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**To:** Veldran, Katherine <KatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov>  
**Date:** 11/16/2011 12:23:49 PM  
**Subject:** FW: SC's Haley: State needs to stop saying no

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**From:** Taillon, Jeff  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2011 12:24 PM  
**To:** Schimsa, Rebecca; Veldran, Katherine  
**Subject:** SC's Haley: State needs to stop saying no

[http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505245\\_162-57325920/scs-haley-state-needs-to-stop-saying-no/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505245_162-57325920/scs-haley-state-needs-to-stop-saying-no/)

SC's Haley: State needs to stop saying no

(AP) CHARLESTON, S.C. — Gov. Nikki Haley said Tuesday that South Carolina came out ahead when its environmental board approved a Savannah River dredging permit that will help Georgia's ports and said it's time for the state to compete, not just say "no."

"I've taken on a state I'm very proud of but one that is used to saying no and can't," she told about 800 people attending a banquet of the Propeller Club of Charleston representing the city's maritime interests.

Haley said South Carolina got more than expected last week when it approved a water quality permit allowing the deepening of the channel of the river forming the border between the two states..

The Department of Health and Environmental Control initially planned to reject the permit. But Haley said that Georgia came back with an agreement to meet South Carolina's rules, including a 50-year commitment to maintain wetlands and control dissolved oxygen levels along the river.

"They hit their benchmarks and they did what they were supposed to do," Haley said. She added the state received a letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that the dredging could be approved without the state permit so South Carolina came out ahead.

Georgia's 15-year push for a \$600 million project to deepen the river channel to handle larger ships was endorsed Tuesday by Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. Savannah is one of the Port of Charleston's keenest competitors.

Haley said when DHEC was going to reject the permit, Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal flew to Columbia and asked Haley's permission for Georgia officials to meet with the DHEC board.

She said she agreed and added South Carolina needs to compete with Georgia, but not by being obstructionist.

"Our fight is not with Savannah. When I stood here a year ago and I said I'm tired of Georgia having their way with us, it was not because we were going to stop Savannah, it was because we were going to do something," she said. "We watched Savannah get distribution centers. We watched Savannah get transportation systems and we sat there and did nothing."

And she added that there's no chance South Carolina will get money to deepen the Charleston Harbor shipping channel without the help of Georgia's federal lawmakers.

"If you think we are going to get the permit for Charleston and keep Savannah from getting their funding, when they have two senators fighting as hard as ours, you're not being realistic," she said.

"We can work together and win or we can fight and be at a standstill. You decide that," Haley said. "I believe we deserve more. I don't believe we need to be petty about it and I don't think we need to say no to everyone else because we're scared to fight and scared to win."

South Carolina's attorney general has agreed to represent the Savannah River Maritime Commission in its opposition to Georgia's plans to dredge the river channel. A spokesman said Attorney General Alan Wilson would represent the commission that legislators created in 2007.

On Monday, the commission voted unanimously to invalidate the water quality permit.

Haley said South Carolina needs to worry more about competing and less about suing. For some South Carolinians "every time something comes up they want to fight, they want to sue and they want to do something else."

An opinion last year by the Attorney General's Office said that DHEC has sole authority to issue a water quality permit.

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