

# The State of South Carolina



## Office of the Attorney General

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February 25, 1992

Mark R. Elam, Esquire  
Senior Counsel to the Governor  
Office of the Governor  
Post Office Box 11369  
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Dear Mr. Elam:

By your letter of February 20, 1992, you have asked for the opinion of this Office as to the constitutionality of S.797, R-284, an act revising the area of the Fairfield County Recreation District. For the reasons following, it is the opinion of this Office that the Act is of doubtful constitutionality.

In considering the constitutionality of an act of the General Assembly, it is presumed that the act is constitutional in all respects. Moreover, such an act will not be considered void unless its unconstitutionality is clear beyond any reasonable doubt. Thomas v. Macklen, 186 S.C. 290, 195 S.E. 539 (1937); Townsend v. Richland County, 190 S.C. 270, 2 S.E.2d 777 (1939). All doubts of constitutionality are generally resolved in favor of constitutionality. While this Office may comment upon potential constitutional problems, it is solely within the province of the courts of this State to declare an act unconstitutional.

The act bearing ratification number 284 of 1992 amends Act No. 1059 of 1970, relating to the Fairfield County Recreation District, so that the District would now include the entire geographic area of Fairfield County. Thus, S.797, R-284 of 1992 is clearly an act for a specific county.

Mr. Elam

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Article VIII, Section 7 of the Constitution of the State of South Carolina provides that "[n]o laws for a specific county shall be enacted." Acts similar to S.797, R-284 have been struck down by the South Carolina Supreme Court as violative of Article VIII, Section 7. See Cooper River Parks and Playground Commission v. City of North Charleston, 273 S.C. 639, 259 S.E.2d 107 (1979); Torgerson v. Craver, 267 S.C. 558, 230 S.E.2d 228 (1976); Knight v. Salisbury, 262 S.C. 565, 206 S.E.2d 875 (1974).

Based on the foregoing, we would advise that S.797, R-284 would be of doubtful constitutionality. Of course, this Office possesses no authority to declare an act of the General Assembly invalid; only a court would have such authority.

Sincerely,

*Patricia D. Petway*

Patricia D. Petway  
Assistant Attorney General

PDP/an

REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY:

*Robert D. Cook*

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