



State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 12267
COLUMBIA 29211

June 7, 2010

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. 4715, R. 283, which directs the Budget and Control Board to transfer ownership of the National Guard Armory in Jefferson to the County of Chesterfield.

This administration has consistently opposed the practice of simply giving away surplus state property because doing so deprives state taxpayers of both the value of that property and a clear understanding of what government really costs. When property is given to another arm of government, the real cost to the entity receiving the gift is underrepresented and the real cost to the government giving the gift is overstated. To make prudent decisions in government, I believe it is important to operate with real numbers. It is especially troubling that the state is continuing this practice at a time when state revenues have decreased so dramatically.

As a member of Congress in 1999, I offered an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would have stopped the Defense Department's practice of giving away surplus equipment to local governments. Since I became governor, this administration has not supported bills similar to H. 4715, vetoing conveyances of National Guard armories to Inman, Jonesville, Lockhart, Bamberg and Lake City. Ultimately, the principles of prudent property management and government transparency require that the state receive fair compensation in return for the transfer of any surplus state property.


Although Chesterfield County might use the property for a beneficial purpose, as has been the argument for these kinds of transfers in the past, the practice of simply giving away state property does nothing to protect the taxpayers' investment or provide greater clarity into the real cost of state, county or local budgeting practices. We've long held the position that state assets should not simply be given to local jurisdictions, even for the most well-intentioned uses – which

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is precisely what this bill does. We maintain our position in this case, and we believe that the state should place the property for sale as required by general state law.

Therefore, I am vetoing and returning without my approval H.4715, R. 283.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Sanford', written in a cursive style.

Mark Sanford.