

Order of the Palmetto Remarks

Dr. Delores Dacosta

“To whom much is given, much is required.”

I stand before you today deeply humbled and profoundly grateful to receive the **Order of the Palmetto**. First and foremost, I give all honor to **God**, who has given me the strength, the opportunity, and most importantly, the heart to serve.

Today is especially meaningful because I am a proud daughter of **Awendaw, South Carolina** a small community with a big heart, strong families, deep faith, and a legacy of service.

I am humbled to be the **second person from Awendaw to receive the Order of the Palmetto**. The first was my cousin and mentor, the late **Rev. William Alston**, who received this distinguished honor in 2005. I know he would be proud today.

And I want everyone to know **there is a lot of greatness coming out of Awendaw!**

Governor Henry McMaster, thank you for this extraordinary honor. More importantly, thank you for your support throughout the years. You and your incredible staff have always been willing to listen to my ideas, hear my vision, and support the growth and transformation of the **South Carolina Commission for Community Advancement and Engagement—ADVANCE SC**.

To those who wrote letters in support of this honor—**Senator Tim Scott, Congressman Joe Wilson, Congressman Jim Clyburn, Senator Tameika Isaac Devine, Chairman Heather Crawford, CG Brian Gains, Pastor Michael Alston, Commissioner Ame Fus, Chairman Nate Barber, and Ms. Courtney Tice**—thank you. Your confidence in me and your belief in my service mean more than words can adequately express.

And to my **Awendaw family** standing with me today—what a blessing it is to have my mother, **Anna Bell Porcher**, who just celebrated her **93rd birthday**, here to witness this moment. To my brothers, sisters, nieces, cousins, and in-laws—**this honor belongs to you, too.**

To my Commissioners, Community Advisors, community partners, friends, and colleagues, thank you for walking this journey of service with me.

And finally, to my **ADVANCE SC staff**: you have labored with me in the vineyard. You have worked, sacrificed, persevered, and served because we believe our work can make a difference in the lives of others. **I appreciate you, and I share this moment with you.**

I have learned throughout my life that **service is not something we do in silo, we are better when we do it together.**

So although **my name may be on this award, your fingerprints are all over the journey that brought me here.**

Thank you for walking with me.

Thank you for believing in me.

And thank you for believing in the **power of service.**

Now, let us continue **walking together, serving together, and working together for the good of the people of this great state we call South Carolina.**

To whom much is given, much is required—and I am not finished serving yet.

Thank you, and may God continue to bless the great State of South Carolina.