Inland Port touted for keeping business on track

Staff report

GREER — Port users, partners, business leaders and dignitaries gathered Friday at the S.C. Inland Port to welcome a ceremonial train trip by Norfolk Southern, SC Ports Authority partner for the Inland Port.

"This is a great opportunity for SC Ports to celebrate the fully open and operational Inland Port with our partner, Norfolk Southern," said Jim Newsome, SCPA president and CEO. "We have opened a new intermodal origin and destination in the fastest growing part of the Southeast, the I-85 corridor. We've had tremendous support from the Upstate and look forward to growing our Greer cargo base this year."

Norfolk Southern CEO Wick Moorman said that "this year alone, Norfolk Southern will take 25,000 truck moves off I-26, saving fuel and emissions and alleviating congestion. Considering the growing pressures on truck operations, we anticipate this new service will provide Upstate shippers with a cost-effective alternative for fulfilling their supply chain."

Gov. Nikki Haley said the state is "focused on growing business in South Carolina, and there's no question that the Inland Port helps us to do that. Its presence in Greer will attract new companies to the Upstate and foster the expansion of those already located here."

Sen. Lindsey Graham called the Inland Port a "game-changing investment that will shape the future of not only the Upstate but all of South Carolina. Even though it's more than 200 miles from the coast, the Inland Port will act as a force multiplier for the Port of Charleston. It's yet another tool for helping bring new business to South Carolina and for helping increase the efficiency of those already here."

U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy said the Inland Port "will give companies in the 4th District an efficient and cost-effective way to move their products across the state, making the Upstate an even more attractive location for investment, economic development and job creation."

The Inland Port opened in October of 2013 to improve the efficiency of international container movements between the Port of Charleston, the Upstate and neighboring states. In partnership with Norfolk Southern, the project utilizes an overnight train service to handle double-stack container trains to and from the Port of Charleston's seaport facilities. Port officials expect to convert an estimated 25,000 container movements from truck to rail in the first year of operation.



Gov. Nikki Haley, with David Wilkins, U.S. ambassador to Canada, said Friday the Inland Port will help business grow in South Carolina. KEN OSBURN/STAFF

SATURDAY, JANU

Speed



A Norfolk Southern train pulls into the Inland Port as part of a ceremonial trip marking its partnership with the South Carolina Ports Authority. KEN OSBURN/STAFF