



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 12267
COLUMBIA 29211

August 26, 2009

The Honorable André Bauer
State House, First Floor, East Wing
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear André,

Thank you for your letter.

I very much appreciate your offer to step in and serve out the 16 months remaining in my term of office, because at a personal level that would come as a relief. To escape the glare of television cameras and reporters in the midst of a media frenzy would not be far from some form of heaven on earth, but my Dad taught me a long time ago that two wrongs don't make a right.

Let me explain what I mean by that. The original moral failing that I disclosed on June 24th was mine. That human frailty has been more than well reported on, analyzed, and dissected by a chorus of media outlets. In an attempt to be transparent, I have said more on that relationship than I think even the public wanted to know - but again that moral failing was mine and I own its consequences past, present and future.

What's going on now though is pure politics, and I'm not going to be railroaded out of office by political opponents. This administration has a compelling story to tell about how we have watched out for the taxpayer and saved very large sums of money for taxpayers. We have acted consistently in accord with what we believed to be both the letter and spirit of the law. When measured up against past administrations, the facts show that we have done a better job on this. It is equally true when measured against practices employed by some members of the General Assembly. To allow political opponents to rewrite that reality would be wrong.

So let me be unequivocally clear: while it would be easier to simply move on with life, and not contest the sensational charges against our administration's handling of public funds, it would be wrong. I also believe that given the constitutionally weak state of the governorship in South Carolina, it would be wrong to simply go back to the farm and take refuge given the implications for future governors.

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While some political opponents might wish to take advantage of the accusations against our administration, I believe the responsible thing to do is lay out all the facts in response to the very incomplete picture presented in media claims. Once the full set of facts is before the General Assembly, its members can make a judgment, and the public can make its own judgment about my actions and those of others in the political process. Until then, I will aggressively make our case that we have done, and continue to do the right thing by way of the taxpayers of our state. And I will continue to focus on the needs of our state's taxpayers going forward.

My faith is all about the larger notion that none of us are perfect, but that God can still use us - imperfections and all. I am committed to finishing this term that the people of South Carolina charged me with, and it is my hope that working with you and others in the General Assembly we can make it one of our most fruitful.

As a consequence, I will most humbly decline your offer, but thank you for it nonetheless.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MS' or similar initials, followed by a horizontal line.

Mark Sanford