

Good Morning! I am Linda Tucker, City Administrator of the City of Isle of Palms, and I would like to thank you for your service on this subcommittee. The proposed change you are currently considering has an admirable goal: to increase the numbers of people who visit our unique state. However, I fear that unintended consequences of this proposal for municipalities, like the Isle of Palms, will create the opposite effect and cause visitors not to return.

The City of Isle of Palms is estimated to lose \$269,000 annually by the proposed change. Mayor Cronin has detailed for you that the City has approximately \$1.9 million in tourism-related expenses in the FY11 budget. This same budget depicts a total deficit in the tourism-related funds supporting these expenses of \$930,924. As the City is already using fund balance to maintain services, the passage of this proposal would require the City to cut services.

As Mayor Cronin has indicated, the Isle of Palms is a City of 4,500 residents that must protect and care for up to 20,000 day-visitors on peak days. Services the City currently provides that would have to be cut include: the finding of lost children, treatment of jellyfish stings, clearing debris from the beach, keeping debris out of the ocean, responding to thefts, executing timely medical rescues, patrolling by beach officers and maintaining Public Restrooms among other things.

Families do not take vacations in places that they do not feel nurtured and safe. Families do not visit beaches that are strewn with litter. Families want adequate public safety personnel to help them if they are unfortunate and experience danger. Families want a clean facility in which to take a restroom break. Not only do we want families to visit South Carolina and the Isle of Palms, but we want them to return home and tell their neighbors they had a good experience. We want them to come back.

If this proposed change is recommended by this committee to the full TRAC and it is accepted, the City of Isle of Palms has no way to make up the gap. South Carolina State Law already restricts Cities' abilities to raise property taxes to provide services. I urge you to reconsider and to look at methods to increase fiscal resources benefitting all of us, not just re-arranging the precious amount we already have.