Free Medical Clinic of Beaufort
Greenville Area Parkinson Society
Greenville Center for Creative Arts
Greenville Homeless Alliance
Greenwood Community Theatre
Habitat for Humanity of Berkeley County
Habitat for Humanity of Greenville County
Habitat for Humanity of Kershaw County
Habitat for Humanity of York County
Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art at the College of Charleston
Healthy Learners
HELP of Beaufort
Helping Hand Center, Inc.
Hemophilia of South Carolina
Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra
Homeless No More
Institute for Child Success
Joseph H Neal Health Collaborative
Just Say Something
Lions Vision Services
Love Yourself Always Inc
Lowcountry Food Bank
Lowcountry Habitat for Humanity
Lowcountry Land Trust
Lowcountry Local First
March of Dimes
Media Reform SC, Ohm Radio
Neighbor to Neighbor of South Carolina, Inc.
One80 Place
Palmetto City Ballet
Palmetto Cycling Coalition
Palmetto Literacy Council
Passion 2 Pay Project LLC P3
Pee Dee Land Trust
Pickens County Advocacy Center
Pickens County Habitat for Humanity
Public Education Partners Greenville County
PURE Theatre
Rebuild Upstate
Richland Library
SC African American Heritage Foundation
SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center
SC Arts Alliance
SC Association for Community Economic Development
SC Association of Habitat for Humanity Affiliates
SC Chapter Sierra Club
SC Christian Action Council
SC Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
SC Community Health Worker Association
SC Community Loan Fund
SC Collaborative for Race and Reconciliation
SC Spinal Cord Injury Association
SC Wildlife Federation
Senior Resources
Sisters of Charity Foundation of SC
South of Broadway Theatre Company
Southeastern Housing and Community Development
Spartanburg Academic Movement (SAM)
The Arts Grand Strand
The Diabetes Wellness Council
The Hive Community Circle
The Palmetto Project
The Spartanburg County Foundation
TINYisPOWERFUL
Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative
Trident Literacy Association
Triune Mercy Center
Turning Pages
United Ministries
United Way of Greenville County
United Way of Pickens County
United Way of the Lowcountry
Upstate Forever
Volunteers in Medicine
WREN
YWCA Greater Charleston