



**State of South Carolina**  
**Office of the Governor**

MARK SANFORD  
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 12267  
COLUMBIA 29211

May 28, 2010

The Honorable Robert W. Harrell, Jr.  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Post Office Box 11867  
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Dear Mr. Speaker and Members of the House:

I am hereby vetoing and returning without my approval H. 3536, R. 238, which requires that candidates for county coroner satisfy specific training or experience qualifications prior to running for office. Although we recognize the need to ensure candidates for public office are properly qualified, ultimately we believe this bill will serve mainly to protect incumbent coroners from being challenged by new candidates. We also believe that the people of our state are capable of making the determination on who might best serve the county without a prescription in this instance by the General Assembly.

H. 3536 requires candidates for county coroner to have higher education or experience to meet its requirements. The provision in H. 3536 that troubles us is the bill's exemption for incumbents from the training and experience requirements that the bill imposes on all new candidates – with no guidance as to when or whether incumbents must eventually satisfy the requirements. 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 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. 3536, R. 238.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Mark Sanford".

Mark Sanford