

Brenda Wykel  
205 Wolfe Road  
Roebuck, S.C. 29376  
February 26, 2016

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley  
Office of the Governor  
1205 Pendleton Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Governor Haley:

Thank you for the responses you have sent to me from my prior emails to you. This issue I thought needed to be addressed in the form of a letter. South Carolina is a very beautiful state with beaches, mountains, farmlands, national forests, state parks and much more.

However, South Carolina, in particular the surrounding areas of Spartanburg, have grown to be a receptacle for garbage, rubbish, litter, junk, debris and other words one can dream up for trash. In particular, cut-through roads such as one I encounter daily is Brice Road in Roebuck. It is an active road that threads from Hwy 215 to Hwy 295. The ditches and drains are so full that heavy rains we've had this fall and winter creates hazards such as pollution and insect breeding.

I have reported it as a "litter hotspot" to PalmettoPride.org. I will let you know how well that process follows through. The web site reports "Litter has been reduced by 62% over the past ten years." I think Palmetto Pride is a good organization but by skimming over some activities it appears that the focus is narrowed to Greenville and Columbia. We need more emphasis for this area. Spartanburg is a quick stop off for interstate 26 and 85 travelers; before heading on to Gamecock and Clemson football, Riverbanks Zoo, Myrtle Beach, Carolina Panther Camp, the many mountain areas we are blessed to have and also many conventions, to name a few.

Palmetto Pride's mission to "fight litter and help beautify South Carolina" seems a little surreal. The education only emphasis is toward education in schools. That seems to be a dollar short. Education should be directed at adults who think that it is not wrong to throw something out of a car or drop something on the sidewalk. After all what are the odds of actually seeing a "litterbug." We need to fight to eradicate litter and change the behavior of those that litter through our different avenues.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, smoking rates have been declining since 1970, with the smoking rate among young people at its lowest ever. About 20.6

percent of all adults are smokers compared to the 1960s, when approximately 55% of men and 30% of women smoked. This shows “in your face” education, encouragement and support” does work.

On the PalmettoPride.org website, I am wondering why most counties in S.C. have a “**Keep South Carolina Beautiful (KSCB) chapter EXCEPT** Spartanburg. Do you know why?

Now with recycling centers no longer accepting glass, I am expecting to see an increase in litter instead of recycling where SC is promoting litter control but yet where is it. There is not enough of that in everyone’s face! The education on stopping smoking has been very effective. The following is taken from sclittercontrol.org.

***“Our Mission:***

***To promote litter control in South Carolina; to maintain public interest in litter control; to keep up with the latest developments in litter control methods; to disseminate information concerning litter control to its membership and the general public through publications and meetings; and to unite and coordinate common interest and efforts.”***

With so much wrong with our environment and ecosystem, decreasing insect pollination of our food supply, contaminated water and food sources, pollution of oceans and air we can at least do this to help Mother Earth. No one likes seeing litter but litter can also have a significant negative impact on business and economic development which affects our property values, opportunities and quality of life.

**Litter can**

- **Impact public health**  
Food litter can attract rodents and bugs and can be a breeding ground for disease
- **Cause fires**  
Paper litter and cigarette butts can be a fire hazard
- **Harm or kill wildlife**  
Animals on land and water can accidentally mistake litter for food
- **Harm waterways**  
Millions of tons of litter wind up in the oceans every year. Animals may get trapped or poisoned with litter in their habitats
- **Costs everyone money**  
Resources are needed to help clean it up

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- **Attract more litter**

My mother was a die-hard "protect our earth." My dad used to get irritated at her wanting to stop along the roads and parking lots to pick up cans, etc. He would tell her "you can't clean up the whole world!" She would always tell him "well if everyone stopped to pick up something the world would be a much better place." That was handed down to me and I instilled it in my son and he is a die-hard recycler. People that recycle are less likely to NOT litter. One of the most basic ways to do that is by helping to rid our piece of the Earth of litter. My mom was right; If each person did **one** thing, what a difference we could make together.

I have appointed myself as litter pick up for my immediate neighborhood and up the cross road Hwy 215. It only takes one person to make a difference and it really makes you feel good. It's easy to do, will make an immediate difference and sets a great example.

Educating **why** people litter is an important start. And people litter for many reasons.

Raising awareness about issues can have a positive impact on others' behavior and attitudes. The children in our life should be made aware of and understand that littering is not okay. Some states have even designated one day per month to encouraging everyone to pick up one piece of litter and disposing of it correctly.

Where are the prisoners that used to be taken to a myriad of roadsides to pick up litter? This should be a mandatory piece of their incarceration or maybe community service programs and those on probation.

**Litter is an environmental problem we all can solve!** The following pictures are from a "cut through street in Roebuck that I reported to the PalmettoPride web site over two weeks ago. The sad part of this road is that there is a beautiful creek behind the trees. I can see litter in it as I pass. Imagine how our visitors from other states see this; that South Carolina does not care! I traveled to Irmo a few weeks ago. I was shocked at the litter that was on the sides and median of this important interstate; the major thruway to Myrtle Beach, Hilton Head and Charleston, our top three most visited and most revenue-producing areas.

The following are pictures of the road I spoke of earlier, Brice Road that I took yesterday.







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Don't these pictures make you embarrassed also? I feel you as our leader and role model should make litter a high priority. Thank you,

Sincerely,

*Brenda Wykel*  
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