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First study of South Carolina's logistics industry finds more than 600 companies, \$32.9 billion impact

The logistics industry cluster is one of the largest in South Carolina according to a study released by the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness (Council). Authored by Dr. Joseph Von Nessen, the study finds that there are more than 600 logistics companies operating in the state, from transportation, to air freight providers, to warehouse and distribution centers.

"The logistics industry moves raw materials and final products from one company to another company, or to a consumer, via ground, sea or air transportation," said Suzanne Dickerson, director of logistics industry initiatives for the Council. "Logistics is one of the most important industries in our state, because every company relies on it to conduct business."

"What we found is that many companies have logistics and supply chain management departments within their operations," said Von Nessen. "So seen collectively, there are over 113,000 South Carolinians working in the logistics industry cluster. The compensation provided by the logistics industry to its employees totals \$5.4 billion annually."

S.C. Commerce Secretary, Bobby Hitt, knows that businesses locate to areas where they are able to be successful and thrive.

"Our strategic emphasis on logistics has been key to the success we've had, especially in attracting advanced manufacturing to South Carolina," said Hitt. "It's not enough to be good at making things. You have to be good at moving things, and that is what our logistics industry is all about."

The strength of South Carolina's logistics industry is shown in part by export sales. For the seventh consecutive year, South Carolina posted a record for total export sales of \$31.3 billion—a \$400 million increase over last year. South Carolina's top export commodities were vehicles, aircraft, machinery,

rubber and electrical machinery. And, the state's top export markets were China, Germany, Canada, United Kingdom and Mexico.

The Council's study was paid for in part by a grant from the Economic Development Administration. The Council and the S.C. Department of Commerce received the federal grant last year to launch the logistics industry initiative, SC Logistics. The initiative is organized by the Council and operates through an Executive Forum which consists of business leaders from the private sector and critically relevant state agencies such as the Department of Commerce, Department of Transportation and the Ports Authority.

"The new SC Logistics initiative is modeled on the successful template the Council implemented for the state's aerospace cluster in 2012. This study confirms both the critical role that logistics plays in the state's economy and our focused effort on growing and supporting this significant economic segment," said Sue Ann Shannon, CEO of the Council. "From here we will build on the early momentum by continuing to identify opportunities to grow this industry sector to support the state's economic health."

For more information on the study and SC Logistics, visit sclogisticsindustry.com.

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The South Carolina Council on Competitiveness is a nonpartisan, business-led non-profit organization committed to advancing the long-term economic competitiveness of our state, industries, and citizens. Our work is accomplished through: actionable research on opportunities and threats to South Carolina's competitiveness; support of industry clusters that provide South Carolina a competitive advantage; and education and workforce development initiatives that ensure all South Carolina's citizens are equipped to compete in a global economy. We execute our work through partnerships recognizing that our state's economic success is secured through sustained collaboration among the private, public, academic and non-profit sectors. For more information, visit www.sclogisticsindustry.com

