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**SC Association of Nonprofit Organizations Builds National Bridges of Partnership  
During Meetings at White House and on Capitol Hill**

Columbia, SC—This last week marked a defining moment for South Carolina nonprofit organizations — and the communities they serve — as the SC Association of Nonprofit Organizations (SCANPO) advocated for the state’s nonprofit sector at the White House and on Capitol Hill.

In an historic first, Mason Hardy, President of the SCANPO, along with 80 fellow leaders representing more than 20,000 nonprofit members from across the country, met Tuesday with a senior White House official to explore ways government and nonprofits can best partner to serve local communities.

Meeting in the celebrated Indian Treaty Room, the White House was represented by Michele Jolin, Senior Advisor in the new Office of Social Innovation & Civic Participation. Jolin noted that the Office was created by a President who has an unprecedented commitment to and personal understanding of the vital role nonprofits play in their communities. Jolin and the nonprofit leaders discussed ways the National Council of Nonprofits, which includes SCANPO, can leverage its unique national/state/local network to help the Office of Social Innovation & Civic Participation connect to small and midsize nonprofits in local communities to identify, promote, and support innovative and scalable programs. The discussion also covered how to create a better policy environment for nonprofits so limited government and nonprofit resources can be leveraged for greater impact in local communities.

On Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, SCANPO leaders also participated in the second annual “Nonprofits Advocate!” Lobby Day. The leaders were briefed by key senior staff members of Senators Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) on the progress of legislation of concern to nonprofits. SCANPO leaders then traversed Capitol Hill for meetings in the offices of Jim DeMint, Lindsey Graham, Jim Clyburn, Gresham Barrett, John Spratt, Joe Wilson and Henry Brown. These visits focused on two core messages: (1) protecting the funding for the “Nonprofit Capacity Building Program” in the Serve America Act; and (2) ensuring that nonprofits – which employ about 10% of America’s workforce and 7% of South Carolina’s – are not forgotten in health care reform.

These discussions with Congress and the White House occurred as part of the annual Member Meeting of the National Council of Nonprofits, of which SCANPO is a member. In addition to sharing innovative ideas and knowledge about best practices, nonprofit leaders heard evidence of the economic recession’s serious impact on nonprofits from Dr. Lester Salamon, a national expert on nonprofits and civil society who leads the Listening Post Project at Johns Hopkins University.

“There was obviously great power and influence in our collective voice on behalf of nonprofits across the country,” said Hardy. “We were honored to join this historic meeting on behalf of the South Carolina nonprofit sector.”

For information on the Office of Social Innovation & Civic Participation and the Social Innovation Fund, [click here](#) for a recent article published by the *Chronicle of Philanthropy—Government and Politics Watch*. For more information on the Listening Post Project and read their latest Communiqués on “Impact of the 2007–09 Economic Recession on Nonprofit Organizations”, [click here](#).

The South Carolina Association of Nonprofit Organizations (SCANPO) is the only statewide organization that brings together charitable nonprofits to strengthen the effectiveness of the state's nonprofit community. SCANPO’s mission is to serve, support and strengthen nonprofit organizations for a better South Carolina. For information on SCANPO, please call 803-929-0399 or visit [www.scanpo.org](http://www.scanpo.org).