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1421 S. Gordon St., SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30310

March 5, 2015

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

Dear Governor Haley:

I am very concerned about the future of South Carolina State University. There is just so much potential on that campus, given the right leadership and adequate funds to do what needs to be done. It has had a stellar history in the past. As I see things, the leadership (Board and President) must change. There are only two people on the Board that I recognize as having vision, appropriate knowledge, experience, and common sense, and they are Dr. William Small and Anthony Grant. For President, we need someone like Dr. Cynthia Warrick or Judge Beatty. Dr. Warrick had already started getting a handle on the problem while she was Interim before she was summarily removed weeks before Mr. Elzey's arrival. She was her own woman and some how posed a threat to the main characters on the Board. She was loved by the university community, which Mr. Elzey is not.

The President, Mr. Elzey, has sued the Board in what I call a "Me" lawsuit. That is, it is all about him, with no consideration to the needs of the school or students. When you, as a leader, ask your constituents to make sacrifices, you should set the example by being the first to do so. Mr. Elzey has not offered to give back any of his overly generous salary, which would pay the salary of several lower echelon employees, nor have I heard of his willingly taking leave. He has shown no vision, as evidenced by the paltry pages he submitted and called a plan for the future. He is obviously in over his head and should be relieved of duty, simply because he is not capable of performing at the level that is needed. The financial problems that the university is experiencing are nothing new. There have always been issues with the way the State has **deliberately** not funded the school. Somehow, we have persevered. But the economic times and expectations by accrediting agencies, requirements needed to keep students abreast in their fields of study as well as new fields developed to keep up with the technology, require more and more funds. This is compounded by the attitude displayed by the Legislature in appointing non-effective, poorly exposed, inept people to our Board of Trustees. Many come with their own agendas and a desire to "run" the school and undermine the president, or hire a president that they can manipulate and use the school as their personal fiefdom.

Yes, SCSU is a Historical Black University, established when black citizens were no longer allowed to attend the University of South Carolina or Clemson. It has never denied anyone admission because of race. It is approximately 95% black. Whereas, USC is a Historical White University that was founded for white people. It has, since after Reconstruction until the mid-60's, denied admission to students based on race. It is approximately 97% white, with a large percentage of the minority students being recruited for sports.

All students enjoy having mentors that look like them and can relate to their issues. SCSU students are no exception. So, why is it more important that HWCUs survive than HBCUs? In South Carolina, there is only **ONE** public HBCU and it has always been treated with disdain. The money comes from public coffers. Because a school is all white, doesn't necessarily make it better than a school that is all black. What makes it better is the way it is funded, equipped, and staffed. SCSU's problems are not a "black" problem; they are a South Carolina attitude problem and it is obvious that South Carolina needs an attitude adjustment. SCSU has always been able to take students from South Carolina's poorly funded public K-12 schools and groom and polish them into students who can compete on any level. We can't continue to do that if the State continues in their unfair pattern of funding; their ridiculous attitude about choosing Board Members and their general "I don't care" attitude about the university.

If South Carolina ever hopes to remove itself from the bottom of the lists that represent a positive picture of a state's successes, i.e. employment, education, salaries, corporations etc. to this country and foreign countries, then it will have to take a different attitude about educating **all** of its citizens. A well educated citizenry provides corporations with excellent employees. The more corporations in the state, the more of its well-educated citizens remain in the state. The more well-employed citizens you have in the state, the better the socioeconomic standards and higher up on the list South Carolina is. Bottom line, it raises the tax base.

Having said all of this, SCSU students, alumni, faculty and staff are tired of being treated differently and indifferently. We want the same thing the other colleges and universities want. Most of all we want the opportunity to educate South Carolina's citizens and offer them a better slice of life. There is a place and purpose for South Carolina State University and it is not to just educate black students, but all students. If SCSU is seen as not deemed "good enough" for South Carolina's white students, then make us "good enough" by giving us an equal opportunity in financing and governance. We will do the rest.

It has not been that long ago when you would have been considered a "minority" and subjected to some of the state's discriminatory practices. It always takes a lawsuit to start to level the fields. But lawsuits are expensive and the big winners are the attorneys. But, if that is what it takes, so be it. However, as Governor, I hope that you will see the advantages of SCSU being on par with all the other public colleges and universities in the state, and work to see that it is done.

Sincerely,



Audrey Quick Battiste
SCSU Class of 1965 and Former SCSUNAA President