



State of South Carolina
Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

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June 7, 2010

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 hereby vetoing and returning without my approval S. 962, R. 256, which allows deputy coroners to attend the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy and allows law enforcement officers appointed as deputy coroners to retain their law enforcement status. This bill also requires candidates for county coroner to satisfy specific training or experience qualifications.

We are vetoing this bill for the same reasons we vetoed H. 3536 earlier this year – we object to the provision in S. 962 that exempts incumbent coroners from the education and experience requirements generally applicable to candidates for county coroner. If a bill dictates a statewide standard, it should be common to all. By carving out incumbents, this exemption gives incumbent coroners a distinct advantage over new candidates as it shrinks the pool of potential challengers.

We appreciate the General Assembly's attempt to "grandfather in" current coroners, but we cannot support a bill that does not include a time period by which incumbent coroners must meet the same qualification standards as every other candidate for the office. We recognize the important role county coroners play in the law enforcement community, but setting standards that do not apply to incumbents should have no part in a fair, democratic process.

For these reasons, I am vetoing and returning without my approval H. 962, R. 256.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "MS", written over a horizontal line.

Mark Sanford