State of South Carolina
Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

June 18, 2012

The Honorable Robert W. Harrell, Jr.
Speaker of the House of Representatives
506 Blatt Building
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Mr. Speaker and Members of the House,

I am vetoing and returning without my approval R284, H.3127, a bill that allows individuals convicted of crimes to apply for a recommendation for records expungement from the Board of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services when they apply for pardons. **I am vetoing this bill because it does not explicitly require a pardon as a pre-condition for expungement and the list of eligible offenses is overly-broad.** By making expungement a seemingly less extreme alternative to pardon, the Board would compromise the public good done by criminal history checks, allowing many to hide their past transgressions.

Even though I understand this bill only allows the Board to recommend expungement to a solicitor, such a recommendation would be weighed heavily and would most likely result in an expungement. As the bill stands, persons convicted of crimes like hit and run, child abandonment, and dealing drugs would have the opportunity to erase their criminal records. The result would be businesses and communities being unfairly deprived of the ability to be informed about the criminal histories of those caring for our children, minding our cash registers, and installing out alarm systems.

Because I am sensitive to the challenges of individuals re-entering our communities after being convicted of a crime, I will work with Representative Rutherford to craft a bill that improves employment opportunities for pardoned individuals without compromising the safety of our communities.

Sincerely,

Nikki R. Haley