

Governor's veto for H.5024 – Denmark Olar School District

Talking Points:

- This veto should be sustained for two reasons: First, our constituents deserve the right to vote on these school district tax increases. Second, no public body should have an unlimited ability to tax citizens.
- We believe that counties and local governments should have some taxing authority, but we also believe that the public should be protected in the event a government becomes inefficient, ineffective, or corrupt. That's one of the reasons the General Assembly put millage caps into law, so locals could set their priorities and assign millage accordingly.
- State law clearly provides that this sort of arrangement is subject to the 8% debt limit that every school district we represent must abide by (§11-27-110).
- Unfortunately what this bill does is add millage on top of limits set forth in statute, gives all the authority to raise taxes to a school board, and places **no limit** on the amount of millage that can be applied. If the argument is that the people of Bamberg can't afford higher taxes, then why does this bill give local government an unlimited ability to tax them?
- This bill was introduced on April 1 of this year and was out of the House in two days. This bill obligates taxpayers to a financing arrangement for 20 or 30 years and it received very little consideration before being passed by the General Assembly and without committee hearings to study the bill. We cannot set this kind of precedent, one that makes local governments and our constituents think that we're not paying attention to local taxes.
- Our responsibility lays squarely with taxpayers on this issue, and we need to make sure that this sort of unchecked taxing authority isn't allowed a toe-hold in South Carolina. We should let our citizens know that we won't trade their right to vote for creative financing.