State of South Carolina
Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

June 18, 2012

The Honorable Robert W. Harrell, Jr.
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Statehouse, Second Floor
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Mr. Speaker and Members of the House,

I am hereby vetoing and returning without my approval R299, H.4497, a bill that permits the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) to provide information on and to administer the human papillomavirus vaccine.

Nothing in current law precludes DHEC from performing any of the activities described in this bill. Furthermore, this bill carries no weight, merely describing steps that the agency "may" undertake beginning in the upcoming school year. In this respect, the bill is superfluous.

H.4497 can also be seen as essentially a suspended unfunded mandate. The bill states that implementation "is contingent upon the appropriation of state and federal funding" to fund the vaccine and the informational materials. Undoubtedly, once the mandate is established in law, advocates will argue that it necessarily follows that this new program must be now be funded by the General Assembly.

I have vetoed this bill because although it would have no real impact today, it is a precursor to another taxpayer-funded healthcare mandate.

My very best,

Nikki R. Haley