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Feb. 3, 2015

Dear Governor Haley,

As a hard working single mother, I feel it is essential to inform you of the experiences I have had while living here in South Carolina. I was implanted here by military marriage. After having major surgery on November 24, 2012, I returned a week later because our family was reliant on my income due to an enormous debt accrued by my husband. On December 14, 2012, my children & I walked into our home where half of our belongings were gone & a Dear John letter on the table. My husband walked out on a 19 year military career, his marriage & child.

I contacted an attorney to try to protect our child & home due to his method of departure. He left me with all of the marital financial debt, dropped our medical/dental benefits & did not pay any form of support. I changed jobs to ensure I could provide benefits that were taken from our asthmatic son. January 2014, my job through Bluecross Blueshield was phased out due to the Affordable Healthcare Act. Our divorce was finalized in September 2014 after no response from him. Therefore, I'm divorced, on the verge of bankruptcy, no insurance, & no form of income/support coming into the home.

I've worked full time since I was 16 years old. I'm unfamiliar with how to ask for handouts. I've had to humble myself to obtain free school lunches, SNAP benefits, Medicaid & SC Help for my home. I still have an enormous amount of debt with no end in sight. A judge awarded me with reimbursement of half of the marital debt, arrearages in child support, half of attorney's fees, & insurance benefits for our child. That means absolutely NOTHING when you can't get any form of enforcement. I have begged DSS for help. They have had an excuse each time I call as to the reasoning for their refusal to pursue. I have called once a month beginning in September 2014 with every update on my ex's whereabouts, current

employment information (including a new position through the military in Texas) & contact information. Every month, I'm hear the response, "Your caseworker/supervisor has 15-30 days to get back with you". I've yet to receive one phone call or one letter stating they are in pursuit of this money. Considering the state of Texas is collecting child support for children of his previous marriage; he should be easily located. If I can locate him on Facebook & LinkedIn; I would assume a government agency could locate him.

To add insult to injury, I received a call from the father of my 19year old daughter stating that DSS has opened an erroneous case against him. He has never had a child support order in the state of South Carolina & has upheld his obligations in her support through the state of that decree. How has DSS spent the last 3 months pursuing the wrong person for the wrong child?

To say that these federal/state programs are in place to protect the welfare of a child would be a joke. I don't know how DSS can think that it is acceptable to ignore a child's support for over 2 years is beyond my comprehension. I have exhausted all efforts in trying to resolve this issue myself. Again, I find myself begging now for your help.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristen C Stratton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kristen" and last name "Stratton" clearly visible.

Kristen Ciccimarro Stratton