

Title: **2012: SOUTH CAROLINA GOES ROGUE**

Author:

Size: 17.20 square inch

Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



2012: SOUTH CAROLINA GOES ROGUE

2012 will be remembered as the primary that ended South Carolina's streak of choosing the eventual GOP presidential nominee.

Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, the favorite in the race, had a tough time catching on with S.C. voters despite the endorsement of S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley.

Romney lost the Iowa caucus by 34 votes to former U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa. But Romney rebounded to win New Hampshire.

S.C. Republicans gravitated first to Texas Gov. Rick Perry. But when his campaign foundered, Perry quit the race and,

just days before the S.C. primary, endorsed former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga. Propelled by strong, energetic performances in two debates in Myrtle Beach and Charleston, Gingrich went on to capture the state.

GINGRICH: 244,065
40 percent

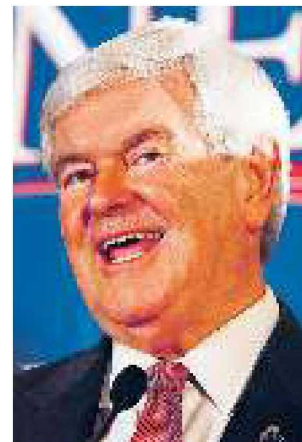
ROMNEY: 168,123
28 percent

RICK SANTORUM:
102,475
17 percent

RON PAUL: 78,360
13 percent

HERMAN CAIN: 6,338
1 percent

RICK PERRY: 2,534



FILE PHOTO

Newt Gingrich addresses his supporters Jan. 21, 2012, in Hilton Head.

JON HUNTSMAN: 1,173

MICHELE BACHMANN:
491

GARY JOHNSON: 211

Title: **Can SC do it one more time for the Bushes?**

Author: BY WILLIAM DOUGLAS AND LESLEY CLARK McClatchy Washington Bureau

Size: 97.34 square inch

Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Can SC do it one more time for the Bushes?

The family name still carries weight
... but some wonder if it will be enough

BY WILLIAM DOUGLAS
AND LESLEY CLARK

McClatchy Washington Bureau

EASLEY

David Owens proudly voted for both George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush for president. When they spoke politically, it was like listening to old family friends.

But Owens walked out a rally at Easley High School on Sunday thinking his Bush-voting streak might end Saturday in the nation's first-in-the-South primary.

"I like Jeb Bush. He's experienced, intelligent, and I like the Bush family," said Owens, a 77-year-old Easley resident. "But the deciding factor for me is who can beat Hillary Clinton. That's what will probably get me to vote for Marco Rubio."

The ties between the Bush family and South Carolina run long and deep.

George Herbert Walker Bush won the state's Republican primary twice. S.C. Republicans then gave George W. Bush a critical primary victory in 2000 after he'd been defeated in New Hampshire by John McCain.

Now it's Jeb Bush's turn to seek S.C. salvation. He's hoping family ties, political connections and the state's military tradition

can rescue a campaign that is being battered by the cross-currents of an anti-establishment fervor among the electorate and a rising populism that's attracting voters to outsiders such as Donald Trump.

Bush reached for the family tree Monday, bringing George W. Bush in for a North Charleston rally, the former president's first public campaign event on his brother's behalf.

"I came here for two reasons — one, because I care deeply about Jeb, and, two, because I care very deeply about our country," Bush told the crowd. "The presidency is a serious job that requires sound judgment and good ideas. And there's no doubt in my mind that Jeb Bush has the experience and the character to be a great president."

The nation's 43rd president said his brother will "rise above petty name-calling," a not-so-veiled dig at Trump. Acknowledging the anger of the electorate, the former president warned South Carolina voters that "we don't need someone in

SEE BUSH, 6A

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BUSH

FROM PAGE 3A

the Oval (Office) who mirrors and inflames our frustration." Whether it works is up to Jeb.

"He should appropriately be managing expectations," said Andrew Card, who was George W. Bush's White House chief of staff and now is president of New Hampshire's Franklin Pierce University. "I don't think he can walk in (and) the presumption is that he will have the same kind of support that his dad had or his brother had. But, at least, he has an entree to get that support."

Charles Bierbauer, dean of the University of South Carolina's College of Information and Communications and a former CNN White House correspondent, said Bush needs to finish in the top three in

the six-candidate race to be seen as viable in the eyes of voters in the March 1 Super Tuesday contests and campaign donors.

