

For Immediate Release:

First Reliance President/CEO Saunders Named to State Board

May 21, 2006

Florence, SC- First Reliance Bank announces today that their CEO/President Rick Saunders has been nominated by Governor Mark Sanford and confirmed by the SC State Senate to the State Board of Financial Institutions. This board has the responsibility of approving the establishment of and supervising of state chartered banks, savings and loan associations, credit unions and other financial concerns in the state. Mr. Saunders was one of the founders of First Reliance Bank in 1999 and has since overseen its growth to over \$400 million in assets.

“I am truly blessed and honored to have this opportunity,” stated Saunders. “When we were starting First Reliance Bank seven years ago I was witness to the importance of having guidance from a strong board in order to protect the investors and consumers of our state. I hope that I am able to give back what was offered to us during our journey.” Saunders’ bank was recently honored as the only bank ever to be named to South Carolina’s 25 Fastest Growing Companies list for the third time (2002, 2004 and 2005.) “I could have never imagined starting a bank from the ground up when I entered the financial services industry over twenty years ago; however, it has been one of the most rewarding things I have ever done. To give people opportunities and watch young, talented bankers chart a course with this new bank, has been an extraordinary reward that I would have never been able to realize without a great team who shared common mission, vision and values.” Saunders will serve on the board with nine other members including the State Treasurer and his term will run until June 30, 2009.

About First Reliance Bank: First Reliance Bank was founded in 1999 and has assets of over \$400 million. The bank serves the midlands, low country and Pee Dee regions of South Carolina. The bank has been recognized for its success including being the only bank ever to be named to *The Top 25 Fastest Growing Companies*™ in South Carolina three times including 2005 (ElliottDavis.) First Reliance Bank is operated in five locations with Totally Free Checking, Totally Free Business, free coin machines, \$500 Service Promises and 8-8 Extended Hours in their Florence location. Their *There’s More to Banking Than Money*™ and *Easy-to-Do-Business-With*™ standards have earned the young bank a customer satisfaction rating of 95% (Performance Solutions-February 2006-Audited.) First Reliance Bank is traded as FSRL.OB. For further information, please contact Ashleigh Miles, Media Relations at 843-674-3286 or visit www.firstreliance.com.