



Robert L. Caslen, Jr.
President

November 11, 2020

Meghan Fay Zahniser
Executive Director
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
2401 Walnut Street, Suite 102
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Ms. Fay Zahniser:

I am pleased to present the University of South Carolina's third submission, and my first as UofSC President, to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System (STARS). Early in my tenure at the university I initiated a new strategic planning process to map out a path forward for our institution. The result of that process is **For South Carolina: A Path to Excellence**, a comprehensive strategic plan and bold vision to become the nation's preeminent flagship institution. Particularly relevant to the university's sustainability initiatives and the STARS report are **Strategic Priority 4: *Cultivate a more diverse, equitable and inclusive campus culture where every individual, regardless of background, has the full opportunity to flourish and thrive*** and **Strategic Priority 7: *Provide a sustainable campus infrastructure – physical, virtual, fundraising and administrative – that supports academic excellence and preeminent student life*** and the goal to "*Promote a framework for national leadership in institutional sustainability.*" I am confident that through innovative research, high quality educational offerings, and high-impact, beyond-the-classroom experiences, our students, faculty, and staff will continue to make progress toward achieving these priorities.

In the coming years, I am particularly interested to see how we can explore the intersection between sustainability and social justice issues and look to expand collaborations between the activities of the Office of Sustainability and the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Exploring the common ground between Strategic Priority 4 and 7 is essential to the future of the university. I will also continue to familiarize myself with the activities of our student sustainability leaders as they positively engage our entire campus on varied issues including zero waste, sustainable food systems, environmental outreach initiatives, social justice, economic prosperity, and more. Their passion for sustainability has the promise to positively impact our campus, community, and beyond.

This submission was facilitated by our Office of Sustainability with cooperation and collaboration by stakeholders from many different offices, departments, and operating units, and the Office of Sustainability staff have verified the accuracy of the submitted information. I am hopeful and excited to witness the University of South Carolina's renewed investment to develop the next generation of sustainability leaders and ensure the next 200 years at South Carolina.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Caslen, Jr.