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LABOR, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
MEDICAL AFFAIRS
S.C. LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS
CHAIRPERSON, CIVIL RIGHTS AND
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

February 2012

Dear State of South Carolina Agency Head:

Enclosed please find an article from the Charleston Post and Courier that references comments from two prominent national Civil Rights figures Rev. Jesse Jackson, Rainbow Push and Benjamin Todd Jealous, President, NAACP made during the Martin Luther King Day Rally in Columbia at the S. C. Statehouse.

Once again, South Carolina was portrayed in another negative posture on an age old problem of discrimination in government which should not exist in 2012. What makes this even more egregious on one hand, we give the impression of equality and equity, yet we fail to give working people the opportunity to advance their stations in life through equitable employment opportunities. With specific reference to opportunity, South Carolina recently elected our first-ever female Governor, who is of color. Recognizing our newly acquired progressiveness this is the same outlook we should embrace towards the working people of the State of South Carolina.

As chairman of the S. C. Legislative Black Caucus, Affirmative Action and Civil Rights Committee, I have been assigned to address employment disparities in State Government and the private sector. The SCLBC Caucus in operation since 1973, but formerly organized in 1975, adopted equitable representation of the working mass as a top priority from day one. In my role as committee chairman and with the consensus of the 2012 SCLBC membership, we are determined to end this practice now.

In conjunction with Joint Resolution S1120, which I introduced to establish a State Employee Compensation Study Commission we open this process by initially engaging the primary stakeholders the employers. We are asking for a response to the enclosed questionnaire within the next 14 days. The questions give us preliminary information needed to begin our meetings with each agency head as soon as possible. We plan to hold the meetings in Room 507 of the Gressette Building. Upon compilation of the information a meeting schedule will be developed and your agency will be notified to schedule a meeting date and time.

We look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to receive and share productive dialogue regarding affirmative action present and future. We also thank you in advance for your cooperation in this endeavor. I assure you our intent is positive; we seek constructive feedback that will allow for the development of an equitable plan for the advancement of African-Americans, women, Hispanic and other minorities. It is our goal that together we can achieve a strategic employment plan that will ultimately benefit public employers and employees of South Carolina.

If you have questions regarding the information requested, please feel free to contact me at 843-813-1777, 803-920-5399 or 803-212-6124.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Ford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert Ford
Chairman, SC Legislative Black Caucus
Affirmative Action & Civil Rights Committee

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable William Clyburn, Chairman, SCLBC
The Honorable Nikki Haley, Governor
The Honorable Glenn McConnell, Speaker Pro Tempore
The Honorable Bobby Harrell, Speaker, SC House

The Post and Courier

Civil rights leaders criticize Haley

By JEFFREY COLLINS

Associated Press

Monday, January 23, 2012

COLUMBIA — Civil rights leaders bothered by South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley's stance on issues like requiring voters to show their IDs at the polls are reminding the governor that she is a minority, too.

"She couldn't vote before 1965, just as I couldn't," said the Rev. Jesse Jackson, referring to the Voting Rights Act that abolished poll taxes, literacy tests and other ways whites across the Deep South kept minorities from voting.



Tracy Glantz/The State

Gov. Nikki Haley waves to guests before delivering the State of the State address Wednesday at the S.C. Statehouse. Civil rights leaders are taking a new tack to fight the governor's support of a law requiring voters to show identification at the polls. 'Your governor, a woman of color, could not vote before '65,' the Rev. Jesse Jackson recently said.

Jackson and other critics have said the law is merely a new, covert effort to take away the right to vote from older blacks and poor people, groups that historically tend to vote for Democrats and are less likely to have a driver's license or other government-issued ID.

Both Haley's parents were born in India and came to South Carolina before she was born. Haley — a Republican who became the state's first female governor — never dwells on her heritage, but she has occasionally mentioned it in her inaugural speech or stories from her childhood. Almost all have the same theme of overcoming adversity.

She refused an interview for this story, instead sending a statement through her spokesman, Rob Godfrey, defending her support of South Carolina's law requiring photo identification at the polls. The governor has said the measure is needed to prevent voter fraud. "Those who see race in this issue are those who see race in every issue, but anyone looking at this law honestly will understand it is a commonsense measure to protect our voting process. Nothing more, nothing less," Godfrey said in the statement.

Haley has invoked strong rhetoric against the federal government and the Obama administration on the voter ID issue and two others. A federal judge temporarily put a halt to the state's law cracking down on illegal immigrants, while the National Labor Relations Board fought Boeing Co.'s efforts to build a plant in North Charleston that would employ 1,000. The board had claimed Boeing built the plant in South Carolina — a right-to-work state where workers are not

required to join unions — to retaliate for past union disputes with its workers in Washington state.

