EMBARGOED

January 8, 2014

COLUMBIA, S.C. -- At today’s meeting of the South Carolina Board of Health and Environmental Control, Director Catherine Templeton announced that she will resign effective January 12, 2015. “When Governor Haley pulled me from the private sector, I promised her four years of public service and I have fulfilled my commitment, Templeton said. “I’m looking forward to serving the state from a different position.”

Templeton, who was one of the first cabinet members appointed by Governor Nikki Haley in 2010 as the Secretary of Labor, came to state government after 20 years in manufacturing and helping Fortune 100 companies around the nation fight unions. She was appointed after the announcement that Boeing would locate in South Carolina. Templeton spent the first year of her appointment fighting the AFL-CIO and National Labor Relations Board on behalf of the state.

The S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation oversees professions such as doctors, accountants, general contractors, and real estate professionals. It was here that Templeton earned her reputation as a reformer after she cut the department budget by 25%, reduced fees, retuned money to the taxpayers, and measurably improved service to the citizens of South Carolina. “What she did to clean up that agency and make it run like a private sector business – in just a year – was nothing short of miraculous. Her keen organizational insight and leadership by example was integral to restoring clarity of mission and expediency.” Dr. Louis Costa, Chairman, S.C. Board of Medical Examiners.

“She pushed to de-regulate whole professions, repealed unnecessary and outdated requirements on the books, and pushed through streamlined processes for entire industries that had not been addressed in decades.” Mark Nix, Executive Director, South Carolina Home Builders Association.

Templeton also had to deal with tragedy while she was at LLR. One month into her term, a child was killed on an amusement ride in Spartanburg, South Carolina. This led Templeton to increase training, certification, and ultimately to privatize the entire inspection program to ensure tight controls on safety.

Templeton was also in charge of the federal Occupational Safety and Health program (OSHA) and immigration. During her appointment at the Department of Labor, the nation saw numerous lawsuits from the ACLU regarding state immigration laws. Templeton is credited with crafting the nation’s only state immigration law that was not constitutionally challenged by the ACLU. She then created an immigration enforcement program that saved the state almost $2 million a year over what the Sanford administration had budgeted in spending annually.

When DHEC, the state’s largest and most complex agency, needed a new leader, its board reached out to Templeton. “We needed a reformer to safeguard public health and to protect the environment while making it easy to do business in South Carolina.” Allen Amsler, Chairman, S.C. Board of DHEC. “We did a national search and we knew Catherine was the person with the depth and breadth of knowledge to get the job done.”

Due to Templeton’s take no prisoners approach, her confirmation to DHEC was met with controversy and filibuster. Three Senate Democrats complained that she was not qualified because she did not have the requisite health or environmental experience.

Supporters countered that the agency was in need of a leader with private sector management experience. Ultimately, Templeton was overwhelmingly confirmed by the Senate and privately thanked by the senator who filibustered her nomination.

In her first 18 months at DHEC, Director Templeton reduced the time it takes to get an environmental permit by 40%, and deregulated or reformed regulations that had been in place for decades. While creating these efficiencies and service enhancements, she cut the budget by $68M, maintained all services during the federal government shutdown, operated under sequester, and did not request a dime from the South Carolina General Assembly.

“No one had tackled the restaurant regulations in twenty years. She introduced common sense and consistency while ensuring safety for our customers.” John Durst, Executive Director, South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association.

“Time is money. Catherine has reduced the time it takes to get a permit from DHEC by 40% and those decisions have integrity because the appeal rate has not increased. That means real money to businesses and real jobs for South Carolinians. Remarkably, she helped create a positive business climate while safeguarding our natural heritage.” Lewis Gossett, President, South Carolina Manufacturers Alliance.

“Catherine has steered her own course, attempting to accomplish environmental goals without getting bogged down in the excesses of process or political accommodation. Her common sense and candor have been fresh breezes in an agency often embattled and distrusted by both the public and the regulated community.” Dana Beach, Executive Director, Coastal Conservation League.

