



State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

December 10, 2014

Ms. Helen Windley
566 Henderson Road
Varnville, South Carolina 29944-4025

Dear Ms. Windley,

Thank you for contacting my office with your thoughts on same-sex marriage in South Carolina. All across America, states have been passing laws on both sides of the same-sex marriage issue, many of which have been litigated in a court of law.

In South Carolina, the people spoke on same-sex marriage. In 2006, 78 percent of voters passed a ballot referendum in favor of defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman, a provision that was embodied in Article 17, Section 15 of our State Constitution. Like the majority of South Carolinians, I support traditional marriage values, and as your governor, I did my duty to uphold the laws of our state defining marriage as between one man and one woman until a court of law recently struck down those laws.

As you may know, the legality of South Carolina's same-sex marriage ban has been declared by the United States District Court to be unconstitutional under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Therefore, because the State is enjoined from enforcing the same-sex marriage ban, same-sex couples can now legally wed in South Carolina. Still pending an appeal, our state's seminal same-sex marriage case, *Bleckley v. Wilson*, remains before the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals and may ultimately be taken up by the Supreme Court of the United States at a later time.

As governor, I swore an oath to uphold the Constitution and laws of this state, and I will continue to do so as the rule of law requires. Regardless of my personal beliefs, same-sex marriages are now considered lawful in South Carolina, and I will enforce the law in this and all other matters as is my sworn duty.

Again, thank you for writing me. I hope that citizens, like you, will continue to speak out and use the power of your voice to get involved in our government. God bless.

My very best,

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

Nikki R. Haley

NRH/rs

A handwritten note in black ink that says "Thank you!" with a large exclamation mark.