"That's what South Carolina does – it squeezes it down to three, maybe four," Bierbauer said.

Bush has work to do. Polls show him lagging in fourth or fifth place.

"We've been sort of the kingmakers for the Bushes, at least the nominee-makers," said Dave Woodard, a Clemson University political science professor. "But a lot of people here who have voted Bush won't vote Bush this time. It's just competition. He has a stronger field than his father or his brother had."

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-Seneca, who endorsed Bush after ending

his own presidential bid, thinks the Bush legacy in South Carolina is strong enough to pull him through. "It means a lot, the family name is good here," Graham said.

But times and voter attitudes have changed since the days when the words of powerful politicians like the late GOP Gov. Carroll Campbell and the late U.S. Sen.

Strom Thurmond, carried sway, and that could spell trouble for Bush.

There's a new generation of influential elected officials, exemplified by Republican Gov. Nikki Haley, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott and U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy. Scott and Gowdy have tossed their support to Rubio. Haley hasn't endorsed a candidate yet.

Richard Blevins voted for Bush 41 and Bush 43.

He's taking a pass on Jeb Bush in favor of Rubio. "The primary reason is I'm afraid of the Bush legacy – there's such a divide," said Blevins, 37, of Seneca. "There are a lot of people, including Republicans, who disapproved of the Iraq War and don't support Jeb, and I think he'd have a hard time leading because of that."

Daniel Nichols, a 36-year-old from Central, added some of Jeb Bush's troubles in South Carolina are of his own making. "For the first six months, he was running away from his family," said Nichols. "He was saying he wasn't establishment, that he was his own man. But your last name is Bush. You can't pretend to be something that you're not."

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MATT ROURKE Associated Press

Jeb Bush, left, shakes hands with his brother, former President George W. Bush, as Laura Bush looks on during a campaign stop Monday in North Charleston.

Title: **Trump threatens third-party run, bashes Haley**
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com
 Size: 72.38 square inch
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Trump threatens third-party run, bashes Haley

BY ANDREW SHAIN

ashain@thestate.com

HANAHAN

Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump did not close the door Monday on a possible third-party run, accusing the Republican National Committee of breaking its pledge to stay neutral in the race.

"The RNC is in default," Trump said during a news conference here. "When somebody is in default, that means the other side can what they have to do."

The New York billionaire also criticized Republican Gov. Nikki Haley, saying she had failed to protect South Carolina from Syrian refugees who could pose a danger to the state and the possibility of Guantanamo prisoners being transferred to the Navy brig outside Charleston.

"A governor has a lot of power people don't realize," Trump said, three miles from the brig. "A governor has a choice."

Haley has sent letters to federal officials voicing her objection to allowing refugees in the state without vetting and protesting any plans to move the Guantanamo prisoners to South Carolina. No decision has been made about

moving those prisoners.

"Donald Trump would be wise to know the facts before he discusses serious issues affecting South Carolinians — on both topics, the governor has taken on President Obama directly," Haley deputy chief of staff Rob Godfrey said.

Haley, one of the state's most popular Republicans, has criticized Trump on several occasions for his combative campaign tactics, including in her State of the Union response last month, when she asked voters to avoid the "angriest voices."

In his fight against the RNC, Trump said he is upset that tickets to GOP presidential debates, including one held Saturday in Greenville, have gone to what he calls special interests and big donors. Trump was booed several times during the debate for criticizing other Republican candidates, especially former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush.

"We have warned them twice and they don't listen," Trump said of the RNC. "The bottom line is that the RNC is controlled by the establishment and the RNC is controlled by the special interests and

the donors. And that's too bad. That's why the Republican ... for president has lost so much for so long."

Of 1,600 seats for Saturday's debate, the RNC said each candidate was given 100 tickets; the S.C. GOP and local-elected officials were given 550; the RNC received 367; and debate partners — CBS News, Peace Center, and Google — received 100.

The RNC did not respond Monday to the possibility of Trump mounting a third-party run if he does not win the GOP nomination.

Trump signed a RNC loyalty pledge last year to support the party's nominee. He initially balked at the pledge, fearing Republicans might try to undermine his campaign.

The reality TV star has surprised pundits by remaining the GOP front-runner for so long. However, his campaign has resonated with voters who want a non-politician to shake up Washington.

