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Dear Ms. Haltiwanger,
Dep. Chief of Staff, Operations
Office of the Governor, SC

Our governor gave me your business card yesterday here at Sun City Hilton Head (Bluffton) so that I might document to you our brief conversation which occurred after her very inspiring presentation here to our mostly Republican residents:

The subject concerns US 17 in Jasper county as one makes his/her way into Savannah. *I must say that there is now a new bridge under construction from the SC side adjacent to the existing 4-lane bridge so that I am not quite sure of its eventual purpose. Maybe current plans call for the addition of additional US 17 SC lanes to connect to it? As an aside, I am wondering if Georgia will be paying for any of this new bridge's construction?*

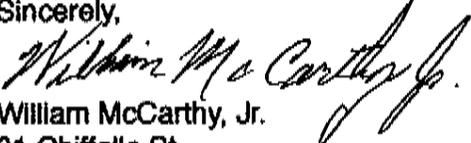
My wife and I have lived in SCHH since 1998 and have travelled to Savannah via US 17 over the last 15 years. Initially just to do special shopping, and now mostly to attend medical specialists. Over this time period the density of traffic along US 17 via Levy has increased between 5 and 10 fold, depending upon the time of day. And at the same time the quality of this road has deteriorated as to be expected. With the increase in traffic there appears to be an even much greater increase in large and heavy truck traffic making the two-lane highway **less safe**.

Why I took the time to share this with Her Honorable Haley is because of one recent trip to Savannah. Here we have had lots of Summer rains, but none seemed more of a downpour than when we were required to go to Savannah for a doctor's appointment.

Let me tell you. Whereas normal weather-condition traffic travels at 110 percent over the posted speed limit, that particular day and time, even some brave souls were traveling much less than the posted speed limit, and I, with some 62 years of driving experience, drove even slower! Why? Not only because of the highly reduced visibility but because of the fear of hitting unseen pot holes that might twist one's car into the oncoming traffic.

Hence, the reason I stayed to talk to "Nikki". For safety reasons, something really needs to be done in the next fiscal year to repair — but more cost effective: construct a 4-lane highway, especially the last 3 miles of this road leading to GA and as a priority road project in 2015 before an accident or two adds to the SC traffic-death statistics.

Sincerely,


William McCarthy, Jr.
31 Chiffelle St.
Bluffton, SC
29909-4549

P.S. The growth of SCHH itself in the 2000s with its "trigger" to bring in other businesses and their workers to mostly Beaufort county and now Jasper county [just take a look at all of the auto dealers along US 278 as one example] would easily seem in itself as justification for the upgrade to Jasper County US 17.