State of South Carolina
Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

June 6, 2016

The Honorable Henry D. McMaster
President of the Senate
Statehouse, Second Floor
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Senate,

I am vetoing and returning without my signature R249, S.1297, a bill that unconstitutionally sets forth how the members of the Chesterfield County School District Board receive per diem.

Our state's Constitution prohibits special laws from being enacted where a general law is applicable. In this case, a longstanding statute authorizes school boards to set their own per diem pursuant to Section 59-1-350 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. **Because the General Assembly has already passed a statewide law declaring how school boards set per diem, this bill is unconstitutional special legislation in violation of Section 34, Article III.**

In the past, I have signed a bill that simply restated a school board's existing statutory authority to set per diem, but this bill goes beyond that – this bill actually limits the school board's authority by postponing the effective date for when a new per diem amount is authorized. If it is important enough that adjusted per diem amounts are delayed for all school boards, then the General Assembly should amend the general statute rather than passing unconstitutional special legislation for a single school board.

Every member of the General Assembly is expected to vote on all legislation, including local bills. **Members who fail to vote are supporting the violation of our Constitution, which we have all sworn to uphold.** Therefore, I ask that you protect the provisions of our State Constitution that prohibit special legislation and sustain my veto.

My very best,

Nikki R. Haley