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Gov. Sanford Named Friend of the Taxpayer

Governor vetoes tax hike legislation

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Americans for Tax Reform announced today its decision to name South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford (R) ‘Friend of the Taxpayer’, following the governor’s veto of H.3567, a bill that would have raised taxes on South Carolinians by \$158 million annually to fund the expansion of Medicaid and other government-mandated health programs. In the hours following the governor’s action, the state house of representatives sustained the veto, officially killing the tax hike plan.

Had the governor approved the bill, H.3567 would have enacted a 50 cent per pack increase of the tax on cigarettes, boosting state revenues by \$158 million per year, of which nearly \$77 million would be used to fund the expansion of Medicaid. Gov. Sanford vetoed the measure for the up-front tax increase, in addition to the future tax hike required to sustain Medicaid spending levels given the average 8 percent annual growth rate.

“Gov. Sanford’s veto proves that he continues to stand up for the best interests of South Carolina taxpayers,” said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. “He has protected taxpayers from a massive tax hike today- and the promise of an even larger hike in the future.”

In addition to today’s action, Gov. Sanford recently pointed out numerous other examples of government overregulation, signing into law bills that would streamline and eliminate burdensome regulations. In the past, he has also stood up for spending restraint and overall limitations on the growth of state government.

“South Carolinians truly have a friend in Gov. Sanford,” continued Norquist. “His actions consistently embody truly responsible governing. As a multiple-recipient of the ‘Friend of the Taxpayer’ award, the governor’s reputation as a true fiscal conservative is the real deal.”

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact John Kartch at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jkartch@atr.org.

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