

VIEWPOINTS

By Christy A. Hall
South Carolina Secretary
of Transportation

The first half of 2021 has brought many challenges and opportunities to SCDOT. While our agency and families have continued to deal with the impacts and ramifications of the pandemic, our team has done an outstanding job of keeping our mission front and center. I am very proud of our team and greatly appreciate the

dedication not only to getting the job done, but also to each other. Unlike many states, we did not stop work, layoff folks or dramatically scale back our road and bridge programs. The pages of this Connector is full of success stories and demonstrates the can-do attitude of our Team. This positive attitude, dedication to service and commitment to each other is precisely why I elected to award performance increases across the board. I have told many of you that I know that I ask a lot

of you, including calling on you to work in extraordinary situations under extreme conditions. And you have all answered the call...every single time. And, I thank you for doing so.

We all still have much to work on together, both to make our agency better but also to make the state's infrastructure better. We have made tremendous strides over the past few years by delivering superb results with the funding allocated to SCDOT by the 2017 gas tax in-

crease. It appears that this may have only been just the beginning. Recent discussions at the state and federal level indicate a desire to continue to boost funding for infrastructure. This unprecedented environment is a reminder to me of how thankful I am to be part of a team that has built a reputation of getting the job done, with a clear vision and solid strategy. You have my pledge that I will continue to do my very best to advocate for what is best for the people of our state and our agency.

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Dignitaries cut the ribbon on the new Harbor River Bridge in Beaufort on April 26.

New Harbor River Bridge opens

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new, modern bridge on U.S. 21 (Sea Island Parkway) over the Harbor River in Beaufort County took place on April 26.

Secretary of Transportation **Christy A. Hall**, State Senator George E. "Chip" Campsen III of District 43, and other community members spoke to commemorate the completion of the bridge.

The old Sea Island Parkway swing span

bridge was almost 80 years old and was at the end of its useful lifespan. It was expensive to maintain and required an operator all hours of the day to open and close the bridge for waterway traffic.

This \$77 million project was on-budget and completed ahead of schedule. The project also includes demolition of the old bridge. The old truss structure will be repurposed off shore and as an artificial reef.



The new bridge is 3,350 feet long and rises 75 feet above the river. It will replace the old Sea Island Parkway swing span.

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