



## State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY  
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET  
COLUMBIA 29201

March 22, 2016

Miss Dhruvi Contractor  
Niceville High School  
800 East John Sims Parkway  
Niceville, Florida 32578

Dear Miss Contractor,

Thank you for your kind letter regarding our shared background, and thank you for your interest in wanting to pursue public service as a way to give back to your fellow citizens.

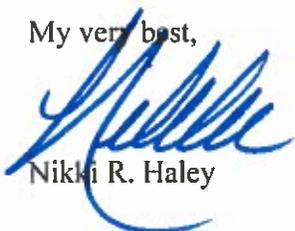
As I've always said, I am the proud daughter of Indian immigrants who reminded my brothers, my sister, and me every day how blessed we were to be in this country. My parents gave up much wealth in India to come to America to have less, because they understood that they would be giving their children more than wealth – they would be giving us the American dream. Here, we are free to be whatever we want to be, as long as we work hard and fight for our success.

You asked me how I have overcome differences as an Indian American, so I will tell you this: Focusing others on our similarities has always done so much more than focusing on our differences. Even as a young girl growing up in the only Indian family in a small rural town, I knew that I had more in common with the other kids than I had differences. As I got older, I never lost that desire to want to bring people together more than push them apart. To this day, I still approach any issue by first finding common ground with others – where we agree and how we are similar – as the best way to tackle any problem, whether social, economic, or political.

I am so proud of the sacrifice my parents made for me, just like someone in your family made for you. Take pride in who you are and where you came from, knowing in your gut that you were meant for amazing things. As a young woman, I will tell you what my mother always told me, "Don't complain about it; do something about it." Find that passion and spark and go after it, making the world around you a better place for having you in it.

Best of luck with the rest of your school year, Dhruvi. I look forward to hearing great things about you. God bless.

My very best,

  
Nikki R. Haley

  
Proud of you  
Dhruvi!