

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Office of the Governor
South Carolina State House, 1st Floor
1205 Pendleton St.
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Gov. Haley:

I am writing to express my deep distress that you have reversed your Confederate flag stance.

You yourself have stated that the flag is not an emblem of hate, and that it does not impede economic advancement or good will among all South Carolinians. To say that the flag represents slavery and oppression frankly is historically wrong; its basis is *the issue of states' rights*.

Otherwise, how do you explain the ownership of slaves in Northern states? How to explain that even some free blacks owned slaves?

While hate groups have appropriated the flag for evil use – and certainly this was the case for Dylann Roof – the answer is not to bow to a wrong consensus.

Because in fact, you are inviting the world to judge and decide for South Carolina. People who are not residents of this state, who likely could not find it on a map, and know little or nothing of South Carolina history should not have a say here. Political correctness is a shallow gesture, Governor. In bowing to uninformed popular opinion, you essentially said, “We’re taking it down because of the *perception* that the flag is bad.”

And that is a slippery slope indeed. When young people are taught that America is a “mean” country, and our President has made a signature of the global apology, what is next – taking down our nation’s flag in mea culpa? There is already precedent for allowing the flag of Mexico to fly over U.S. government buildings and schools. The University of California at Irvine removed a U.S. flag to spare illegal aliens “hurt feelings.” And now Louis Farrakhan is calling for America’s flag to be furled. Why would you encourage this trend?

As you set the stage to cleanse South Carolina history and culture, removing monuments and symbols, renaming buildings and streets, where does it stop? Do we raze Charleston’s historic sites lest there be offense? For that matter, should Washington, D.C., be renamed? After all, there were slaves at Mt. Vernon!

I appeal to you, think back to the reason in your previous statements. Let this matter be decided by South Carolinians, not by outsiders. At least let there be time for debate over the fact that Dylann Roof’s drugs were more to blame for the massacre than a flag he misappropriated.

In closing, let me say that I proudly voted for you. I have written to you expressing my gratitude that you are my Governor. However, I can no longer support you if you remove the flag. With all due respect, you will have lost my trust.

Sincerely,



Diana Blackwell
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