



HENRY McMASTER
GOVERNOR

February 28, 2017

The Honorable James H. Lucas
Speaker of the House of Representatives
State House, Second Floor
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Mr. Speaker and Members of the House:

I am hereby vetoing and returning without my approval R-4, H. 3462, a bill pertaining to Florence County School District Number Three ("District Three"), which extends the terms of members of District Three's Board of Trustees from three to four years and provides that such terms shall be staggered with general elections conducted in even-numbered years. For the reasons set forth below, I must veto H. 3462 and return the same without my signature.

Article III, section 34 of the South Carolina Constitution expressly prohibits the General Assembly from enacting local or special laws "where a general law can be made applicable," S.C. Const. art. III, § 34(IX); however, greater deference is warranted when local legislation relates to the General Assembly's article XI authority to establish, organize, and support a system of public schools. In the present case, aside from the constitutional inquiry, I believe that H. 3462 subjugates the will of the voters of District Three by extending the terms of existing members of the Board of Trustees without requiring the same to stand for re-election. Although I applaud the presumptive effort to save taxpayer funds by consolidating general elections in even-numbered years, any system of staggered terms should be implemented in a manner that takes care to avoid the type of temporary disenfranchisement that would necessarily follow from H. 3462. Therefore, because the approach outlined in H. 3462 is less than ideal in this regard, I must veto the present measure.

For the foregoing reasons, I am respectfully vetoing R-4, H. 3462 and returning the same without my signature.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Henry McMaster".

Henry McMaster