



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

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April 26, 2004

The Honorable André Bauer
President of the Senate
State House, 1st Floor, East Wing
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Mr. President and Members of the Senate:

I am hereby returning without my approval S. 154, R-229, an Act.

This legislation was introduced to strengthen the background check procedure for prospective teachers, which is a measure I support. However, I am vetoing the legislation based on the content of Section 2, which was added by amendment.

Section 2 of the bill deletes Sections 59-3-50, 59-3-60 and 59-3-70 from the Code of Laws, which require the reporting of various statistics from schools to the Superintendent, as well as from the Superintendent to the governor and the General Assembly. The information that these sections require is critical to the legislature and to governors as they make decisions that affect the state's schools. It includes the number of pupils, the number of schools, the average teacher salary and the cost and status of school construction, among other items.

This veto is not based on communications problems between the Superintendent's office and governor's office. In fact, I have no doubts that the Superintendent would continue to report this information in a timely manner to my office as well as to the General Assembly. Instead, my veto is based on the importance of the state's role in maintaining our education system. As one of the state's most significant obligations, it is essential that future governors, legislatures and Superintendents have access to the most current information and data. The Department of Education has indicated that some of the language contained in these Sections is outdated. A more appropriate method of addressing this would be to update and amend those sections rather than eliminating them altogether.

For these reasons, I am returning S. 154, R-229 to you without my signature.

Sincerely,

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

Mark Sanford