

ROBERT FORD
SENATOR, CHARLESTON COUNTY
SENATORIAL DISTRICT NO. 42

HOME ADDRESS:
P.O. BOX 21302
CHARLESTON, SC 29413
TELEPHONE: (843) 852-0777
EMAIL: RIF@SCSENATE.ORG

OFFICE ADDRESS:
P. O. BOX 142
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29202
TELEPHONE (803) 212-6124
FAX (803) 212-6299
EMAIL: RIF@SCSENATE.ORG
HOME FAX: (843) 571-5935
HOME EMAIL: SENATORRFORD@BELLSOUTH.NET



COMMITTEES:
BANKING AND INSURANCE
CORRECTIONS AND PENOLOGY
GENERAL
INVITATIONS
JUDICIARY
LABOR, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
MEDICAL AFFAIRS
S.C. LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS
CHAIRPERSON, CIVIL RIGHTS AND
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

August 16, 2010

Wayne Washington, Reporter
The State Newspaper
Post Office Box 1388
Columbia, SC 29202

Dear Mr. Washington:

There would not have been an issue of the James E. Clyburn Transportation Center being audited if it wasn't for an effort initiated by Robert Ford. I was also interested in obtaining an Attorney General's Opinion at the advice and encouragement of SCSU board member Maurice Washington on actions taken at two South Carolina State Board of Trustee meetings. I was involved in a Primary Election along with six other members of the General Assembly for the past year and a half. I did not bring this issue up during my campaign because I thought this would have been in bad taste and perceived as grandstanding. However, the other 163 members of the South Carolina General Assembly who were not involved in campaigns could have pursued this matter. The ten signatures I obtained which included Senate President Pro Tem Glenn McConnell and Speaker Bobby Harrell are all from Charleston. As you can see this issue was initiated by me.

Mr. Washington, your job as a reporter and the State Newspaper's job is to report the news of people who make and generate the news. Reporters or newspapers do not generate news that in my opinion would be immoral. What's so strange is more than 100 other news outlets in this country have made contact with me regarding the James E. Clyburn Transportation Center, but not the State Newspaper? But like most issues that I have initiated since I have been a State Senator, the State Newspaper has found it convenient not to report on the issue. But in the newspaper's own devious way attempts to try and diminish/confuse my efforts and give the credit to someone else.

As African-Americans we have struggled long and hard. At this point in our struggle we all should be proud of who we are and should have no problem letting the whole world know how proud we are. We should not have to send signals to be accepted by anyone. We are human

Wayne Washington
Page Two
August 16, 2010

beings and by that fact alone, we are accepted and should believe in ourselves. Because of my tenure and involvement in the struggle for equality Mr. Washington, I have a responsibility to point out in brief a summary of our history to individuals like you who might have been deprived of the proud history of African-Americans in this country.

In 1969, after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, I secured permission from the Reverend Ralph Abernathy, CEO, Southern Christian Leadership Conference to picket various Southern newspapers. If you check your history, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference we staff and I were in Charleston, SC for three months for the Hospital Strike. I was one of the statewide coordinators for the hospital strike. Having obtained permission from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to do so, I picketed the Greenville News, the State/Columbia Record and the Post and Courier/Charleston Evening Post. The reason for the pickets was that none of these newspapers had any African-Americans in any significant positions.

Fast forwarding to 1993, it was Senator Robert Ford from Charleston that led the fight to resolve the Confederate Flag issue which was ultimately resolved in 1998. The 1993 and 1998 legislation was identical and I was the sole sponsor of both. Contrary to what the State Newspaper would have people believe – this was not a compromise. If you are not aware of the following, I would like for you to take the time to make yourself aware. It was also my legislation that made Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday and Confederate Memorial Day legal state holidays. I took three optional State Confederate holidays and made one legal Confederate State Holiday. Once again, the State Newspaper did not write one article pertaining to my successful efforts or the fact; I was the also sole sponsor of this legislation.

Senator Darrell Jackson and I, along with Senator Glenn McConnell sponsored the bill to erect the first and only African-American Monument on any Statehouse grounds in the country. Again, not one article from the State Newspaper. Senate President Pro Tem, Glenn McConnell appointed me to the Criminal Justice Task Force to deal with the problem of violent crime in Charleston in 2007. He did so, because he was aware of my call for the National Guard to come to Charleston as a result of the 107 killings in Charleston in 2006. The Task Force was led by Senator Gerald Malloy of Darlington, but not one word or the fact that it was created based on the concerns of Robert Ford by the State Newspaper. Several other prominent issues attributed to me that positively address important state issues have deliberately been ignored by the State Newspaper because they were attached to Robert Ford. Obviously in someone's opinion at the State Newspaper none of these actions warranted an article or an interview.

The problem that you create as a newspaper for your readers is a distorted and biased view of the news. Not only does John Doe public depend on you to accurately report the news, but radio and television news is also derived from print media stories. In 2010, there is other

Wayne Washington
Page Three
August 16, 2010

ways to get news, now that we have blogs, You-Tube, internet and internet news these are alternate mediums for readers to rely upon. I don't care what Mark Lett and Cindy Ross Scoppe tell you with bigotry and their elitist attitudes; it is your job to interview the initiator of the news. In this particular case, a project started by Senator Robert Ford with the assistance of Maurice Washington, S.C. State University Board trustee. I cannot believe that you by-lined the reporting of a story and never talked to the prime sources of the news article. This goes back to you being a proud Black man and if cognizant, you would not present yourself as the person you presently portray.

In closing Brother Washington, I started in the Civil Rights Movement as a very young man at the tender age of 15. Please believe me when I tell you, it is quite painful for me as a soldier of the Civil Rights Movement to observe what we as a people are going through in 2010. All of the things that you and your generation currently enjoy are the result of people like me who were willing to fight and die to obtain basic rights. To see what we have become as a people is unbearable. As you see Brother Washington, all you had to do in life is show-up and the silver platter was available to you because of the work and commitment of people like Robert Ford. What is most shocking is that you are not alone.

The hardest thing about being in Columbia is there are so many African-Americans who have benefitted from all of our actions who are in positions to do so much for our people and refuse to do so. When we look at other ethnic groups, we see people that look out for their people first. For example, the Jews, Irish, Asian, Hispanic and Middle East Indians they all give back. Everyone looks out for their own except African Americans in the County of Richland. In Richland County basically all you have are state jobs, yet we think that we are all that and more. Since this is mainly a Richland County problem; I am hoping that African-Americans in Richland County realize that they have an important role to play in the further liberation of our people. Mr. Washington, I am sorry to say --we have not yet overcome!

Sincerely,



Robert Ford
Senate District 42

cc: mlett@thestate.com
lchapman@thestate.com
rburris@thestate.com
wwashington@thestate.com