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Date: 11/15/2016 10:22:04 AM
Subject: Test Message - Gov. Nikki Haley And Supt. Spearman Ask Lawmakers To Make Education Superintendent A Cabinet Position

November 15, 2016
For immediate release
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In Case You Missed It:

Gov. Nikki Haley And Supt. Spearman Ask Lawmakers To Make Education Superintendent A Cabinet Position

From **The Post and Courier**

"Instead of moving the state forward with a common vision for education priorities, this divided leadership structure can result in incompatible positions, a lack of coordination and fragmented accountability for failures in our Pre K-12 education system."

November 15, 2016

"Gov. Nikki Haley and S.C. Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman called on lawmakers Monday to support upcoming bills that would make the top education job part of the governor's cabinet instead of being popularly elected.

"Haley's letter is a move to get a jump on one of her top remaining priorities in her final two years in office. The proposal will ask voters in 2018 to move the superintendent from elected office to a gubernatorial appointment in 2023. It is similar to other pushes rejected by lawmakers during the past two decades.

"'Instead of moving the state forward with a common vision for education priorities, this divided leadership structure can result in incompatible positions, a lack of coordination and fragmented accountability for failures in our Pre K-12 education system,' her letter to lawmakers says.

"One weakness of the current election method is that past governors and superintendents have come from different political parties but served at the same time, said Sen. Chip Campsen, R-Charleston.

"He sees the reform as long overdue and early next month will pre-file proposed legislation to make the change during the upcoming legislative session.

"'You have (gubernatorial) candidates who may be able to address issues of education on the campaign trail, but they have very little power to make any of it happen,' Campsen said. 'It just doesn't provide the appropriate level of accountability or let the executive branch be effective in implementing education policy.'"

"South Carolina's constitution separates the positions, leaving the state as one of only 13 in the country with an elected superintendent of education.

"If legislation were approved, voters would still need to agree to amend the constitution, as they did in a similar move with the Adjutant General's Office in 2014.

“A restructuring bill addressing the superintendent post made it the farthest in the 2016 legislative session. Haley and Spearman wrote House Speaker Jay Lucas, R-Hartsville, last year backing its movement. Spearman wrote him again Feb. 10 giving her support. The next day the House sent the joint resolution to the Senate, but two months later Senate Democrats blocked a vote on it.

“Campsen said it's hard to pinpoint the resistance issue but one common reason is state lawmakers typically don't like to give the governor more power.

“Even if the superintendent's office and its \$4.2 billion education budget were under the governor's purview, lawmakers would still have some degree of control since senators would need to confirm the superintendent and lawmakers would still control the budget.

“‘You wouldn't have a runaway governor's office when it comes to funding education,’ Campsen said. ‘There's even a potential to save money.’

“House Judiciary Chairman Greg Delleney, R-Chester, will pre-file legislation similar to Campsen's next month, as well, according to the letter.”

A copy of the letter from Governor Haley and Superintendent Spearman can be found, [here](#).

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