In a speech to several hundred people at a Mount Pleasant hotel earlier Monday, Trump pounced on his GOP opponents who attacked him

at Saturday's debate.

"I have never met people like politicians. They are the most dishonest people I have ever met," he said. "They lie, lie, lie and then they apologize."

Trump blasted U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, his closest rival in South Carolina, in particular, saying the Texas Republican had distorted his stance on the Second Amendment during the debate.

"I think he's an unstable person," Trump said of Cruz.

Trump called Cruz a "bad liar," saying his campaign stole the Iowa caucus by spreading rumors that GOP candidate Ben Carson was quitting.

Cruz won the Iowa caucus. However, Trump said the Iowa Republican Party should disqualify Cruz's win "if they had any guts."

Cruz's contradictions — touting his religious background while misstating other candidates' records — are the reason that he is not leading among evangelical Christian voters, said Trump, who has been the favorite among S.C. evangelicals.

"The worst thing ... is you're willing to lie about anything and then hold up a Bible," Trump said.

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Later Monday, Trump threatened to sue Cruz, questioning his ability to hold the office of president since he was born in Canada to an American mother. (Most experts say Cruz meets the qualifica-

tions to run.)

Trump's appearance came hours before former President George W. Bush's 2016 campaign debut for his brother, Jeb Bush, in North Charleston.

Trump criticized the former president during

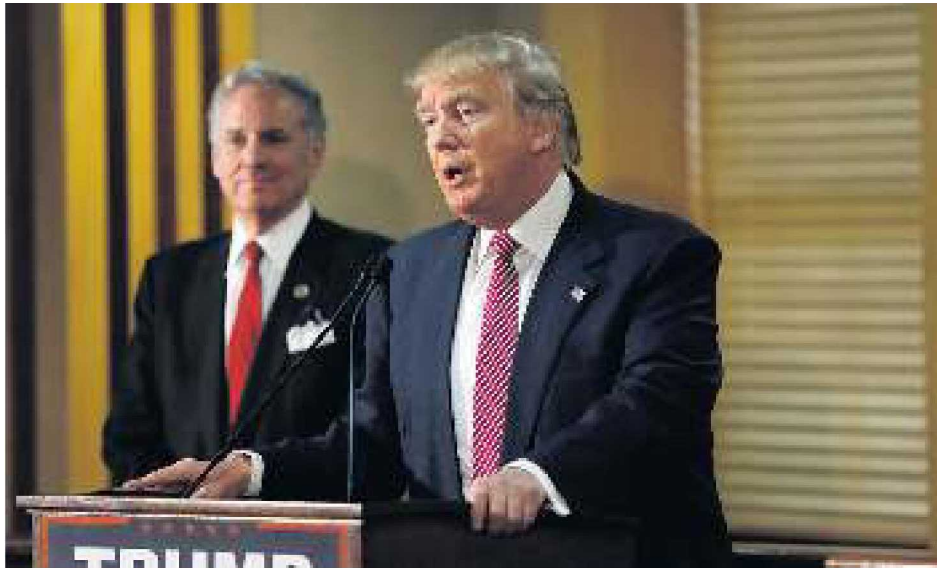
Saturday's debate for launching the Iraq war.

On Monday, however, Trump wondered why Jeb Bush had not enlisted his brother's assistance sooner.

"I think he would have done better," Trump said.

"It's better than exclamation points," a reference to Jeb Bush's original campaign logo.

—
Andrew Shain:
 803-771-8619,
 @AndyShain



MATT ROURKE / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Donald Trump, accompanied by SC Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster, speaks during a news conference Monday in Hanahan.

Title: **Akey ingredient is missing from Senate's DOT reform plan**
 Author:
 Size: 65.41 square inch
 Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



CINDI ROSS SCOPPE
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
THE STATE

A key ingredient is missing from Senate's DOT reform plan

IF YOUR BOSS boss can't fire you, she's not your boss. If no one can fire you — or even cut your pay or reduce or increase your responsibilities or in any other way influence your work conditions — then you really don't have a boss.

The members of the state Transportation Commission don't have a boss. If the plan approved by the Senate Transportation Committee to "reform" the commission becomes law, they *still* won't have a boss. And that's a problem, a problem that significantly diminishes the benefit of overhauling the commission — and significantly reduces the bang we'll get for our transportation bucks.

