

230 Pelham Road Apt 125
Greenville, South Carolina 29615

March 2, 2015

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Governor Nikki Haley,

My name is Lacey Kish and I am a college student at Tri-County Technical College in Pendleton, South Carolina. I am currently taking State and Local Government as an elective for my major. My class was assigned to write a letter to an elected official about an important political topic in order to receive extra credit for the semester. If I get a response by April 28th, I will receive even more extra credit, so I hope you will consider responding to my concerns if possible.

As a sophomore in college, it has come to my attention that I may not have been as prepared for college as I anticipated. In high school, I graduated as an honors student, a member of the National Honors Society, the National Beta Club, and with a total grade point average of a 4.3. Upon graduation, I thought I would do great as a college student based on my high school experience, however this was not the case. I found myself not knowing how to study for a college test and how learn college material in preparation for mid-terms and final exams. I also found it very difficult to keep college material in my long-term memory for future college courses ahead. Transitioning from high school to college in the state of South Carolina was very difficult for me and it only encourage me to find the reason why I had such a difficult time.

After researching South Carolina's education, I have come to the realization that the passing of *The No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001, which grants federal spending for K-12 education, is the reason for my lack of preparation for college level learning. South Carolina schools administer the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) testing every year which accounts for whether or not South Carolina students are learning specific standards. In doing so, schools and teachers are spending the academic year teaching students how to make an exceptional grade on the PASS test without teaching long-term essentials. Students are not learning how to think for themselves, much less learning for long-term education. Students are learning how to pick apart a question that is on the PASS exam and choose the best answer, without actually learning the information. South Carolina participates in this way of learning because of keeping federal funding, which is important, however, I feel a different approach should be taken for creating well rounded individuals that can succeed in upper level education.

A different way to South Carolina's approach *The No Child Left Behind Act* would be to change the way students are being taught. This would include an increase of critical thinking activities by setting aside time during each subject class to allow students to use the knowledge they have learned and apply it. In Anderson County, students have a shortened regular subject class along with a separate PASS testing subject class. The elimination of the separate PASS testing class in place of a critical thinking section would really improve learning in the long-term. Teaching a student how to learn and how to study would also improve long-term learning.

Thank you, Governor Nikki Haley, for reading my letter. I hope you will consider my concerns, and I appreciate you taking the time out of your day to read this. I really think this is an important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lacey Kish". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lacey Kish