

Title: **Gov. Haley: We must reverse cuts to nation's military forces**  
 Author: BY SUSANNE M. SCHAFER Associated Press  
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# Gov. Haley: We must reverse cuts to nation's military forces

BY SUSANNE  
M. SCHAFER  
*Associated Press*

COLUMBIA — America's military forces have been weakened by budget cuts that should be reversed, Gov. Nikki Haley told a group of senior military commanders on Wednesday.

The Republican governor made the comment during her annual meeting with 10 officers from the state's major military installations, delayed by the massive flooding that afflicted the state in October. The group represents Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard installations.

Haley, whose husband Michael serves in the South Carolina Army National Guard, said she wants to prepare arguments for those in

Congress who continue to argue for military budget cuts.

She called the budget and manpower cuts "terrible."



Haley

"We have got to reverse course. We have got to strengthen our military. We have to strengthen the equipment and

the resources because we don't know what is in the future," Haley said.

The governor said U.S. forces must be better prepared, given international and terrorism threats at home and abroad.

At the session, Haley also thanked the 4,000 members of the South Carolina Na-

tional Guard who were called to active duty to assist in the state's emergency operations by conducting evacuations as well as road and dam repairs. She noted that military commanders are being required to beef up security, given attacks such as the one in July that resulted in five military service members killed in shootings in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

"But whatever it is, we're not ready," Haley said.

Several of the military commanders told the governor that besides the ongoing slimming of the nation's forces, they fear the automatic budget cuts scheduled for the coming years should the process known as "sequestration" be allowed to continue.

Lt. Gen. Michael Garrett, the three-star commander of U.S. Army Central, pointed

out that his command headquarters was moved several years ago to Shaw Air Force Base in central South Carolina with "over 1,000 soldiers with 2,800 family members."

However, the Army is looking to cut his headquarters by 54 percent, resulting in a reduction to 539 soldiers and 73 Army-employed civilians by next fall, he said.

Those cuts have been ordered with no cutbacks in his duties, the general added.

Garrett's forces include the Third Army, which supports U.S. military units in the Middle East, western Africa and southwest Asia and engage terrorist organizations throughout, he said.

Such instability in the Middle East, coupled with manpower reductions, remains his top concerns, Garrett said.

Title: **Standard (featured in Top 10)**  
 Author: BY MAAYAN SCHECHTER mschechter@ctikenstandard.com  
 Size: 50.06 square inch  
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# Standard featured in Top 10

## Paper makes list of outstanding front pages

BY MAAYAN SCHECHTER  
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The *Aiken Standard* received worldwide recognition Wednesday for its July 10 edition that featured the Confederate flag, a photo of South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley and an editorial titled "Time to unite, heal in the Palmetto State" on the front page.

Newseum, an interactive museum of news and journalism in Washington, D.C., traditionally shows the top 10 front pages of each day from newspapers around the world.

At the end of the year, Newseum wraps up its top 10 notable front pages

— judged by their "emotion and boldness; the ability to provoke sympathy, joy and outrage; and an unfettered willingness to overstep boundaries. They initiated debate and pulled readers into the discussion. They hung tough when their controversial decisions were challenged by a worldwide audience. Some made it to our daily Top Ten list, some did not. They were the epitome of a free press and stood out among a crop of outstanding front pages," as stated on Newseum's website.

The *Aiken Standard* was featured at No. 5 on the list, one below the June 21 edition of *The Post & Courier's* front page featuring a bed of roses made of sweetgrass, native to Charleston, and a list of names and short biographies of the nine black parishioners who were killed this summer at the historic Emanuel AME Church by a lone, white gunman.

*The Post & Courier* of Charleston — also owned by Evening Post Pub-

Please see **NEWSEUM**, Page 16A

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Author: BY MAAYAN SCHECHTER mschechter@ctikenstandard.com

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## NEWSEUM

CONTINUED from 1A

lishing – was the only other South Carolina paper to be featured on the list.

“In a year marked by terrorism, gun violence, war refugees and debates over the Confederate flag, religious freedom and gay marriage, 2015 could long be remembered as the year the press wore its heart on its sleeve – or at least aired its opinions on Page One,” Newseum stated on its website. “The Jan. 7 terrorist attack on satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo’s* Paris newsroom, which resulted in the deaths of 12 people, including the paper’s editor-in-chief, set the tone for an advocacy press that frequently used the front page as its soapbox.”