But leaders of the NAACP said after a Martin Luther King Day rally at the South Carolina Statehouse that they would expect a governor who experienced some prejudice growing up to have some compassion, especially when it comes to the voter ID law.

“At the end of the day, it’s one more governor who is willing to deify the dreamer and desecrate the dream,” said Benjamin Todd Jealous, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Jealous was referring to politicians whom he said will give speeches praising King’s work while at the same time supporting laws that undermine his message of equality.

Haley was born in 1972, and her first memories came more than a decade after the height of the civil rights struggle, when South Carolina finally gave up allowing only whites to vote. Her family lived in Bamberg County, where about 50 percent of the 16,000 residents were black, according to the 1970 Census. Her father wore a traditional Sikh turban and taught biology at the local historically black college, while her mother was a middle school social studies teacher.

During her 2010 campaign, Haley didn’t make her heritage a point. But when asked, she wouldn’t shy away from how her brown skin affected her life. She told a story about her third-grade classmates refusing to play kickball with her until they figured out if she was black or white. She insisted she was brown, and said instead of stewing about the problem, simply took the ball and ran to the field. Her classmates followed, and they played.

One story she has repeatedly told is how she and her sister entered a children’s beauty pageant in Bamberg County, which crowned black and white winners. Organizers didn’t know where to put the girls, so they were disqualified. “I grew up knowing that we were different. But it’s also the reason why I think that I focused so much on trying to find the similarities with people as opposed to the differences,” Haley said during the campaign.

Haley also wasn’t around to hear Southern governors like George Wallace in Alabama rail against the federal government during the civil rights movement. In June 1963, Wallace briefly blocked a doorway at the University of Alabama as the National Guard tried to help two black students inside to register. He called the federal intrusion “unwelcomed, unwanted, unwarranted and force-induced.”

But NAACP leaders said Haley’s fiery pledges to fight the federal government reminds them of that time five decades ago.



Covering the politics of the Lowcountry, South Carolina and the nation.

On the King holiday last week when a thousand people rallied at the Statehouse to honor the slain civil rights leader, Haley was in Myrtle Beach talking to a tea party convention about how she plans to sue the Justice Department over its rejection of the voter ID law. She told them the hardest part of her job in her first year in office was dealing with President Barack Obama.

“What they don’t know is you don’t mess with us in South Carolina,” Haley said, pausing as the crowd cheered. “We’re going to fight, and as much as President Obama has decided to continue his assaults on South Carolina, we’re going to fight back.”

North Carolina NAACP President the Rev. William Barber shook his head when he heard about Haley’s comments. He was invited to the South Carolina King Day event to speak about the

Confederate flag, saying it represented a “nightmarish vision of democracy.” The flag still flies on the front lawn of the Statehouse after a compromise in 2000 pulled it off the capitol’s dome.

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South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus
Affirmative Action & Civil Rights Committee
Agency Questionnaire

Agency _____

Director/Designee _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

1. Number of employees (FTE's), State and Federal
2. Number of employees by gender and ethnicity employed by your agency.
3. Number of employees whose salary is above \$50k by race and gender.
4. Number of employees whose salary is less than \$50k by race and gender
5. Does your agency have a Succession Plan? Please describe the key elements briefly.
6. Did your agency have a RIF in FY2010, FY2011? If so, how many employees were affected by race and gender for each year.
7. Number of managers and supervisors by department by race and gender depicting longevity and current salary.

This questionnaire is only an outline of the information sought. Spreadsheet format is preferred however; any other format that contains the desired information is accepted and appreciated.

S 1120 Joint Resolution, By Ford

Summary: State Employee Compensation Study Committee

A JOINT RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE STATE EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION STUDY COMMITTEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF COMPARING COMPENSATION RATES PAID TO VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF STATE EMPLOYEES WITH THE COMPENSATION PAID SIMILAR EMPLOYEES OF OTHER SOUTHEASTERN STATES, TO IDENTIFY THOSE CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYEES WHOSE COMPENSATION IS BELOW SOUTHEASTERN COMPARABLES AND THE FEASIBILITY OF ADJUSTING THE COMPENSATION FOR THOSE STATE EMPLOYEES BELOW THE APPLICABLE SOUTHEASTERN AVERAGE AND IF FOUND FEASIBLE, THE PREPARATION OF A PLAN TO MAKE THOSE ADJUSTMENTS, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AND ITS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

01/19/12 Senate Introduce and read first time

01/19/12 Senate Referred to Committee on Finance (Senate Journal Page 2)