

Jobs outlook strong, official says

Outgoing commerce secretary says state in good position for next year

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COLUMBIA — The outgoing leader of the state's job recruitment efforts says this year may be the state's best at attracting new jobs and the good news should continue into next year and beyond.

Commerce Secretary

Joe Taylor, who has held the post for nearly five years, said South Carolina has been recognized nationally for economic development at a time of a punishing recession and dramatic budget cuts.

"Sometimes it's not about the money," he told Gov. Mark Sanford and others at Sanford's final

cabinet meeting. "It's about attitude and effort."

Taylor, who came out of retirement after selling his business to take over the Commerce Department, said Gov.-elect Nikki Haley will inherit economic development momentum next year that should blossom with more jobs and business investments because of the work this year by his staff and Sanford.

Sanford said Taylor met every qualification he had

for the state's chief business recruiter — no conflicts of interest, a small business perspective and a businessman comfortable in any setting, from corporate board rooms to a farm.

The decision by Boeing to come to South Carolina, Taylor said, remains the largest economic development announcement in the state's history.

He said while the state

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led the region last year in job recruitment, the numbers for this year have already passed those from 2009.

In February, Taylor said the state will have six companies constructing buildings of at least one million square feet or larger.

He said there have been eight projects during the past two years that involve creating at least 1,000 jobs. And 28 percent of new jobs recruited since 2003 are going to rural areas.