



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 12267
COLUMBIA 29211

June 13, 2006

The Honorable Robert W. Harrell, Jr.
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Post Office Box 11867
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Dear Mr. Speaker and Members of the House:

I am hereby vetoing and returning without my approval H. 4707, R-427.

This legislation creates the Financial Literacy Trust to collect private funds donated in support of the Financial Literacy Instruction Act of 2005. Though well-intended, this legislation creates another separate pocket of government and, thereby, over the long, run we believe serves to weaken accountability in the larger field of education.

Last year, I signed legislation that established a curriculum related to financial literacy in high schools across the state. I supported the legislation because I believed that incorporating this life skill into the overall educational curriculum was a logical component of preparing our students for life after school. This is still a mission I continue to believe is important.

However, after the program has been in existence just one year, I have been presented a bill that creates an entirely new division of the State Department of Education and a separate board to provide funding through a newly-established trust. With a new Superintendent of Schools set to take office next January and just one year of operation, this legislation is, at best, premature.

This administration has consistently advocated for better coordination and accountability within state government. This legislation is yet another step away from the spirit of the 1994 Restructuring Act. Over the last few months, some have actually suggested that the State Department of Education needs to be restructured to reduce bureaucracy and waste. Since we are on the verge of new leadership at the State Department of Education, we should not saddle the incoming Superintendent with yet another independent board.

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Further, this notion of adding additional islands or layers in the education process needs to be looked at within the context of what has happened with other subject areas. The South Carolina Financial Literacy Board of Trustees controls the funds and the curriculum of a program housed at the State Department of Education. Though the Superintendent sits as Chair and appoints the remaining members of the Board, this now creates a fifth entity involved in some fashion of education curriculum, including the Office of First Steps, the State Department of Education, the Education Oversight Committee, and the Education and Economic Development Coordinating Council which has one piece of the education pie related to workforce training.

This is the same issue we wrestle with inside the health care field, as there are multiple agencies overseeing health care in our state. As we noted in our FY 2006-07 Executive Budget, we spend as much money as other states on health care, yet get worse results. We believe it is our failed health care structure, creating overlap and duplication, that has left clients to suffer. We believe that the education of our young should not be subjected to this same fate.

If the intent of the legislation was to create a vehicle for private donations, this legislation could have simply created a trust at the Treasurer's Office and empowered the State Board of Education to make these financial decisions. We do not agree that another entity and another board are going to increase accountability. Board structures, by their nature, are conservative and often times resistant to change, and we again do not believe another board is necessary to take care of the important issue of raising financial literacy.

I continue to support the intent of the Financial Literacy Instruction Act of 2005 and believe that the public-private partnership that H. 4707 seeks to create is worthwhile. I cannot, however, support this vehicle as the tool to be used to accomplish that goal.

For these reasons, I am returning H. 4707 to you without my approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Sanford", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Sanford