“In my thirty years of involvement with state government and politics, I have never seen a director of DHEC who has the respect of both the environmental community and the business community.” Mark Elam, former Chief of Staff to Governor Carroll Campbell.

During her short time at DHEC, Templeton also expanded healthcare services and access statewide and directed public health efforts to the one issue that that kills the most South Carolinians, makes the most sick, and if prevented would save the state the most money in healthcare costs: Obesity. In September 2014, the Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reported that South Carolina improved from No. 7 to No. 10 in adult obesity.

“Director Templeton has been a visionary in addressing the disease that kills the most South Carolinians, makes the most sick, and if prevented would save the state the most money in health care costs. Her leadership on this issue will positively impact every rural and metropolitan community in South Carolina.” Dr. Lee Pearson, Institute of Medicine.

Templeton also weathered controversy when children at a Ninety-Six elementary school were exposed to tuberculosis by one of the school’s employees. While no one got sick after DHEC was notified of the exposure, Templeton was dissatisfied with the region’s response, resulting in her public criticism of the agency and termination of some staff members. DHEC was subsequently lauded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control for its response to the exposure and Templeton was commended for the Incident Command she created. As a result, when South Carolina was faced with Ebola, the agency was in the forefront of the nation in its hospital and public health preparedness, even drawing praise from the Senate Medical Affairs Committee that had investigated the tuberculosis incident. At the Governor’s Roundtable on Ebola, Senator Harvey Peeler (R - Gaffney), S.C. Senate Majority Leader and Chairman Medical Affairs Committee, said “Quite frankly, if you ask me what would make us more comfortable - if the President would name Catherine Templeton as the Ebola Czar, I'd feel more comfortable."

Referred to as a consensus builder, Templeton also enjoys a reputation as a plain spoken reformer. Templeton gained national attention for South Carolina’s “unusual display of resistance” when she pushed back against the federal government for failing to keep its promises at the Savannah River Site. (*SC Threatens Washington Over Clean Up*, The New York Times, Nov. 28, 2013) In an unprecedented move, she refused to move the milestones for cleaning up high level hazardous liquid waste and threatened to impose a $154M fine.

“We have valued our partnership with Catherine on the critical issues our state faces at the Savannah River Site,” said U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham. “It is a complex situation and she has the intelligence and energy to prioritize the issues and run point for our environmental management. Catherine has served our state well and she has an unlimited future.”

She also garnered attention for being one of five people placed on Governor Haley's short list with now Senator Tim Scott to become a United States Senator from South Carolina upon the resignation of Senator Jim DeMint. (CNN, Dec. 11, 2012)

“Losing her service is a loss for every part of this state, but the lowcountry sure will celebrate having her back.” said U.S. Senator Tim Scott.

“She has made government more accessible and transparent for every one of us. We can only hope she will decide to return to leadership in government again one day.” Mikee Johnson, President Cox Industries and Chairman, South Carolina Chamber of Commerce.

Among other boards and committees, Director Templeton sits on the Homeland Security Advisory Council, the Governor's Savannah River Committee, First Steps board, State Emergency Response Council, South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind board, the S.C. Health Care Coordinating Council Board of Directors, and the National Oceanic Council – representing Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

Additionally, United States Supreme Court Justice (Ret.) Sandra Day O'Conner appointed Templeton as the National Coordinator of the Justice's iCivics program that educates children on the importance of civic involvement and the role of the three branches of government. She received the University of South Carolina School of Law's highest award, the Compleat Lawyer, and was recognized by her peers as one of the nation's Best Lawyers.

Templeton is appointed by the Senate through March 2016, but told the Board upon hire that she would leave after Governor Haley’s first term to make room for another set of fresh eyes. After she signaled her departure to the Board in October, she formally resigned by letter this month.

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