



State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

May 14, 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,

Today, I signed into law R.186, H.3083, a bill that re-authorizes the South Carolina Conservation Bank for an additional five years. I signed this bill because I appreciate the importance of our efforts to conserve South Carolina's natural resources and rural aesthetics. The Bank supports and promotes agriculture, tourism, and the preservation of our state's heritage - factors that drive our economy and sense of community.

At its inception, the Bank was provided with a dedicated revenue stream - a portion of the annual collections of documentary stamp fees - that is sufficient to maintain the Bank's operations. Since the Bank's efforts are not a critical function of government, the law automatically suspends this transfer in lean economic times. Unfortunately, this provision has been repeatedly circumvented in the past few years through the diversion of millions of General Fund dollars and additional professional licensure fees paid by nurses, accountants, contractors, and others. The Bank has also habitually committed to projects beyond its available means.

I support the Bank's conservation efforts, but I will continue to oppose these actions which plainly violate the original intent of the Act.

My very best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nikki R. Haley".

Nikki R. Haley

NRH/jdb