It would be wonderful if we could widen and improve and even build new roads everywhere anyone wanted them. But even if we raised the gas tax by \$2 a gallon (legislators are considering 10 to 12 cents), we still couldn't afford that.

So it's essential that we target our limited transportation dollars to our greatest needs. If the road conditions, population

density and traffic volume demonstrate that we need more road work in the Upstate than the Lowcountry, then we need a Transportation Department that can devote more resources to the Upstate than the Lowcountry. If we know objectively that there is a greater need for road improvements in urban areas than in rural areas, we need a Transportation Department that is not forced to spend money on lower-need projects in rural areas.

To have that sort of agency, we need a Transportation Commission that makes decisions about which roads to build, improve and repair based on the needs of our state rather than the needs of the regions of our state. Yet a regional vision is almost guaranteed under the current arrangement, whereby each of seven separate groups of legislators appoints one commissioner. That is one reason we're seeing less impressive results than we ought to from our road funding.

Allowing the governor to appoint the commissioners creates the possibility that they will focus on the needs of the

entire state, rather than their regions. It also creates the possibility that we can hold someone accountable for the state of our roads, which simply cannot be done when road decisions are made by people appointed by 170 legislators.

But just letting the governor appoint the commissioners doesn't guarantee a statewide perspective, and it doesn't guarantee that the governor can be held accountable for the commission's decisions. The other essential component is letting the governor fire her commissioners if she thinks they're making bad decisions.

Nothing like that is possible with the Legislature's commissioners. They are appointed for fixed terms and can be removed only if they break the law or can be demonstrated to be guilty of "malfeasance, misfeasance, incompetency, absenteeism, conflicts of interest, misconduct, persistent neglect of duty in office, or incapacity."

There are a lot of state senators who talk a good game about letting the governor control the Transportation Depart-

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ment, and the bill approved earlier this month by the Senate Transportation Committee gives her that authority. Sort of. But it doesn't let her fire the commissioners.

If the governor can't fire her commissioners, then the only way they'll have a statewide perspective is if the governor somehow manages to appoint people who voluntarily maintain that perspective rather than doing what transportation commissioners always have done: trade votes to make sure their own part of the state gets just as much road work as every other part of the state, even if the need isn't as great.

The Senate Transportation Committee bill makes it extra difficult for governors to appoint state-focused commissioners, because it doesn't actually let her appoint the people she wants to appoint: It makes the 10 regional Council of Government districts the new Transportation Commission districts

(think Central Midlands Regional Council of Government) and requires the governor to appoint commissioners from a list of nominees submitted by each council.

Perhaps the councils will shed their parochialism for this exercise, but that's difficult to imagine, since they exist for the very purpose of looking after their part of the state. To expect them to nominate people who focus on the good of the entire state would be like expecting the governor to appoint someone to a federal transportation panel who focuses on needs of the nation as a whole rather than just South Carolina.

It might be nice to imagine that this would happen, but it's not realistic.

Gov. Nikki Haley has been quite successful at getting the DHEC board to do her bidding, even though her appointees to that board have this same protected status as transportation commissioners. But the issues

before the DHEC board have a lot to do with political philosophy, and governors can always find people who agree with their political philosophy.

The Transportation Commission decides where road money is going to be spent, and absent some intervening force, that has little to do with political philosophy and lots to do with regionalism. And that's something we can't afford.

Ms. Scoppe can be reached at cscoppe@thestate.com.

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IF YOUR BOSS CAN'T FIRE YOU, SHE'S NOT YOUR BOSS; IF NO ONE CAN FIRE YOU, YOU DON'T HAVE A BOSS. THE COMMISSIONERS DON'T HAVE A BOSS.



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Title: **George W. Bush offers Trump takedown in campaign debut**
 Author: BY JULIE PACE Associated Press
 Size: 44.64 square inch
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635



George W. Bush offers Trump takedown in campaign debut

BY JULIE PACE

Associated Press

CHARLESTON — George W. Bush never mentioned Donald Trump. But with his folksy touch, the former president unleashed a tough takedown Monday of the billionaire businessman who has upended a Republican Party his family has long led.

"I understand Americans are angry and frustrated," Bush said during his first campaign rally for his brother, Jeb Bush. "But we do not need somebody in the Oval Office who mirrors and inflames our anger and frustration."

