

April 25, 2007

Horry County Excels in House Budget- By Rep. Tracy Edge

North Myrtle Beach Online

The South Carolina House of Representatives has completed its version of the state budget with Horry County well positioned to reap many rewards.

Serving as Chairman of the Health Care and Environmental Control Committee, where over one third of our budget originates, allows me the position to initiate and guide many area projects through the funding process.

The needs of our area are protected on the House floor during debate by all of our House delegation members who work together as a team. Together, we see that vital needs of our area's economy, environment, and infrastructure are met through our budget process.

The wellbeing of our coastline and area waters is among the highest importance of our environment and economy of South Carolina.

Therefore, we again placed \$5,000,000 in the budget for beach renourishment which will complete the funding necessary for a major renourishment project for our Grand Strand beaches to begin early this fall.

See related story by clicking [here](#).

Another \$5,000,000 was placed in the budget to assist our local governments with the removal of stormwater outfall pipes which deposit toxic water onto our beaches. Concern over this issue led to my election to the North Myrtle Beach City Council in 1994 and I have remained concerned and eager to assist local government in solving this problem as a member of the General Assembly. The use of these funds will improve our water quality and help rid our coastline of these unsightly structures.

To learn more about the outfall project click [here](#).

Preserving the waters of the Cherry Grove Inlet for recreation, boating and fishing, also served as a catalyst for funding this year. For many years, Cherry Grove Inlet has been filling with silt and has largely become unnavigable except at high tide. Two years ago, I presented the City of North Myrtle Beach \$125,000 to assist with permitting and planning for the dredging project. Now I am pleased to announce the inclusion of \$1,000,000 of funding in the House budget for this project which will benefit everyone in our area.

For more information about the dredging project click [here](#).

Funding for Interstate 73 and 74 dominates the minds of all in our community who are interested and involved in the massive undertaking of these projects.

One million dollars has been appropriated by the General Assembly in the past four years for planning for these projects. This year, we went beyond that number and appropriated \$6,000,000 dedicated to the DOT and State Infrastructure Bank which can finance approximately \$50,000,000 for both projects. Our goal is to add \$5,000,000 in funding each year for I-73 and 74 until the state's portion of the cost of construction is complete.

The stunning success of the \$2 for \$1 grant program for Grand Strand area advertising caused everyone involved to not only ask for funding again, but also for more. To that end, we have doubled this year's appropriation to PRT for destination specific advertising to \$10,000,000 and allocated an additional \$10,000,000 for state advertising use. These extra funds will allow South Carolina to begin competing with larger states such as Florida for a greater share of the tourism economy.

The health and human services area of our budget also provides for \$500,000 in funding for SharedCare and \$100,000 for the Sea Haven Home in North Myrtle Beach. SharedCare's important mission in our area is to assist with providing health services for the uninsured. Funding at the half million dollar level will assure that their reach will extend deeper into our community. Funding for Sea Haven will assist this organization in providing services for troubled youth, which is a growing concern.

Other items the House has funded in its budget include \$230,000 for the stormwater filtration system for Conway, \$25,000 for the South Carolina Hall of Fame, and \$2,000,000 for improvements to the General Aviation Operations at the Myrtle Beach Airport.

My colleagues in the South Carolina House of Representatives and I believe we have initiated and funded many important priorities in our area. Our sincere hope is to continue to provide for our area needs through our teamwork.

\$500,000 SharedCare
\$5,000,000 Beach Renourishment
\$5,000,000 Outfall Pipe Removal
\$1,000,000 Cherry Grove Dredging
\$6,000,000 Interstates 73 and 74
\$100,000 Sea Haven
\$25,000 SC Hall of Fame
\$20,000,000 Advertising
\$2,000,000 General Aviation Improvements
\$230,000 Conway Stormwater