

Dear Gov. Haley,

I must apologize for delaying to write to you. I've been wanting to do so since June of 2015 but never had the nerve to follow through. I guess I just never thought that my little letter would ever get to you. Sure, it would probably make it to your office, but to actually be opened and read by you didn't seem like a possibility. Yet and still here I am... Penning my first letter to an elected official.

Gov. Haley, I am writing to you as an African-American woman. Not that my background matters - I just wanted you to get an idea of who I am so that you would grasp my sincerity.

So, like I was saying, I'm an African American woman who was born and raised in North Charleston, SC where I currently reside. I have watched you, Governor Haley. I've paid close attention to the way that you carry yourself, the way that you exude confidence and the way that you lead fearlessly. Simply put, if I may speak in slang, you are the bomb dot com!

Thank you for your leadership and for providing a glowing example of what a woman can do.

While I may not always agree with your decisions, I respect you wholeheartedly. As a woman, I am proud of you. I support you and I cheer for you.

When I graduated from Winthrop University in 2004, I had no desire to learn about local or state government. This same attitude held true when I completed graduate studies at The Citadel in 2011 (this is where I met you the first time, although I'm sure you don't remember). I also saw you in 2012 when you spoke at the

Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce where I currently work as the Director of Charleston Young Professionals.

Everytime I saw you, whether in person or on television, you were poised, professional and at the top of your game. I admire you greatly and hope to one day be a great leader just like that.

If I may be so bold to ask, I would love to be mentored by you. I promise I'm a good mentee, and I'll happily travel to Columbia whenever you say so.

I guess that at the end of the day, I just want to be the best Erica that I can be; and if I can just sit at the table with someone I admire and want to learn from, I believe I'll make that dream a reality.

Even if you are not in the market for a mentee (I know you're busy), I'm grateful just knowing that I finally reached out to you to tell you how much you rock!

Thank you for being an inspiration.

Warm Regards,

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