Trump's rise has confounded the Bush family and its allies. But despite months of predicting the brash billionaire would fade, it's Jeb Bush whose White House hopes are in peril, particularly if he's unable to pull out a strong showing in Saturday's South Carolina primary.

The former president emerged from his self-imposed political hibernation to try to give Bush a boost. He layered each validation of his younger brother with an implicit critique of Trump.

He urged voters to back a candidate who will be "measured and thoughtful" on the world stage. A candidate whose "humility" helps him understand what he doesn't know. A candidate who can win in November's general election.

"All the sloganeering and all the talk doesn't matter if we don't win," Bush said. "We need somebody who can take a positive message across the country."

With his brother as a strong warm-up act, Jeb Bush delivered an impassioned version of his campaign speech, touting his experience as Florida governor

and vowing he could put Republicans back in the White House for the first time in eight years.

"I can beat Hillary Clinton," he said of the Democratic front-runner. "I can promise you that."

The former president's return to presidential politics has been met with blistering attacks from Trump about the unpopular Iraq war and the economic recession that began at the end of his administration. Trump has also repeatedly reminded voters that

the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks happened on Bush's watch.

"If the ex-president is campaigning for his brother, I think he's probably open to great scrutiny, maybe things that haven't been thought of in the past," Trump told reporters Monday.

Rather than gloss over 9/11, Bush leaned in. As the crowd fell into a hushed silence, he recounted in detail his where-

abouts on the morning of the attacks and praised the troops that served in the two wars he started in response.

"Your most solemn job as voters is to elect a president who understands the reality of the threats we face," he said.

As he praised Gov. Nikki Haley, the daughter of Indian-born parents, Bush pointedly said, "Thank goodness our country welcomed her parents when they immigrated here in 1969."

It was a reminder of how much the Republican Party has changed since he was president. While Bush championed failed legislation that would have provided a pathway to citizenship for millions of people in the U.S. illegally, many current GOP presidential candidates have fought to outdo each other with tough enforcement policies, even mass deportations.

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AP PHOTO/MATT ROURKE

Republican presidential candidate and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, accompanied by his brother former President George W. Bush and George's wife Laura Bush, takes the stage during a campaign stop Monday, in North Charleston.



Title: **Proposed bills would raise minimum wage, repeal anti-union law**
 Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX Associated Press
 Size: 41.69 square inch
 Aiken, SC Circulation: 19635

Proposed bills would raise minimum wage, repeal anti-union law

BY SEANNA ADCOX

Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Proposals to raise the minimum wage in South Carolina and repeal an anti-union law have virtually no chance of passing in the Republican-dominated Legislature, but Democrats hope to spark a debate as the nation's attention turns to the first-in-the-South primary state.

Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter, who sponsored both bills, said it's time to discuss living wages in a state that ranks 46th in child poverty, 48th in per capita income and last in union membership.

"We keep hearing all these glowing numbers about how great things are," she said of jobs touted by Gov. Nikki Haley. "Yet we get reports that show we're ranking in the bottom. ... I don't see why we can't at least start talking about the reality of what it means to work in South Carolina on one hand and still be eligible for assistance on the other."

Cobb-Hunter, D-Orangeburg, held a news conference on the bills last week after a House panel officially adjourned debate on both. A second hearing is not

expected.

One bill would set the state's minimum wage at \$10.10 an hour. South Carolina is among 21 states where employers can pay as low as \$7.25 an hour, the federal minimum since 2009.

Proponents call \$10.10 a start. That's the minimal pay for fed-

eral contractors, as per President Barack Obama's 2014 executive order.

"We'll continue to fight for \$15" an hour, said Rachel Nelson, of Charleston, who makes \$9 an hour at Hardee's after 10 years as a fast food worker.

The mother of three children, ages 8 to 12, told the House panel she'd like to get off of public assistance, but her paychecks make it impossible.

"With my last check, I was only able to pay my light bill," Nelson said. "Trying to keep a roof over our heads is a constant stressor in my life."

More than 2,600 state employees make less than \$10.10 an hour, or about 4 percent of the state-paid workforce. Just over half of those employees are considered temporary, according to

the Department of Administration. It noted the numbers could be higher since public colleges aren't required to send the agency data on temporary workers.

