

STATEMENT BY J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR OF
SOUTH CAROLINA, ON THE NEED FOR BRINGING OUT
THE FACTS CONCERNING THE PROPOSED INCREASE
IN TELEPHONE RATES. SEPTEMBER 29, 1950.

The Public Service Commission, beginning October 31 at 11 a.m. in its hearing rooms, will conduct public hearings on the application of the Southern Bell Telephone Company to make further increases in telephone rates in South Carolina.

At my request, the State Budget and Control Board has granted an additional \$15,000.00 to the Commission in order that it may employ additional experts to bring out the facts regarding the request for this increase.

I urge our Mayors, and other interested public officials, local civic groups, and other interested organizations to send representatives to the hearings and make known their views as to the request for higher telephone rates.

In my Inaugural Address I expressed the hope that instead of increasing rates, utilities such as the telephone companies would expand their services, and with greater volume of business would be able to lower their rates. Just the opposite has happened, and apparently the telephone companies have operated on the theory that the more people served by telephones the higher the rates should be. Two requests for rate increases have already been granted since 1947.

The question arises as to whether the cost of telephone service may soon be so high that persons of moderate incomes will not be able to afford it.

We need to further extend telephone service in South Carolina, especially in the rural areas. To bring this about, we need lower and not higher telephone rates.

Therefore, I hope that all the facts will be brought out at the Public Service Commission hearings. As far as it is possible to do so, the influence of the Governor's office shall be used to see to it that the public is protected in this matter.

Original
J. Strom Thurmond
Governor