



State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

June 6, 2016

The Honorable James H. Lucas
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Statehouse, Second Floor
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Speaker Lucas and Members of the House of Representatives,

Today, I am vetoing and returning without my approval R268, H.4762, a bill that allows county and local governments to increase taxes above existing statutory millage caps if it contains a significant amount of federally-owned forestland. I am vetoing this bill **because it expands the ability of local governments to increase taxes on citizens without a public vote.**

It is my belief that the people of this state deserve the right to vote on any local tax increases, whether they are fees, local option taxes, or property millage. Advocates argue that federally-owned forests reduce the tax base of local governments, but such arguments ignore the fact that the area of responsibility of the local government is reduced by a corresponding amount and that counties receive offsetting payments from the federal government in lieu of taxes.

I have vetoed this bill because it is an invitation for local governments to raise taxes on families and businesses. Sustaining this veto would show your constituents you believe in citizen participation in local tax policy.

My very best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Nikki R. Haley".

Nikki R. Haley