

February 24, 2015

Honorable Governor Nikki Haley  
1205 Pendleton Street  
Columbia, S.C. 290201

Dear Governor Haley,

To introduce myself to you, I am a lifelong resident of Greer, S.C. I am a mother and grandmother, a christian, and I am writing to appeal to you about an issue I hear grandparents like myself, talk about, and that is there are no grandparents rights in S.C.

I did all the right things as far as taking my children to church, involved in athletics and the school bands. Unfortunately, I divorced their dad when they were two and four years old. It was necessary because of physical abuse. I had custody, but when they were 13 and 14, they decided they wanted to go live with their dad, of which I fought. The judge said they were old enough to make that decision, which I totally disagree with. They had no discipline, they could do as they please, which every teenager would love. My younger son, Heath, who is now 36, during the last 15 years, without my knowledge, became addicted to prescription pain medicine. I would have intervened, but by the time I discovered it, it was too late. He made a bad choice, and while on the influence of drugs, committed armed robbery. He said he would have never done that if he hadn't been on drugs. Heath is a hardworking person, a great work ethic, and had a job up until the time this incident happened. He has never done anything like this before. I did not raise my children that way. He has been in the Greenville County Detention Center, since October 24, 2014

My former daughter-in-law has refused to let anyone on this side of the family see my precious 9 year old granddaughter. Her name is Sydney. It breaks my heart, because I have a strong bond with Sydney and have taken her to church with me in the past., and done other special things, like take her horseback riding, children's museum in Greenville , skating, just to name a few. This isn't the first time she has withheld visitation, she has done this numerous times in the past. She would always threaten Heath, that she had a warrant out for his arrest, which scared him, and prevented him from paying the \$25.00 to rule her into court for contempt.

It doesn't look to be very promising as far as the solicitor giving my son a second chance, (although I believe everyone deserves a second chance) and let him attend drug court, and get into a rehab program, that can help him navigate back to a normal life. (I have hired an attorney) I don't want these precious years to go by, missing out on so much of Sydney's life. It has been seven months since I have seen or talked to Sydney. I even tried to volunteer at her school, and my former daughter-in-law has blocked that. She is to be called by the school, even if I call the school, which makes me feel like a criminal. I did talk with the principal, and she said that she understood, because she was a grandmother too, and was very close to her grandchild, but that my former daughter-in-law could cause the school a lot of problems, if she let me volunteer at the school. She would accuse them of not protecting her child.

I have talked with several attorney's and they say that some grandparents and parents have spent anywhere from \$1,000.00 to \$50,000.00 to get visitation. You shouldn't have to spend money in that amount, to see your grandchildren, Something needs to change! Heartbreaking... Is there a way we can get a bill introduced into the House of Representatives, for grandparents rights? If you need signatures, I will be glad to get them.

I respectfully ask for a reply. I know you are probably bombarded with letters from residents of S.C., but I feel like this is an issue that is so important. Thanking you in advance...

Sincerely,

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