

LEON G. THOMAS

1010 Edgewood Blvd
Dillon, South Carolina 29536

July 11, 2016

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

Dear Governor Haley:

I do not know if you are aware of the upcoming vote by your appointed Santee Cooper Board on marginal lease fees for hundreds of property owners on Lake Marion and Moultrie. These proposed lease fees are on property located between the property owners line and the lake. This area is already under a lease fee, but now Santee Cooper thinks the fees are not high enough and wish to raise them, in this time of economic hardship for so very many citizens of South Carolina.

The area in question is now totally maintained by the property owners, with Santee Cooper providing nothing to its up keep; so in reality they are already receiving monies with no quid pro quo.

The propose increase can be as high as 2000% or higher , with nothing in return for the property owners. Perhaps if they offered maintenance of these lease areas or stump removal so we can safely navigate out of the creeks without damaging our boat and motor, or water weed control on a routine basis, or a discount for senior citizens living on fixed incomes, property owners would feel they are at least getting something for their money.

This increase in lease fees is being presented as totally a one sided proposition. Board members will receive a summary of all the responses to the increase instead of the actual letters. Since Board members are suppose to represent the districts they are from , it seems to me they should get a copy of all responses from there home area to see how their constituents actually feel.

Please have your staff look into this dictatorial misuse of power, and work out a way the voices and concerns of the property owners can be represented.

Another area to look into, is where will all of these new monies be placed in their operating budget and to what PURPOSE, hopefully not bonuses and salary increases.

Sincerely,



Leon G. Thomas



June 21, 2016

Dear Lease Holder:

Because you have an interest in a current marginal lease on property owned by Santee Cooper, I want to let you know about a new rate structure that the Santee Cooper Board of Directors will be considering for new marginal leases. In an effort to establish consistent lease rates for all marginal properties and to align the marginal rates with other residential leases, the considered plan is proposed as follows:

- Standard Marginal Lease: The lease rate would be 0.5% of the average per acre value of waterfront properties on the Santee Cooper lakes at the time of execution or renewal. Rates will be based on a minimum of 0.25 acres.

Example: For a standard marginal lease with the current average value of waterfront properties at \$150,000 per acre, the rate would be 0.5% of \$150,000, or \$750 per acre. For a 0.25 acre lot, the annual lease amount would be \$188.

- Expanded Marginal Lease: The lease rate would be 1.0% of the average per acre value of waterfront properties on the Santee Cooper lakes at the time of execution or renewal. Rates will be based on a minimum of 0.25 acres.
- Lease rates would be adjusted every ten years based upon the average per acre value of waterfront properties on the Santee Cooper lakes.
- Lease term would be forty years.
- Santee Cooper would hire certified appraisers to establish the average value of waterfront property.
- This rate plan would not affect your current lease. New rates would apply at the time of renewal of or extension to your current lease.

I invite you to submit written comments regarding the new rate structure until July 26, 2016. Please mail comments to Santee Cooper, Property Management Division (MM06), P. O. Box 2946101, Moncks Corner, S. C. 29461-6101 or email them to property@santeecooper.com. All comments will be reviewed, and a summary will be presented to the Board. We expect the Board to act on this proposal in August, and I will send a copy of the final rate plan to all marginal leaseholders at that time.

Thank you for being a valued leaseholder and member of the Santee Cooper team.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Elisa Furse'.

Elisa Furse
Supervisor, Real Estate

LEON G. THOMAS, JR.

1010 Edgewood Blvd.
Dillon, South Carolina 29536

July 11, 2016

Santee Cooper
Property Management Division (MM06)
P.O. Box 2946101
Monks Corner, S.C. 29461-6101

Gentlemen:

As directors of a state owned utility, appointed by our Governor , you are entrusted to not only operate this facility efficiently, but also compassionately for all the citizens of South Carolina. It is for this reason this proposed increase in property leases of upwards of 2000% makes no sense in these hard economic times, especially for lessee's living on fixed incomes.

Bonuses and cost of living increases approved by the legislature for all South Carolina state employees does not affect the thousands living on fixed incomes and dependent on the federal government for Social Security increases.

Another area in question is where will all this new found revenue be used ?

*Will it be funneled back into caring and maintaining the land under these leases?

*Will stumps be removed from my creek so I can navigate out without damaging my boat and motor?

*Will spraying of water weeds that clog the creek fouling motors and watercraft be carried out on a REGULAR basis?

These are just a few areas of service you need to provide with all this new potential additional income.

Just because something has not been adjusted, in this case upward, for many years does not necessarily mean it should be adjusted. A justifying reason should be provided to all lease owners stating the need for additional monies and what use will be made to improve the land and water with this proposed lease increase. Lessee's are citizens of South Carolina and co-owners of this utility, and they should be provided with a more in depth reason for this action and where the collected proceeds are earmarked for use. We need assurances they will not be used for bonuses and salary increases which should be restricted to your budget.

I am against this proposed action as it is another example of government overreach into the wallets of our citizens for no reason, need or emergency except that you can. This will act like a house of cards, and I fully expect the County to follow suit with additional property tax increases, at least we can try and vote these individuals out of office. Unfortunately, we cannot do the same with you, if you approved this proposal; however, myself and many others will let our Governor and representatives know our feelings on this unrepresentative action into the wallet's of its citizens.

I urge you not to vote in support of this proposed lease increase and instead give the citizens of South Carolina a much needed break.

Sincerely,

cc: Nikki Haley