



April 1, 2009

## Inglis calls Sanford's refusal to take school money 'irrational'

By Raju Chebium  
GANNETT

WASHINGTON -- The congressman who represents the Upstate says he finds Gov. Mark Sanford's refusal to accept \$700 million in federal education funds "irrational."

"It's like this. A table full of food has been prepared. And South Carolina is going to join the other 49 states in paying for the food," Rep. Bob Inglis told Gannett Washington Bureau in a telephone interview. "That being the case, it seems irrational to me to refuse the sustenance."

Inglis said he'd try to persuade Sanford to seek the funds, though he acknowledged he didn't know how much good that would do.

"I would assume the governor has already heard that argument a thousand times," said Inglis, usually a steadfast Sanford supporter.

The \$700 million is part of the \$787 billion economic stimulus package President Barack Obama signed into law in February. The White House rejected Sanford's request to use the funding to pay down the state's debt. That led Sanford to announce he wouldn't seek the money.

The stimulus law contains a provision authored by House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn of South Carolina allowing state legislatures to bypass the governor and seek the so-called state stabilization funds. Education Secretary Arne Duncan told USA TODAY and Gannett Washington Bureau recently the Obama administration will make sure the money reaches South Carolina schools despite Sanford's refusal.

But the White House's Office of Management and Budget said today the South Carolina legislature doesn't have the authority to bypass the governor. That ruling also appears to put the brakes on any administration plan to send the money to South Carolina. The Education Department didn't return calls seeking comment.

---