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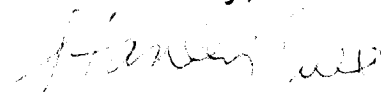
Dear Governor Haley,

The enclosed letter to the editor ran in this morning's Greenville News. When I read it I knew immediately I had to send it to you. Though I am 83 years old, this is my very first letter to a governor.

The letter reflects my thinking exactly, and that of everyone I have ever spoken to on the subject. Why in the world should we be proud of having the third lowest gas tax in the nation when the result is that we also have just about the worst roads in the nation? I guess the idea is that lower gas taxes benefit the poor among us. I am certainly not rich---my wife and I watch our expenditures closely, but a ten cent increase in tax on a gallon of gas would be money well spent, probably paying for itself in terms of less wear and tear on tires and vehicles for those same poor you might be concerned about. With gas prices more than a dollar a gallon off recent prices, such an increase would be forgotten by the consumer in short order, but the improved roads, bridges, etc. would not be.

You have done a great job in bringing new industry to our state. You have surely read the concern expressed by business leaders (BMW for example) over the condition of our roads. If allowed to continue to deteriorate, or even if they are not soon improved, attracting and keeping industry will become impossible. Your road plan won't do it, and you must know that. Please be magnanimous and do what's right.

Sincerely,



Enclosure: Clipping, Greenville News

Talk is cheap but repairing state's roads is not

Abraham Lincoln once said "If you cannot convince a man that two plus two equals four, there is little point in having a debate with him." It seems that our governor and many, perhaps most, of our state legislators live in an alternate universe where logic and simple math do not apply when it comes to taxes and effective, responsible governance.

If South Carolina has the fourth highest state maintained road miles while simultaneously having the third or fourth lowest state gasoline tax, how does that logic and math work in the real world? Are the other 45 states with higher gasoline taxes more or less rational and responsible than we are when it comes to maintaining essential highway infrastructure?

It seems we cannot even afford to repaint or restripe our existing roads since many of our roads have lane markers that are so faded as to be almost invisible. This is a serious safety issue. I have heard numerous friends say they try to avoid driving at night because of the poor state of our roads and lane markings.

Enough of the talk and debate! Audit the responsible state agencies and departments for the alleged abuse, fraud and "waste," bring in consultants to recommend best practices from other states with effective and efficient departments of transportation, and increase the gasoline tax sufficiently to meet our needs and ensure public safety. Talk is cheap, but roads and effective governance are not.

Dennis Hennett
Greer