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In Case You Missed It:

Gov. Haley Calls For Ethics And Education Reform In State Of The State Address

From [Anderson Independent Mail](#)

Gov. Haley Calls For Ethics And Education Reform In State Of The State Address
Kirk Brown
January 22, 2014

"In her annual State of the State address Wednesday night, Gov. Nikki Haley called on South Carolina legislators to toughen ethics laws and strengthen the state's public schools.

"We know that the ethics laws we have are not good enough,' Haley said. 'Send me a strong ethics reform bill this year and show the people of this state that we, as their elected representatives, deserve their trust.'

"Earlier Wednesday, state senators began debating an ethics bill. Besides requiring lawmakers to report their income sources, the measure would create an independent panel to review ethics complaints against elected officials — steps that Haley favors. But the bill did not have enough support to pass in the Senate last year and its fate remains uncertain.

"Haley also urged lawmakers to approve her education initiative, which calls for spending an extra \$100 million next year on impoverished students.

"The most glaring failure on our part has been the failure to acknowledge that it simply costs more to educate a child in poverty,' she said. 'As a state, we can't afford to ignore that any longer.'

"Haley wants to set aside another \$60 million to hire reading coaches for each elementary school in the state and to improve technology in schools like the one that she attended as a child in Bamberg.

"My daughter Rena attends the brand-new River Bluff High School in Lexington, where every classroom has a 72-inch television and every child has an iPad,' Haley said. 'When I went back to Bamberg to give an anti-bullying speech, the school didn't even have the equipment to show a video.

"That's wrong. It's immoral. And it has to change.' ...

"I think it is a positive step forward,' said Rep. Joshua Putnam, a Republican from Piedmont.

"Rep. Anne Thayer, a Republican from Anderson, was equally upbeat.

“‘I am glad to see that we are going to do something for education,’ Thayer said. ‘It is really important for South Carolina.’ ...

“‘At the beginning of her 37-minute speech, Haley congratulated Sheheen and other state lawmakers for passing a government restructuring plan this week after years of discussion. The measure gives the governor more authority over the state’s bureaucracy by eliminating the five-member Budget and Control Board.

“‘There is not time tonight for me to go into all the good that will come from this change, but I will say this: The Budget and Control Board — what I call the big, green, ugly monster — is dead, and with it the legacy of a backwards administrative government that was as wasteful as it was clumsy, as inefficient as it was embarrassing,’ she said.

“‘Haley also lauded a road-funding bill that was approved last year.

“‘South Carolinians are about to see orange cones popping up all across our state,’ she said. ‘It’s a beautiful thing.’

“‘The governor urged lawmakers to use anticipated new revenue to continue paying for highway projects. She again warned them that she will veto any effort to raise the state’s gas tax.

“‘Haley defended her refusal last year to expand South Carolina’s Medicaid program. ‘We will continue to fight Obamacare every step of the way,’ she said.

“‘Haley took time to tout her administration’s economic achievements.

“‘We have announced 43,000 new jobs, in 45 out of our 46 counties. We have seen almost \$10 billion invested in South Carolina,’ said Haley, adding that the state’s unemployment rate has dropped to its lowest level in five years. ‘We now have the fastest-growing economy on the East Coast.’

“‘Rep, Mike Gambrell, a Republican from Honea Path who is chairman of Anderson County’s legislative delegation, said Haley deserves credit for her accomplishments.

“‘It is hard to argue with her record on jobs,’ he said.

“‘Gambrell said he was impressed with Haley’s fourth State of the State address.

“‘I thought it was her best one yet,’ he said.”

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