

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aiken, SC - 4/22/2024 -

State Senate Candidate Dee Elder Takes Firm Stance on Proposed Chicken Processing Plant in Aiken, SC

State Senate Candidate Dee Elder (District 24) has pledged her support for addressing a critical issue that resonates deeply within our community. As she continues to champion the rights and well-being of Aiken residents, she has written the following statement:

"For years, "Economic Development" in Aiken has meant to give a giant tax incentive to an outside company, make a big deal of creating a few temporary jobs, building a factory (for extra points take a picture with a hard hat and shovel). This "economic development opportunity" will likely create a few well-paying management positions, and then under deliver on the number of permanent so-called "good jobs" provided to the actual working people of Aiken. Ultimately, these types of development create tax revenue for Columbia and dividends payments for the owners of Bridgestone or Kimberly-Clark or House of Raeford Farms, while the people of Aiken County are left holding the bag for providing water, sewer, power and other services for these businesses.

Maybe because it is a chicken processing plant, the residents of Aiken could smell it coming. Last Tuesday at the Aiken County Council Meeting, a large gathering of the people of Aiken stood up and uniformly said "no, thank you" to the House of Raeford Farms proposed chicken processing plant. The reasons varied but they included (among others), Aiken's inability to provide water and sewer service to a new plant that size. The good folks that came out to the County Council meeting last Tuesday made that clear and yet we still get word from Governor McMaster that he intends to try to push this through and defer the people's vote, possibly using state funds to help meet the operating needs of House of Raeford Farms.

No means no, Governor McMaster.

The proposed deal with The House of Raeford Farms is another in a long line of "Economic Development Initiatives" that do little or nothing to help working families pay their rent or mortgages or groceries or healthcare costs or car payment or credit card bills or for little Timmy's braces. The money from this kind of "economic development" goes either up to the top or out of Aiken all together.

It sounds to me like the people in Columbia want to eat the chicken salad while the people of Aiken will be tasked with shoveling the chicken waste left behind.

If this sort of economic development isn't the answer, what then? We're thinking too big. That the only answers to our questions are huge factories built by huge corporations that "promise" 900+ jobs. What if we tried to make Aiken somewhere that smaller businesses come to grow? Focus on attracting smaller firms of between 50-100 employees. We won't have to give them the enormous costly incentives that we give businesses like the House of Raeford Farms, and we won't have to completely rebuild our town's infrastructure to appease them.

When I am elected as your next South Carolina State Senator from District 24 I will fight hard for the people of Aiken County to bring not just jobs but GOOD jobs to our District. Where a person can pay their bills and feed their kids working 40 hours a week. This may make me a bleeding heart, but I believe that a person that works full time should make enough money to put a roof over their head, food in their stomach, take care of their family and even have a little fun at the end of the week. Any job that can't provide that, you can keep.

In short, we don't need to give away the farm for a dozen eggs that may not hatch"

In recent years, Aiken has grappled with the pressing challenge of economic and infrastructure growth. This issue has affected the lives of countless individuals and families, undermining the vitality and prosperity of our community. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, Dee Elder refuses to stand idly by as Aiken is turned into yet another environmental disaster zone that lines the pockets of non-residents.

With a commitment to proactive leadership and tangible results, Dee Elder outlines a bold vision to address Aiken's local economy and infrastructural challenges. She will work tirelessly to:

- **Engage the Community:** Dee Elder understands the importance of community involvement in finding solutions. She will actively seek input from residents, organizations, and experts to develop effective strategies to ensure economic growth in a way that makes the best sense for Aiken.
- **Advocate for Change:** As a voice for Aiken in the state Senate, Dee will fiercely advocate for policies and initiatives that address the root causes of economic

failure within our city. She will work in the statehouse to garner support and enact meaningful solutions.

- **Invest in Resources:** Dee Elder recognizes the need for adequate resources to provide a strong economy for our growing city of Aiken. She will fight for increased funding for essential services, programs, and infrastructure improvements that will make a tangible difference in the lives of Aiken residents.
- **Promote Collaboration:** Collaboration is key to achieving lasting change. Dee will collaborate with local officials, community leaders, and Aiken residents to implement comprehensive, sustainable solutions that benefit all members of our community.

With Dee Elder at the helm, Aiken can look forward to a brighter future where economic failure and environmental damage no longer cast a shadow over our city's prosperity. She brings a wealth of experience, education, integrity, and passion to the table, and she is ready to lead Aiken toward a better tomorrow, hand-in-hand with its residents.

For more information on Dee Elder, please visit electelder2024.com or contact press@electelder2024.com.

Contact:

Melanie Nowlin

Senior Campaign Advisor

803-653-2046 (please text first or email)

press@electelder2024.com

electelder2024.com