Rep. Todd Atwater, who sits on the subcommittee, contends raising the minimum wage is bad for the economy because it increases products' cost and eliminates entry-level jobs often filled by high school and college students.

"It hurts the workers they're trying to help," said Atwater, R-Lexington.

The answer, he said, is better training, so students graduate from school with skills that enable them to get a higher-paying job.

Cobb-Hunter's other bill would repeal the state's right-to-work law.

About half of states have such laws, which means unions can't force employees across an entire worksite to pay membership dues as a condition of employment.

Haley, who frequently lambasts unions, considers the state's low union membership an economic development tool.

About 41,000 people — or just 2.1 percent of South Carolina's workers — belong to unions, leapfrogging North Carolina in 2015 to rank last nationwide, according to a January report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Seth Holzopfel, with the International Association of Firefighters in Myrtle Beach, said the law should be renamed the "right to work for less" — contending it's made South Carolina a virtual sweatshop — or "right to freeloader," as it allows people in a union-covered job to receive benefits without paying dues.

As expected, the state's Chamber of Commerce adamantly opposes the proposal.

Mikee Johnson, president of Cox Industries, said it would halt the state's economic momentum.

"We've got to have the jobs before we get the wages. This is one of those things that would stop companies from coming to South Carolina," he said, adding that none of his workers make less than \$10 an hour. "South Carolina workers do not need fewer choices when it comes to how they work every day or added costs forced upon them."

Title: **SCsenatorsget choicesonroad moneyspending**
 Author:
 Size: 41.54 square inch
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



SC senators get choices on road money spending

Department of
Transportation Secretary
Christy Hall gives senators
a host of options

One proposal would raise
the gas tax by 12 cents a
gallon

Hall points out that the
state's roads are reaching
a crisis

COLUMBIA

As South Carolina senators prepare to debate how much extra money to give to the state's highways and bridges, the leader of the roads agencies has been careful to give lawmakers plenty of options while not pushing them too hard in any direction.

Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall has given senators a host of options, from spending just \$65 million extra a year to get the

pavement on the interstates up to good condition while doing no bridge work or expansion to \$800 million in new money that would attack congestion, widen more than 150 miles of major highways and get rid of old bridges.

One PowerPoint slide she likes to show lawmakers has nearly a dozen options on how she could spend whatever extra money lawmakers can find.

The Senate started de-

bate on a roads bill Thursday before adjourning for the weekend. Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman told his colleagues they could spend most of this week on it too.

The proposal getting the most attention on the Senate floor would raise the gas tax by 12 cents a gallon over three years and increase or add a number of other fees. In five years, an estimated \$723 million extra would be put into roads, nearly

reaching Hall's most expensive option.

But the idea only cuts income and other taxes by \$400 million over that period, and Gov. Nikki Haley and other conservative lawmakers want an even swap. Supporters of the amendment say they factored in that a third of the gas tax is paid by out of state drivers who need no tax break, but some lawmakers don't think the basis behind that estimate has been proven.

Reforming the DOT's

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board and the State Infrastructure Bank, which helps borrow money for expensive projects will also be discussed, with conservatives again fearing the proposal doesn't go far enough to give the governor more control of the agency.

If lawmakers give the DOT more money without reform "we're going to see hundreds of millions of dollars going to rural areas where it is not needed," said Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort.

For her part, Hall promises to use whatever money she gets wisely. But she also is carefully pointing out that the state's roads are reaching a crisis.

"The fear I have is that we have waited too long," Hall told lawmakers last week during hours of testimony.

The one thing all lawmakers agree on is something must be done. With all the attention on interstates, Hall worried the primary roads that carry nearly half the state's traffic are falling apart quickly. Only 20 percent of pavement on them is in good condition.

"It's been neglected and it's at a point where it's going to take complete reconstruction," Hall said.

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(IF LAWMAKERS GIVE THE DOT MORE MONEY WITHOUT REFORM) WE'RE GOING TO SEE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS GOING TO RURAL AREAS WHERE IT IS NOT NEEDED.

*Sen. Tom Davis,
R-Beaufort*



MARK BOSTER TNS

Title: **Plenty of choices when it comes to new road money**
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS Associated Press
 Size: 42.62 square inch
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



S.C. SENATE

Plenty of choices when it comes to new road money

Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall has given senators a host of options

The proposal getting the most attention would raise the gas tax by 12 cents a gallon over three years and increase or add a number of other fees

BY JEFFREY COLLINS
 Associated Press

COLUMBIA

As South Carolina senators prepare to debate how much extra money to give to the state's highways and bridges, the leader of the roads agencies has been careful to give lawmakers plenty of options while not pushing them too hard in any direction.

Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall has given senators a host of options, from spending just \$65 million

FROM PAGE 3A

ROADS

the gas tax is paid by out of state drivers who need no tax break, but some lawmakers don't think the basis behind that estimate has been proven.

Reforming the DOT's board and the State Infrastructure Bank, which helps borrow money for expensive projects will also be discussed, with conservatives again fearing the proposal doesn't

extra a year to get the pavement on the interstates up to good condition while doing no bridge work or expansion to \$800 million in new money that would attack congestion, widen more than 150 miles of major highways and get rid of old bridges.

One PowerPoint slide she likes to show lawmakers has nearly a dozen options on how she could spend whatever extra

go far enough to give the governor more control of the agency.

If lawmakers give the DOT more money without reform "we're going to see hundreds of millions of dollars going to rural areas where it is not needed," said Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort.

For her part, Hall promises to use whatever mon-

money lawmakers can find.

The Senate started debate on a roads bill Thursday before adjourning for the weekend. Senate President Pro Tem Hugh Leatherman told his colleagues they could spend most of next week on it too.

The proposal getting the most attention on the Senate floor would raise the gas tax by 12 cents a gallon over three years and increase or add a

number of other fees. In five years, an estimated \$723 million extra would be put into roads, nearly reaching Hall's most expensive option.

But the idea only cuts income and other taxes by \$400 million over that period, and Gov. Nikki Haley and other conservative lawmakers want an even swap. Supporters of the amendment say they factored in that a third of

SEE ROADS, 5A

ey she gets wisely. But she also is carefully pointing out that the state's roads are reaching a crisis. "The fear I have is that we have waited too long," Hall told lawmakers last week during hours of testimony.

She used what was supposed to be a repaving project on Interstate 85 to make her point. Tests showed the foundation of the road had crumbled

from years of neglect, adding about \$10 million to what was supposed to be a \$48 million project. Hall said she fears a similar problem on an upcoming resurfacing of Interstate 26 between Newberry and Columbia.

Sen. Ray Cleary, a Republican and Murrells Inlet dentist who has been pushing for more money for roads for years, li-



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kened it to a patient who can floss or brush, wait and have a cavity filled, or wait even longer and need a crown or more extensive dental work.
“I can fix it for \$100, \$300 or \$3,000, depending on when you see me,” Cleary said.
The one thing all lawmakers agree on is something must be done. With all the attention on interstate, Hall worried the primary roads that carry nearly half the state’s traffic are falling apart quickly and about to reach a crisis. Only 20 percent of pavement on them is in good condition.
“It’s been neglected and it’s at a point where it’s going to take complete reconstruction,” Hall said.

Title: **SCsenatorsget choicesonroad moneyspending**
 Author:
 Size: 41.69 square inch
 Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



SC senators get choices on road money spending

Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall gives senators a host of options

One proposal would raise the gas tax by 12 cents a gallon

Hall points out that the state's roads are reaching a crisis

COLUMBIA

As South Carolina senators prepare to debate how much extra money to give to the state's highways and bridges, the leader of the roads agencies has been careful to give lawmakers plenty of options while not pushing them too hard in any direction.

Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall has given senators a host of options, from spending just \$65 million extra a year to get the

pavement on the interstates up to good condition while doing no bridge work or expansion to \$800 million in new money that would attack congestion, widen more than 150 miles of major highways and get rid of old bridges.

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The proposal getting the most attention on the Senate floor would raise the gas tax by 12 cents a gallon over three years and increase or add a number of other fees. In five years, an estimated \$723 million extra would be put into roads, nearly

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But the idea only cuts income and other taxes by \$400 million over that period, and Gov. Nikki Haley and other conservative lawmakers want an even swap. Supporters of the amendment say they factored in that a third of the gas tax is paid by out of state drivers who need no tax break, but some lawmakers don't think the basis behind that estimate has been proven.

Reforming the DOT's

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board and the State Infrastructure Bank, which helps borrow money for expensive projects will also be discussed, with conservatives again fearing the proposal doesn't go far enough to give the governor more control of the agency.

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