After the nine parishioners – including a state senator – were killed in June in Charleston, photos of the shooter, Dylann Roof, circulated social media showing him holding a Confederate flag.

That photo sparked the

debate back to light about whether the flag should remain on the Statehouse grounds or be moved to the Confederate relic room. In the end, Gov. Nikki Haley signed a law that removed the flag from the grounds.

The *Aiken Standard* responded to that action with an editorial swept across the front page, urging South Carolinians to begin the healing process to move forward, and a quote from Haley: “It is a new day in South Carolina, a day we can all be proud of, a day that truly brings us all together as we continue to heal, as one people and one state.”

“After decades of impassioned debate over the Confederate battle flag, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley signed a law that removed the flag from the State House grounds,” Newseum stated. “The mass murder on June 17 of nine black parishioners inside Charleston’s Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church precipitated the new law. In a July

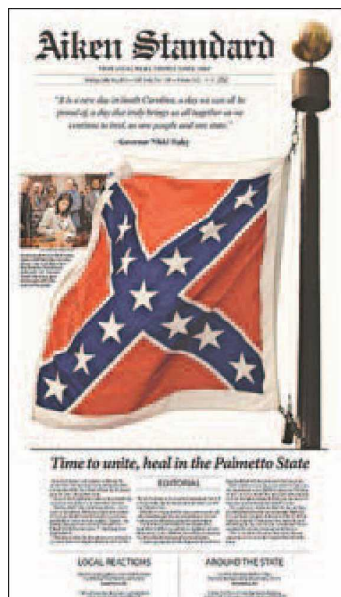
10 ceremony in Columbia, the flag finally came down. In a front-page editorial that included a large image of a battered flag, the *Aiken Standard* looked past the decades-long controversy, declaring “Time to unite, heal in the Palmetto State.”

Other featured front pages included the March 31 edition of the *The Indianapolis Star*, which featured a giant color block with “Fix. This. Now” in large bold print and just an editorial, referencing the adoption of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, a law that critics said would allow businesses to turn away gay and lesbian customers due to religious freedom.

The recent Dec. 5 edition of the *The New York Times* with its first front-page editorial since 1920 on the “gun epidemic” was also featured in the Top 10.

To view Newseum’s most notable front pages of 2015, visit [bit.ly/1QftYvS](http://bit.ly/1QftYvS).

**Maayan Schechter** is the digital news editor with the *Aiken Standard*. Follow on Twitter @MaayanSchechter.



Title: **Resolution would bar Syrianrefugeeshere**  
 Author: BY BRISTOW MARCHANT bmarchant@heraldonline.com  
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## YORK COUNTY COUNCIL

# Resolution would bar Syrian refugees here

Council plans to vote on resettlement Dec. 21

Last month, a similar resolution died without a vote

Terrorism, public pressure revive anti-refugee measure

BY BRISTOW MARCHANT  
 bmarchant@heraldonline.com

## YORK

After letting the issue die last month without a vote, the York County Council will revisit whether to go on the record in opposition to welcoming Syrian refugees to the county.

The council on Monday instructed county attorney Michael Kendree to draw up a new resolution addressing whether people displaced by the four-year civil war in Syria should be admitted to the United States. Council members will vote on the new resolution at their Dec. 21 meeting.

Monday's decision came one month after the council took no action on a resolution offered by Councilman Bruce Henderson that called on South Carolina to suspend resettlement of refugees "from North Africa and the Middle East, including Syria." That motion died when no other council member offered a second to bring it to a vote.

Since then, the refugee issue has been thrust back into the national spotlight following



Henderson

the terrorist attacks in Paris and the mass shooting by a radicalized Muslim couple in California.

Multiple people have spoken at recent council meetings, some traveling from outside the county, supporting Henderson's contention that refugees pose a threat to national security.

"It's imperative that we act on this," Henderson said Monday. "We've seen on TV these evil actions. ... I brought this to the coun-

cil two weeks before Paris."

Authorities suspect at least one of the Paris attackers may have come from Syria, although many if not all of the Paris attackers were citizens of France or other European countries.

## '... DON'T LOOK FOR DOLPHINS'

Henderson said his resolution would be called "anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant, whatever," but added, "If you get attacked by a shark, you don't look for dolphins."

