



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 12267
COLUMBIA 29211

June 4, 2008

The Honorable André Bauer
President of the Senate
State House, First Floor, East Wing
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Senate:

I am hereby vetoing and returning without my approval S. 1022, R-307.

Last year, I vetoed the same legislation contained in a bill with two other unrelated issues. The majority of this bill is identical to last year's, with the addition of one section that stipulates funds are subject to appropriation by the General Assembly.

While I still believe the "South Carolina Critical Needs Nursing Initiative Act" is well-intentioned, it is also a piecemeal approach to addressing higher education priorities. According to the Office of State Budget, full implementation of this legislation will cost at least \$35.9 million – or looked at another way, it would require the Commission on Higher Education to increase its total budget by almost 29 percent. We believe adding this program makes little sense considering today's challenging budgetary environment and the fact that tacking on a new curriculum of this size will likely only prolong our financial problems.

As stated in our last veto message, little has been done to study and ultimately reduce the duplication and overlaps in the higher education system that needlessly consume dollars that could be used to pay for this program. Currently, South Carolina spends the second highest amount on higher education as a percentage of our budget among Southeastern states. Nationwide, only six states dedicate a greater percentage of their budget to higher education than South Carolina. Unfortunately, at the same time, South Carolina's in-state tuition is double that of Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina – three states that dedicate a smaller portion of their budgets to higher education.

Before heading down the path of adding more programs to our higher education system, we ask the General Assembly to look at ways to reduce duplication and centralize efforts to provide a more affordable education.

For the reasons stated above, I am vetoing S. 1022, R-307, and returning it without my approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Mark Sanford", written over a horizontal line.

Mark Sanford