C. Alex Harvin, III
(1950-2005)
Papers, 1968-2005

Volume: 23 linear feet
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Biographical Note:

“Harvin was a true public servant. He worked tirelessly for the people of his beloved Clarendon County. He knew every last person in the district and would be the first person they’d hear from on birthdays, anniversaries, and just about any significant event.”

- State Democratic Party Chairman Joe Erwin, upon Harvin’s death in 2005

Charles Alexander “Alex” Harvin, III was born in Sumter to Charles Alexander, Jr. and Thomasine Harvin on February 7th, 1950. He represented District 64 (Clarendon and Williamsburg counties) for 29 years. He attended the Baptist College at Charleston (now Charleston Southern) and graduated from there in 1972 with degree in history and a minor in political science. He then went on to receive a Juris Doctorate from Augusta Law School in 1976. In 1982, he married Cathy Brand and they had one daughter, Mary Franklin.

Harvin’s political career began at Baptist College as president of the Young Democrats from 1970 until 1972. He also served as a member of the South Carolina Young Democrats Executive Committee and was Chairman of the Sixth Congressional District Young Democrats from 1975 to 1976.

He was first elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives in 1976, just a few days before receiving his law degree. In December 2004, he said of his first election, “I never thought I could do it. Just look at the number of people who have retired, who have been defeated or who have died. Just look at all the changes that have gone through. When I got there, I had to pinch myself to make sure I was there.” In 15 elections, only once did he face opposition.

His 29 years of service made him the longest continuously serving state representative. During his time in office, he held many leadership positions. From 1979 until 1982 he was the Majority Whip and in 1982, he became Majority Leader. He served in that position until 1986. From that time on, he was the Majority Leader Emeritus. Also, he served as the vice chairman of the U.S. Constitution Bicentennial Committee, the Joint Agriculture Study Committee, and the National Conference of State Legislators Labor, Commerce, & Economic Development Committee. While a Representative, one of the issues that Harvin was dedicated to was education. He served on the Board of Visitors for Clemson University, the Medical University of South Carolina, and Charleston Southern. He also served on the House Subcommittee on Higher Education.
Harvin was also active in the State Democratic Party, serving as vice chairman from 1976 until 1978. He served as chairman of the Clarendon County Democratic Party from 1979 until his death. In 1984, he was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention.

He received many honors during his tenure in office. In 1977, he was named “Freshman Legislator of the Year” by the University of South Carolina Young Democrats. He received the Distinguished Service Award from the SC Democratic Party in 1981. On July 11, 2005, Governor Mark Sanford presented Harvin with the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina’s highest civilian honor.

On October 11, 2005, Harvin died after a long illness at the age of 55. Upon his death, Congressman James Clyburn said, “Alex was a great friend to me, the people of Clarendon County and every South Carolinian. Alex never met a stranger or a person he wasn’t willing to help. His compassion for others and his abiding commitment to this state were the hallmarks of his public service. Alex’s presences always loomed larger that his stature and his loss has left a void that will be difficult to fill.” As he became increasingly ill, Harvin’s request was that Cathy take over his seat. In a special Democratic primary on January 3, 2006, Cathy won with 85% of the vote. She ran unopposed in the special election, and officially took over his seat on February 14, 2006.
Scope and Content Note:

The Alex Harvin papers consist of 23 linear feet divided into six series. The material mostly dates from 1976 to 1999. The series are Administrative Papers, Public Papers, Personal Papers, Speeches, Audiovisual Material, and Clippings.

The Administrative series contains press releases sent out by the office and some inter-office memos. There are also invitations to various events that Harvin attended throughout his 29 years of service. Also of note are 6 appointments books from 1978 to 1983 that have handwritten meetings and notes by Harvin.

Public papers make up the largest series of the collection with roughly 16 linear feet of material. These papers contain material relating to Harvin’s legislative efforts. The General Assembly files contain documents regarding Harvin’s work on the Ways and Means Committee, as well as his many legislative efforts while in office. Arranged in alphabetical order, these topics also reflect Harvin’s special interest in education, health, and transportation.

The majority of the Personal papers relate to the Democratic Party and memberships in various organizations. Also present are papers from Harvin’s campaigns in 1994 and 1996. There are also materials relating to Harvin’s personal life and family.

The Speeches series includes speeches that Harvin gave at various events as well as speeches given by other people. This is the smallest series of the collection and it is arranged chronologically.

Audiovisual material includes 14 video tapes dating from 1987 to 1991 and photographs from 1977 to 1999. The videos include appearances on Capitol View and lectures to a class at Coastal Carolina University. Photographs include portraits, group shots, and family photos.

