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## SELLING OTHER STATES ON INTERSTATE

It's disappointing that highway officials in Michigan and Ohio are showing little interest in making plans for Interstate 73 a reality, as leaders in West Virginia, Virginia and the Carolinas have.

But those in the southern states of the proposed interstate route shouldn't let the attitudes of those along the northern sections be too discouraging.

We agree with Rep. Alan Clemmons, R-Myrtle Beach and president of the S.C. I-73 Association, who says public demand for the road can change the position of highway officials in those two states. Residents of Ohio and Michigan are frequent visitors to the S.C. coast, and they probably will pressure their officials to complete the road to the north when it appears definite that the southern part of the route will be built.

Even though Congress has designated I-73 as a priority corridor, a commitment by the states involved is essential. No federal money has been promised for the project, so funding is left up to the states.

Members of the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce headed to Washington, D.C., today plan to spend time lobbying for support of I-73 on their trip. Grand Strand leaders, wisely, are determined to keep reminding other states of the importance of the project. An interstate stopping at the West Virginia-Ohio border would not give our region the same economic boost as the proposed route stretching from Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., to Myrtle Beach.

Re-forming an association of the six states the road crosses could be an important key to building public demand for the interstate in Michigan and Ohio. The association formed in the early 1990s but broke down after no federal funding was promised.

It is important that Grand Strand leaders, as well as others along the proposed route, convince those in Michigan and Ohio of the value of I-73.

