

P.O. Box 31672
Knoxville, Tennessee 37930
June 23, 2015

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

Dear Governor Haley:

My wife and I watched you on television as the evil in Charleston played out before our very eyes. While nothing can diminish the horror of what happened there, you and the good people of Charleston shifted the focus of the world from the evil perpetrator and his hate to the faith, unity and love of the people of the great State of South Carolina. Neither race nor the Confederate flag were responsible for that horrible event. I am extremely proud of my home State!!!

My Mom moved with her five children to Mullins in 1945 where she had grown up. I was 4 years old. Yes, there was segregation in those days, which I did not fully understand—it just was. Yes, there was the KKK, a group of dangerous idiots of whom I was terribly frightened. My Mom, a registered nurse, worked with and loved black nurses, black orderlies and black cooks. As a kid, they loved on me and I loved them. She treated black patients with love and respect. The way she lived taught me that we all are God's creations. **She** influenced who I have become, not the experience of segregation.

I dearly love South Carolina and am proud of its history. I am a loyal Gamecock, class of 1966 and 1969. Men like John C. Calhoun, Francis Marion, James Burns and Donald Russell are South Carolinians I admire. I am first and foremost a loyal American. I honorably served my country in the United States Air Force under the Stars and Stripes. However, I am not ambivalent about the Confederate flag. I encountered the KKK by accident on several occasions and, of course, the Confederate flag was on display. As a white man, on those occasions, I was filled with fear. I watched your news conference yesterday with tears and pride. I clapped with others as you announced the decision to remove the flag from the Capital grounds. I applaud your courage and your leadership.

One last thing; my Mom taught me that a woman is capable of achieving anything she sets her heart and mind to accomplish. So, I'm all in favor of a woman President of the United States as long as she has character and is competent. The current woman candidate is neither. I pray to live long enough to see you, Governor, achieve that high office, if you are so led. You will be in our prayers!!

Sincerely,


Arthur Harrison (Art) Allen