Clippings are arranged topically and include columns by Harvin for The Clarendon Chronicle and The Manning Times. Also included are clippings relating to campaigns and Harvin’s family.

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    Tobacco
Report to Legislative Committee to Study the Programs and Problems of Agriculture
Animals:
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    Euthanasia:
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Welfare
Arts
Banking:
    General
    Interest Rates
    Interstate Banking Legislation
    Usury Correspondence, 1979

Charities
Children:
    General
    Adoption/Foster Care
    Child Care
    Special Needs
    Youth
Civil Rights
Commerce:
    General
1995 Capital Investment Report
Service Station Dealers Association
Trade:
    General
    International
    Textiles
Confederate Flag
Cultural Affairs
District of Columbia Statehood
Education:
    General:
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    Adult Education
    Governor’s School
    Higher:
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        Budget Cuts
        Commission Higher Education:
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            Subcommittee on Higher Education (2)
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        Institutions:
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            Baptist College at Charleston/Charleston Southern
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                General
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Kindergarten, Mandatory
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Funding:
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  Education Finance Act (EFA), 1991
  Education Improvement Act:
    General
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  Retirement
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  Polling Places
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  Barnwell:
    1981-1992
  Savannah River Site
  Weapons
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    DHEC Monitoring Strategy, 1986
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Box 6

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South Africa

Gambling:
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1990-1994
National Association of Insurance Commissioners
Accreditation Special
Workers’ Compensation bill, S. 540
Operation and Management, 1978
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Ways and Means:
   General (2)
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   Economic Development, Capital Improvement and Other Taxes
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   Health and Human Services Finance
   Old Exchange Building
   Public Service
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   State Reorganization

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      1989 revised through Feb.
      1989 revised through March
Post Session Reports:
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1985, House Democratic Caucus
1988, March: Legislative Council Audit
1993:
February 10: Social Health and Correctional Agencies Orientation Briefing to S.C. General Assembly
March: A Limited Scope Review of Long Term Care and Related Services for the Elderly

1996, Preliminary Report, Compliance Review Committee for a Box 10 Performance Audit of the S.C. Resources Authority Infrastructure Funding Program

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  May 24, 1978: H. 4129
  June 10, 1978: H. 4129 Public Hearing
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  General
  Application, 1985
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“Economic and Fiscal Impact of Sale of P.S.A.”

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Department of Highways Report, 1983

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   General:
       1976-1986
   Committees
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       Clarendon
       Sumter, “South Carolina Courant” Newsletter
   Fundraising
   Leadership
   “Repackaging the Democratic Party: An Action Plan”
   South Carolina Young Democrats

Family:
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   C. Alex Harvin, Jr.:
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       Mental Health Association
   Cathy Harvin:
       General
Wedding
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Genealogy
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House Democratic Caucus:
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Service Support, Proposals

Memberships:
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The American Council of Young Political Leaders
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South Carolina Confederation of Local History Societies
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  Dan Bancroft Johnson
  Dr. Archibald Rutledge
U.S. Constitution Bicentennial Commission of South Carolina

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Speeches:
  General
  1981, August 17: “How to Help the Family”
  1984, June 1: Graduation Address for Archibald Rutledge Academy Class of 1984
  1985, January 29: Speech to Democratic Caucus of the House of Representatives
  1986: Baptist College Remarks
  1987:
    May 29: Graduation Remarks for Clarendon Hall/Summerton
    c. 1987: “Philadelphia was the Mecca in 1787 and will be a Mecca in 1987”

No Date:
  Creative Awareness Activities
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  Statement in Honor of Rep. Charles L. Griffin, III
  Statement by Harvin at Town Meeting held by Tallon
  Tax Legislation

Audiovisual:
  VHS Tapes:
    Barbados Twining SC Ceremony, November 1997
  Capitol View:
    March 5, 1987
    April 11, 1990
    January 9, 1991
  Cotton Gin Restoration and Dedication, John Blue Festival
  Harvin and Dr. David Smith, TV 43 Myrtle Beach
  Journal, May 7, 1990
  Lecture for Dr. David Smith’s Class, Coastal Carolina University, Fall 1988:
    Morning Class
Afternoon Class

SCETV:
1989: Interview at Harvin Home in Summerton, Summer 1989
No Date: Harvin and Ric O’Barry, Dolphin Trainer

State House Week:
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March 1, 1998
WRJA Talk Show, January 1994

Photographs:
General
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Clippings:
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Animal Welfare
Banking
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Columns:
“Legislative Newsletter” – The Clarendon Chronicle
“On the House Side” – The Manning Times

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   Public Safety
   Youth

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   Taw Caw Creek

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Savannah River Site
South Carolina Hall of Fame
South Carolina Public Service Commission
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  Roads
  Trucking
Veterans Memorial
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