

I-73 funds get governor's veto axe

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By Zane Wilson

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Box Samples of Gov. Mark Sanford's \$72 million in budget vetoes Interstate 73/74, \$1 million Children's Health Insurance Program, \$21.2 million Regional tourism districts, \$550,000 Silver Haired Legislature, \$15,000 Student Legislature, \$25,000 Rural hospital grants, \$3 million

COLUMBIA | Local lawmakers were puzzling Wednesday over Gov. Mark Sanford's veto of the \$1 million annual allocation for Interstate 73/74 in the state budget.

The veto was one of 69 the governor made in the \$7 billion budget, from which he slashed \$72 million.

Sanford said \$1 million isn't enough to build I-73, so an allocation for that amount is unnecessary. He said he would work with lawmakers to find a way to fund the \$2 billion road that is planned to connect Horry County with an interstate highway.

"How bizarre, odd," said Sen. Luke Rankin, R-Myrtle Beach.

"It doesn't make sense," said Rep. Nelson Hardwick, R-Surfside Beach. The veto is "shortsighted," said Rep. Alan Clemmons, R-Myrtle Beach, chairman of the six-state National I-73/74 Corridor Association.

"It sends the wrong message to the federal government of support from South Carolina," Clemmons said.

Rep. Tracy Edge, R-North Myrtle Beach, is co-chair of the state I-73 association. He said the money has been in the budget for five years and it is helping to build a base for the road funding that could be used to issue construction bonds.

He said he believes the veto will be overridden.