SEE REFUGEES, 8A

## FROM PAGE 3A

## REFUGEES

Many speakers in favor of a resolution at Monday's meeting explicitly tied their opposition to refugee resettlement specifically to the fact most of the refugees are Muslim. Michael Reed with the Columbia-based Palmetto Christian Defense, called on the council to pass a resolution opposing all Muslim refugees coming

into York County, echoing calls from presidential candidate Donald Trump to bar any Muslim from entering the United States. That kind of talk disturbs James "Jumah" Moore, executive director of the Islamic Center of South Carolina in Rock Hill.

"We've got to stop trying put everybody in one basket," Moore said. "You

see other religions do things, but Muslims seem to get singled out."

Moore supports the United States helping Syrians fleeing the war; "It's not a religious thing, it's a human thing," he said. He doesn't know of any Syrians who worship at Rock Hill's Masjid al-Salam (Mosque of Peace), but said there could be

some among the mosque's diverse congregation of 33 separate nationalities.

Reed also cited the case of Tashfeen Malik, the Pakistani-born woman identified as one of the San Bernardino shooters along with her U.S. citizen husband, as proof lax security screenings of those entering the country pose a danger to Amer-

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icans' safety.

"If they can't screen out one, how are they going to screen out thousands?" Reed said, although Malik entered the U.S. not as a refugee but on a marriage visa sponsored by her husband, Syed Farook. "They don't have the manpower."

#### **'I LOVE AMERICA'**

Moore said he hasn't heard from any county officials as the resolution is being developed. "It seems like some people want to get on the bandwagon, and it doesn't matter how the people who live here feel," Moore said. "I love America. I was born and raised here, so it doesn't make any sense to me the rhetoric you hear about how all Muslims are bad."

Local Muslims aren't the only ones concerned about the resolution. The Rev. Sam McGregor, pastor at Allison Creek Presbyterian Church near Lake Wylie, said he wrote Henderson after the council-

man first proposed the resolution expressing his disappointment in the measure.

"It seems we've got swept up in a fearful reaction that targets certain folks," McGregor said. "That goes against what I believe in as a Christian and an American."

Earlier this year, McGregor was one of two dozen pastors who called for interreligious harmony with "our Muslim brothers and sisters" and toured York County's Holy Islamville community (which is distinct from Rock Hill's mosque) after the settlement was threatened with violent attack.

He said he's particularly concerned about the refugee situation "at this time of year, when as a Christian I celebrate a Christ child who was a refugee, and fled to another country after he was born."

Rather than take up Henderson's resolution again, Kendree, the county attorney, will craft a resolution similar to Gov.

Nikki Haley's position on the issue. After initially saying she supported helping refugees, Haley wrote to the U.S. State Department after the Nov. 13 Paris attacks asking that refugees not be sent to South Carolina.

Some council members indicated they would be willing to affirm Haley's stance, although Henderson said the governor hadn't been forceful enough in opposing resettlement.

#### **NO RESETTLEMENT PLANS FOR S.C.**

World Relief Spartanburg, one of two South Carolina nonprofits that work with the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement, says there are no plans for any of the estimated 10,000 Syrian war refugees the U.S. will admit next year to be settled in South Carolina. Executive director Jason Lee said sister organizations in North Carolina and Georgia are more likely to receive Syrians, because

they're better set up to deal with their particular needs.

"It's not that we don't want Syrians," Lee said, "It's just that that's where they will receive the best services."

Lee says the push to block Syrian resettlement is based on misinformation and "political posturing," but said he has no problem with Haley's stance on the issue, since he says the governor has generally been supportive of the needs of refugees resettled in the state.

In any event, states and localities have few available tools to stop the federally run resettlement program, much less the movement of individual refugees after they enter the country.

"This is a very mobile country," Councilman Robert Winkler said Monday. "If you let whoever into one county, they can come into any county."

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Title: **Rights group opens Lancaster chapter after rash of shootings**  
 Author: BY TEDDY KULMALA tkulmala@heraldonline.com  
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# Rights group opens Lancaster chapter after rash of shootings

Newly formed chapter will address black-on-black violence, issues in educational system

Organizers say residents need to take more interest in community and their neighbors

**"We shall overcome. But, we've got to work together as a team, as a body."**

BY TEDDY KULMALA  
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## LANCASTER

Less than a week after her sons were gunned down in south Charlotte, Laverne McGriff is setting out to keep other parents from undertaking the painful task of planning funerals for their children.

McGriff spoke Tuesday at a news conference held by the newly formed Lancaster chapter of the National Action Network civil rights group, which was launched in response to a recent string of shooting deaths in the area.

