

February 11, 2015

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

Dear Governor Haley:

As an SC State alumna I was dismayed to hear that the South Carolina House Ways and Means Higher Education Subcommittee voted to suspend operations at SC State University for two years. If there is any another way to fix the financial and executive issues please utilize these methods instead. I speak for myself and for many fellow alumni when I say that **"We Do Not Support the Shutdown."** Please **reconsider the shutdown.**

In 2007 I was offered a Presidential Scholarship to attend South Carolina State University. Without this scholarship I would not be a debt-free college graduate with a BS degree in physics. I am currently a doctoral student at the University of South Florida studying medical physics and will graduate in 2016 with my PhD before age 27. SC State has contributed greatly to my success and my financial independence. SC State also helped me to embrace who I am as an African-American woman. My mentors and advisors from the Department of Physics, Honors College, and Marching 101 Band were paramount to my success in school. Studying physics and being in a University level band is not an easy task. However, I learned how to prioritize my time, study hard at every free opportunity, and have fun when I could. I am the first Miss Honors (ambassador for the Honors College), a former clarinet section leader in the Marching 101 Band, Jazz band pianist, Honors College corresponding secretary, Sigma Pi Sigma Physics Honor Society charter member, Golden Key International Honour Society member and member of Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity. I also had the elite honor of performing George Gershwin's concerto, *Rhapsody in Blue*, with the wind ensemble as the piano soloist (the only student to perform this piece with the band). SC State has allowed me to exceed my wildest expectations of what I could achieve and has shaped the course of my life by developing my character, self-value, hunger for learning, and pursuit for excellence. **Please reconsider the shutdown.**

This school has a deep legacy and history for many African-Americans, particularly its students and alumni. In 1896 South Carolina State University was the only public college for black youth in the state. Currently, SC State has the only BS program in nuclear engineering in the state. It has produced 7 University presidents, 4 US Army Generals, 27 professional athletes, countless doctors, lawyers, scientists, teachers, accountants, engineers, and computer scientists. There is great value in this University demonstrated by its legacy, its products, and its impact on current students and alumni. **Please reconsider the shutdown.**

SC State also has a special place and history in my family. My father is also SC State alumni. He attended SCSU on a track scholarship and graduated from the University in 1974 with a BS in biology with chemistry minor. My uncle attended SCSU on a partial band scholarship and graduated in 1976 with a BS degree. Today, my cousin is a SC State student and my younger sister is eager to attend the University as well. This month she received her acceptance letter! Every year since I can remember, my family has travelled from Valrico, FL to Orangeburg, SC for Homecoming Weekend. The football games, weekend activities, and celebration of our school and heritage are included in my fondest memories. **Please reconsider the shutdown.**

Whatever the outcome, we continue to sing:

*Hail! Hail! Dear Alma Mater
Hail! Hail! Dear S.C.C.
We'll defend and honor,
Love and cherish thee.*

A concerned alumna of SC State,



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