

March 8, 2015

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Senator Michael L. Fair
Representative James Burns

Thank each of you for taking the time to review the attached. I am hearing many "plans" to reorganize the SC DOT, raise the gas tax in the state, modify the sales tax in the state, so on and so forth.

I would pose a question to underline the existing circumstances from the prospective of the average citizen residing in the state of South Carolina. Based on the current conditions of our state road system there is little doubt some things need to be done and some changes are overdue. My immediate concern is why would the recommendation be made to restructure the SCDOT and at the same time throw additional monies at this particular division of state government.

Make the necessary modifications to the SCDOT, hopefully, modeling the changes based on an existing state whose Department of Transportation has done a good job in two particular areas; maintained a good road system and operated efficiently within their existing budget.

Before considering any modifications to the revenue stream presently being allocated to the SCDOT have an audit performed for the past three fiscal years expenditures for this department and allow the public access to this information. If the present SCDOT has been off target to the degree that serious consideration is being given to a reorganization, who should conclude they have been doing anything like an acceptable job of being fiscally responsible either?


Historically the DOT operation within any state has been a notorious agency for budget waste, roads to nowhere, providing financing for projects having nothing to do with roadway planning, on-going maintenance, etc. It occurs to me the SCDOT in particular is challenged to properly align the road surface with both ends of pretty much any bridge within the states borders.

Finally, any proposed change to the gasoline tax for the state of South Carolina should be placed on a ballot and allow the citizens who will be paying for those changes the opportunity to vote up or down.

Recently an initiative in Greenville County was placed on the ballot for us to pay a few cents for improvements to local roadways. This proposal was to be capped at 8 years or a total dollar amount to be raised, whichever, occurred first. The measure was soundly defeated by the residents of this county. One of the items that came out of the discussions pertaining to this initiative prior to the election was a question that was never answered; what was the SCDOT budget allocated to provide for the "planned improvements" for the same particular roads as outlined in the county initiative that was placed on the ballot.

Common sense and proven business practices (audit-accountability in office, etc.) are what is needed not a gas tax increase without a parallel justification for the same which amounts to throwing good money after bad with no recourse for being in a position to correct the wrong in a timely fashion.

I respectfully appreciate your time and consideration.


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