

From: Mayer, Doug
To: Soura, ChristianChristianSoura@gov.sc.gov
Date: 10/3/2013 3:59:50 PM
Subject: Fw:

From: Mayer, Doug
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2013 03:58 PM
To: Katherine Haltiwanger (katherinehaltiwanger@gov.sc.gov) <katherinehaltiwanger@gov.sc.gov>
Subject: RE:

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

As you know, the Department of Health and Human Services is a critical part of the state's health care system. The Department's primary mission is to protect and promote the health of the people of South Carolina. The Department's activities are primarily directed towards the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease and the promotion of health and well-being.

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Very best,

Frankley

From: Mayer, Doug
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2013 3:39 PM
To: Katherine Haltiwanger (katherinehaltiwanger@gov.sc.gov)
Subject:

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

As you know, the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program, administered by your agency, supports the nutritional needs of low income women and children. It is a critical program that has a lifelong impact on the health of the next generation of South Carolinians, and in our state alone more than ninety thousand infants and children and thirty thousand women rely on WIC to meet their nutritional needs.

In spite of the importance of the program, this week we were informed by your Department of Agriculture that WIC was deemed to be a non-essential program, meaning that the over 120,000 South Carolinians who rely on this program for their health and nutritional well-being will be left without the resources they very much depend on.

This unfortunate designation, and the loss of funding that comes with it, means that the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the agency that administers WIC in our state, is left with no choice but to begin the process of furloughing the majority of its 600 or so WIC employees. The practical consequence of this action is that although funding for the food products may exist, South Carolina will not have the funds required to employ the personnel necessary to administer and distribute WIC vouchers.

As I'm sure you can imagine, the temporary cessation of the WIC program, for however long or short the government shutdown in Washington may continue, the impact on South Carolina's low income women and children will be significant.

Fortunately, it is also avoidable, as there is an easy resolution to this problem, and so I respectfully request that you work with the Office of Management and Budget in order to alter the initial designation and immediately declare WIC to be an essential government service. Such action will allow for the continued funding of WIC personnel, which will allow us to continue to distribute the necessary nutritional benefits to the most vulnerable of South Carolinians.

We both understand that politics is politics, but also that there are some things that have import far beyond the political winds of the day. Surely we both agree that making sure that keeping our neediest women and children well-fed and in good nutritional health is one of them. I respectfully ask for your swift attention to this matter.

My very best,

Governor Nikki Haley

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