McGriff's sons, 29-year-old Naquivs Benson and 28-year-old Jarvis Mandrell Benson, and their friend Javarius McGee, were found shot to death in a home on China Grove Church Road in south Charlotte near the state line Friday. Both the Benson brothers were Lancaster natives.

Authorities in Charlotte and Lancaster are investigating whether the killings are related to the Nov. 28 unsolved killing of Carlos Antonio Massey in Lancaster. Massey was a friend of the victims in Friday's triple homicide that remains unsolved.

"They may be young or old, but they're still their mother's child," said McGriff, who on Tuesday lamented that so many young men are growing up without fathers or positive male role models in their lives.

"They're allowing the world and the street to teach them how to be a man," she said. "They're not being taught. ... What are you doing when you see that little child is going

astray? Somebody's got to reach out their hand and say, 'I can help you. Let me show you the

way. This is not the right way.'"

Tuesday's news conference kicked off the Lancaster chapter of the National Action Network, which was founded in 1991 by the Rev. Al Sharpton in New York City. Kim Cunningham, president of the Lancaster chapter, said they are building the chapter through membership enrollment and have a list of issues they want to address in 2016, including voter education, educational issues in the Lancaster County school district and violence in the area.

Cunningham said she's been in contact with Lancaster County Sheriff Barry Faile and Lancaster Police Chief Harlean Carter, both of whom are on board to work with the group.

One issue the network targets

**SEE SHOOTINGS, 6A**

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FROM PAGE 1A

## SHOOTINGS

is black-on-black crime, which is an “epidemic” around South Carolina and the rest of the nation, said James Johnson, state coordinator for the National Action Network. The violence, he said, is fueled in part by illegal guns on the streets and problems in the education system.

“A conversation must be had about the number of black males that’s dying across the state of South Carolina,” he said. “Those illegal guns can be had for \$40. When we put guns in the community and we throw drugs behind it, we have a war.”

Johnson said state coordi-

inators in the network will ask Gov. Nikki Haley and local law enforcement to step up efforts to keep guns from ending up on the streets and in the hands of criminals.

Lucille Puckett, a Charlotte representative of the National Action Network, said change has to start on the individual level.

“It starts with us in our neighborhoods,” she said. “We can’t expect the governor to do it; it’s going to take us. We say, ‘Black lives matter, black lives matter’ – black lives have to matter to us as blacks, as African-Americans. It’s not the Caucasians, it’s

not the Hispanics. It’s blacks killing blacks.”

McGriff implored parents to be more involved in their children’s lives, and for people to take more of an interest in their neighbors’ lives.

“I agree, it’s not a black thing or a white thing, but it bothers me as a mother to see so many young black men dying and so many young black women raising boys by themselves, not knowing what to do,” she said. “Guys tell them in the street, ‘This is what you need to do.’”

“We shall overcome,” she said. “But, we’ve got to work together as a team, as a body.”

Johnson echoed McGriff’s sentiments, and said network representatives will meet later this month to further develop a plan of action. Early next year, he said, members will start talking with families they see in the community to remind parents to talk with their children about the dangers of guns and drugs.

“We don’t know who we talk to that it may deter them from shooting somebody,” he said. “It may sink into their brain.”

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“

**A CONVERSATION MUST BE HAD ABOUT THE NUMBER OF BLACK MALES THAT’S DYING ACROSS THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA. THOSE ILLEGAL GUNS CAN BE HAD FOR \$40. WHEN WE PUT GUNS IN THE COMMUNITY AND WE THROW DRUGS BEHIND IT, WE HAVE A WAR.**

*James Johnson, state coordinator for the National Action Network*

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Laverne McGriff, left, is comforted by Apostle Mamie Wilson of the Resurrection of Life Church in Lancaster on Tuesday after the National Action Network announced its new chapter.



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Laverne McGriff is the mother of two Lancaster men recently shot to death in Charlotte.

Title: **Trump speech evokes response across state**  
 Author: AMANDA COYNE ? THE GREENVILLE NEWS  
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# Trump speech evokes response across state

*South Carolina Republicans are criticizing presidential candidate for proposal to block Muslims from entering the US*

AMANDA COYNE | THE GREENVILLE NEWS

From the state party chair to the average voter, South Carolina Republicans have criticized presidential Donald Trump's proposal to block Muslims from entering the U.S. Before a rally at the U.S.S. Yorktown in Mount Pleasant, Trump issued a statement saying Muslims should be barred from coming to the U.S. "until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on."

