

Release Sunday, October 31, 1948

STATEMENT OF J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA,
ON THE NEED FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT OF AMENDMENT TO STATE
CONSTITUTION LIMITING PARDON POWER OF GOVERNOR.

I want to urge our citizens to come out on November 2 and vote in favor of the constitutional amendment which will limit the pardoning power of the Governor.

I advocated this amendment when I ran for Governor, and urged the General Assembly in my Inaugural Address in 1947 and also in my message in 1948 to propose this amendment to the people for their consideration. It is now before you for your action at the ballot box.

I myself have not abused the pardoning power in my term as Governor. I have exercised the clemency power only where the State Probation, Parole and Pardon Board has recommended its use after full investigation.

But the people know that this power has been abused in the past, and too often the work of our courts and the verdicts of juries have been undone, for political or other reasons. I have been astounded by some of the facts which have come to my knowledge since I took office as Governor.

The people of South Carolina should not overlook this opportunity to see that no such abuses can occur in the future. I earnestly urge you not to overlook voting on this amendment when you go to the polls next Tuesday.

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