

From:
To: Patel, Swati <SwatiPatel@gov.sc.gov>
CC: Symmes, Brian <BrianSymmes@gov.sc.gov>
Smith, Austin <AustinSmith@gov.sc.gov>
Baker, Josh <JoshBaker@gov.sc.gov>
Date: 11/18/2015 9:40:30 AM
Subject: DSS Foster Care Recruitment Campaign

Swati,

As you are probably aware, one of the allegations in the DSS class action lawsuit is a disproportionate number of foster children in congregate care settings, and this issue will be addressed in the Settlement Agreement. In fact, SC has the highest rate in the country of children 12 years and younger in congregate care. Best practice in child welfare is to place children in the most family-like, least restrictive setting, not congregate care. The goal is to have one foster home per child in care. DSS has identified a need of appx. 1600 additional foster homes in order to reach this goal, and they have broken this down by need per county.

Brian, Austin, and I met with Susan and members of her team yesterday about the foster care recruitment campaign they intend to roll out in January. They will market the campaign as one to recruit "Champions for Children" to address this "Quiet Crisis." They have asked the Governor to participate and have made four specific asks –

- 1 – Hold a press conference in January 2016 – invite key legislators, foster parents, and members of the faith community to kick off the campaign
- 2 – Produce a video to be rolled out in February 2016 and help push the video out through social media and the press
- 3 – Rally at the Statehouse in May 2016 to recognize foster parents and announce accomplishments of the campaign
- 4 – Speak at the foster care conference in May 2016 – more than 500 foster parents attend

DSS has acknowledged that they can only do so much at the state level, and that the bulk of this work must be done in counties and regions, mainly in churches. To support these local efforts, I think it would also be cool for her to do a state tour, speaking in areas where foster homes are needed the most to get local press on the subject.

Attached is a copy of the powerpoint DSS handed out during our meeting. Because the Governor is going to be traveling this week and Thanksgiving is next week, please get this in front of her, so we can get back to DSS about their asks.

Thanks, Holly

Holly G. Pisarik
Chief Legal Counsel
Office of Governor Nikki R. Haley
O: 803-734-8465 C: 803-322-6255