"Until we are able to determine and understand this problem and the dangerous threat it poses, our country cannot be the victims of horrendous attacks by people that believe only in Jihad and have no sense of reason or respect for human life," Trump said in the

release.  
 South Carolina Republican Party Chairman Matt Moore denounced Trump's position Monday night on Twitter.

"As a conservative who truly cares

about religious liberty, Donald Trump's bad idea and rhetoric send a shiver down my spine," Moore wrote.

"American exceptionalism means always defending our inalienable

**See TRUMP, Page 6A**

## Trump

Continued from Page 1A

rights, not attacking them when it's politically convenient."

Reached Tuesday morning, Moore said he believes the views he expressed echo "most Republicans on this issue."

Gov. Nikki Haley also rejected Trump's proposal, saying it was "an embarrassment to the Republican Party" when asked at a press confer-

ence Tuesday, according to *The State*.

"It's just an embarrassment to the Republican Party," Haley said.

"It's absolutely un-American. It's unconstitutional. It defies everything this country was based on and it's just wrong."

Trump has ramped up his anti-Muslim rhetoric up since deadly terrorist

attacks in Paris killed 130 people in November and 14 people were killed in San Bernadino, California, last week by a married Muslim couple, which President Barack Obama has called a terrorist attack.

Trump previously said Muslims in Jersey City, New Jersey could be seen celebrating after the ter-

rorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, a claim that has been widely discredited.

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Supporter Erich Schmid, center, from Hilton Head, waits to hear Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speak.



PHOTOS BY MIC SMITH/AP

Republican presidential candidate, Donald Trump, speaks during a rally coinciding with Pearl Harbor Day at Patriots Point.

Title: **Muslims say politicians playing race card**  
 Author: JEFF WILKINSON JWILKINSON@THESTATE.COM  
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# Muslims say politicians playing race card

JEFF WILKINSON  
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Zohra Arastu migrated to the United States from India with her husband, a young surgeon, in 1976.

In addition to being an artist and a mother, she teaches American children how to read translations of the Quran properly. But recently, she has grown more concerned that U.S. presidential candidates are playing the race card against Muslims, preying on "Islamophobia" to gain votes. "How do we make them stop?" she asked during a forum to promote cross-religious understanding at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia on Monday night. "They are undoing all that we are trying to do here." The "town meeting" was organized by the As-Salaam mosque on Monticello Road, whose members are mostly African-American Muslims, and hosted by the seminary. It was the third such meeting at the seminary since the Nov. 13 terror attacks in Paris. About 100 attended. The meeting began with the mosque's Imam, Omar Shaheed, who converted to Islam in the 1970s, joining a host of

Muslim leaders and organizations across the country to condemn the violence associated with Muslim extremism, including last week's shooting in San Bernardino, Calif., which is considered the deadliest act of terrorism on United States soil since Sept. 11, 2001. Fourteen people were killed in the San Bernardino attack. The violence "is not coming from Muslims," he said. "It is coming from a group that is dealing in politics."

Included on the panel was Mohamad Dahoudi, Imam of the Islamic Society of Augusta, Georgia, who said such condemnations are nothing new. Moderate Muslims have been condemning violence since the World Trade Center attack, and they continue to do so, he said. He added the drumbeat for constant statements of separation from the terrorists are growing tedious. "We are victims of the extremists as much as you are," he said.

Several speakers noted that Dylann Roof, who allegedly murdered nine black parishioners at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, sometimes attended St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Columbia. "No

one blamed all Christians for Dylann Roof," said the Lutheran seminary's James Thomas. "No one held Lutherans responsible."

Dahoudi said the group that calls itself Islamic States is a political, not a religious, organization. "They are radicals, terrorists, extremists," he said. "There is nothing there about faith."

Dahoudi added that when terrorists, criminals or the mentally ill are first labeled Muslim, "that is not fair." For instance, singling out Syrian refugees as a threat to the nation was misguided, he said, adding that none of the Paris shooters were Syrian and none were refugees. Several Republican presidential candidates and governors, including South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, have said Syrian refugees should be barred from entering the country. Candidate Donald Trump has advocated barring all Muslims. Dahoudi said that would damage the country's future.

Apple founder "Steve Jobs was the son of a Syrian immigrant," he said. "Where would you be without him? No iPhones, no iPads."