



KEVIN L. BRYANT
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 142
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29202

October 3, 2017

Dear Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray and the other members of the Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee:

I write in advance of your October 4, 2017, hearing to highlight the outstanding work that the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce's Executive Director Cheryl Stanton has done for South Carolina, and to enthusiastically support her nomination to serve as the Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division at the United States Department of Labor.

I served as the Chair of the Labor and Employment Subcommittee of the South Carolina Senate Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee from the start of Director Stanton's tenure at DEW until January of this year. When Director Stanton began, South Carolina's debt to the federal government was \$531,557,413.41, the state's unemployment rate was 8.1 percent, and my office was flooded with constituent calls complaining about how badly the department was handling unemployment claims.

Today, South Carolina's unemployment trust fund has a positive balance of more than \$700,000,000, and the unemployment rate is 4.0 percent. Furthermore, I never hear complaints from constituents – employers or claimants – about how DEW has handled an unemployment insurance claim. Moreover, DEW has cut employer's state unemployment taxes in three consecutive years, for an average savings of more than 30 percent in taxes for class rates 1 through 19. In fact, in 2017, more than 69,000 employers will pay less in taxes than they would have paid under the previous tax system.

Under Director Stanton's tenure, the workforce system has put 392,193 South Carolinians to work. DEW has issued 171,843 Work Opportunity Tax Credit certifications to employers (for a potential savings of \$478,300,750) to incentivize them to hire job seekers with the greatest barriers to employment. Additionally, South Carolina leveraged a grant issued by the Department of Defense to save 1090 jobs – and create 490 more jobs – by helping defense contractors who were impacted by budget cuts/sequestration diversify their product lines.

Director Stanton has brought a practical, but empathetic approach to solving South Carolina's workforce development issues, and in ensuring individuals who want jobs get jobs.

Director Stanton, as I have told people across South Carolina, was the best decision former Governor Nikki Haley ever made in South Carolina. She transformed an agency overnight and made it work for employers and employees---and taxpayers. I offer you my full and unqualified recommendation, because I know that she will do for our country what she did for South Carolina.

With Warmest Regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin L. Bryant".

Kevin L. Bryant