



# State of South Carolina

## Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD  
GOVERNOR

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June 11, 2008

The Honorable André Bauer  
President of the Senate  
State House, First Floor, East Wing  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Senate:

I am writing to inform you that I am vetoing and returning without my signature S. 968, R-346. The underlying bill redefines the weapons definition of a knife with a two-inch handle. If this were the only provision of the bill, I would have no trouble signing it.

What gave us pause about this legislation was the second section, which is aimed at allowing state employees and legislators to store a concealed weapon in their vehicle when entering the State House complex. We have long supported the Second Amendment Rights of our state's citizens and have supported several bills to allow them to enjoy those rights. What I find troubling about this bill is the way that it seems to contradict the central tenet of true public service, which is putting the rights of others above oneself. To the outside observer it would seem that self-interest reigns supreme when it comes to security measures in, or around, the State Capitol.

As we all know, \$6 million has been directed to make secure what was already an incredibly secure Capitol Complex. Instead, those funds could have gone to other law enforcement efforts to make the average South Carolinian across the state more secure. Most people don't work in a place that has its own police force, armed guards 24 hours a day, security cameras, and more. Nonetheless, this additional \$6 million was spent over our objection – and in that process, security measures have moved forward erecting a variety of barriers, entrances, and screening devices and sensors.

In effect, the "People's House" has become something of a fortress both to mirror many of the security features found in Washington, D.C. – and to allegedly protect it from terrorist attack. There is obviously a glaring difference in the level of threat in Washington, D.C. versus Columbia, S.C. Our point is simply this: If we are going to spend the \$6 million and if those kinds of security measures are going to be installed, it would make sense to live by the same

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rules that have been employed in the Capitol Complex in Washington wherein members are not in fact allowed to bring a weapon to work.

In short, our view is the same as it has been. Either cease and desist on what we think to be extraneous security measures where those dollars could be far better applied to helping average South Carolinians – and, in that case, let people bring guns to and from work in their car. Alternatively, if one is to insist on what we believe to be a waste of these \$6 million, then live by the same rules that are in place in Washington where a member cannot bring a gun to the garage.

To be consistent in our objection, we will once again veto this bill because it further codifies the \$6 million in security upgrades that we think to be unnecessary.

It is for this reason, I am vetoing S. 968, R-346.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MS', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark Sanford