



State of South Carolina
Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

March 5, 2015

Ms. Emily Wright
509 Don Drive
Greenville, South Carolina 29607

Dear Ms. Wright,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding domestic violence. No one can doubt that South Carolina has a culture of domestic violence, evidenced by our state's ranking of second highest in the nation for the rate of women murdered by men, which follows previous top ten rankings each year for the past ten years. As governor, and more importantly as a wife and mother, this ranking is troubling and sad on so many levels.

I know that other state leaders are tackling domestic violence in their own ways, but I am mindful that no piece of legislation and no amount of funding can fix the culture in South Carolina that is breeding catastrophic numbers of violence in our homes. We all must do our part, and as the leader of our state, I saw an opportunity in bringing together state and community leaders of all labors to comprehensively address the cultural issues surrounding domestic violence.

Acting on that mindset, on January 28, 2015, I issued Executive Order 2015-02, establishing the South Carolina Domestic Violence Task Force for the purpose of identifying and addressing systemic problems within our criminal justice system, the services we provide to victims and offenders, and the education, awareness, and outreach we bring to our communities. County by county, the Task Force will analyze the quality and quantity of training, services, and resources to ensure that every part of South Carolina is lifted up through this effort. The Task Force will expire at the end of 2015, and although cultural problems cannot be changed quickly, it is my hope that we can make enough changes after one year to forever change the face of domestic violence on present and future generations of South Carolinians.

As a public body, all meetings of the Domestic Violence Task Force and its Divisions are open to the public, and I would encourage anyone with passion or interest to attend the meetings, follow the work, and participate where possible. Information about Task Force meetings can be found on my office's website, www.governor.sc.gov. I believe that if we tackle domestic violence together, as Team South Carolina, then we can make every home in our state a safer home for our men, women, and children.

Once again, thank you for contacting me. God bless.

My very best,

Handwritten signature of Nikki R. Haley in cursive script.
Nikki R. Haley

NRH/rs

Handwritten signature of Emily Wright in cursive script.