

Title: **Horry County applying for FEMA assistance**  
 Author: BY MICHAEL SMITH MICHAELSMITH@MYHORRYNEWS.COM  
 Size: 52.23 square inch  
 Conway, SC Circulation: 16000



# Horry County applying for FEMA assistance

BY MICHAEL SMITH

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Life continues trending toward normalcy following historic floods that damaged or destroyed more than 400 homes earlier this month.

Horry County has lowered its alert status to Operating Condition (OPCON) 5, the county's lowest alert status.

OPCON 5 means that Horry County is operating under normal conditions.

Despite the lowered alertness level, however, the Horry County Emergency Operations Center remains activated 24 hours a day with limited emergency support functions.

Horry County police will continue to staff security checkpoints along the Waccamaw River, but will begin demobilizing those operations as the river recedes and property owners can access their homes, the county said in a news release.

In related developments, Horry County is also now eligible for FEMA assistance from the flood.

Gov. Nikki Haley said last week that the Federal Emergency Management Agency approved numerous additional South Carolina counties for additional funding to help them recover from October's severe flooding.

Horry was among the coun-

ties now eligible to recoup costs for storm response, debris removal, and infrastructure damage. Before, Horry County was only eligible for debris removal and emergency protective measures, Haley's office said.

The FEMA Public Assistance program includes roads and bridges.

In a presentation to Horry County Council on Oct. 8, county officials said between \$850,000 and \$950,000 in damages were caused to Horry County infrastructure, mainly roads damaged during the flood.

Horry County spokeswoman Lisa Bourcier said the county does plan to recoup costs it incurred during the storm. She said the \$850,000-\$950,000 infrastructure damage estimate remains constant, though the figure could rise once the Waccamaw River fully recedes and additional roads can be assessed.

Bourcier also said according to preliminary figures, an additional estimate of \$250,000 in costs have been incurred. Those costs consist of staff time, including checkpoints in flood hot spots. The S.C. Department of Natural Re-

sources and Horry County police are also providing boat patrols along the Waccamaw River.

Horry County has requested reimbursement for 75 percent of those costs, the maximum amount allowed by FEMA. "Those figures are still being calculated since we still have checkpoints and are still incurring costs," Bourcier said.

There has been some additional facility damage to various buildings across the county. The extent of those damages are still being assessed, and some of them may be covered by the county's insurance reserve fund rather than FEMA.

"Some of this may be FEMA, some of it may come from other Federal agencies," she said.

The FEMA program is a reimbursement grant program.

Typically, the federal share is 75 percent and the state or local governments pay the remaining 25 percent whereas eligible private non-profit groups are responsible for the full 25 percent.

FEMA disaster recovery centers remain open at the North Strand Recreation Center located at 120 Highway 57 South in Little River and the South Strand Recreation Cen-

ter located at 9650 Scipio Lane in Myrtle Beach.

Both centers are open seven days a week from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. until further notice, and are designed to help Horry County flood victims who've lost their homes and personal property due to flooding. More than 2,500 Horry County victims have registered for assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, receiving more than \$1.5 million in individual and household assistance.

Also, more than \$340,000 has been given for rental assistance for those affected by the flood.

Flood victims can also register by calling a FEMA hotline at 800-621-3362.

Phone lines are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. EDT, seven days a week until further notice.

Individuals with hearing difficulties can call 800-462-7585. Applicants may also register online at with any

computer, smartphone or tablet at <http://DisasterAssistance.gov>.

Follow the link to "apply online for federal assistance." Survivors may also visit one of the two Horry County disaster recovery centers.

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**Horry County has said that it plans to seek the full 75 percent reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for expenses incurred during the Oct. 4-5 flood. Above, areas of Conway were completely submerged by the flood.**

Title: **UrbanLeaguehonoring lessonsfromflagremoval**  
 Author:  
 Size: 24.64 square inch  
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



## Urban League honoring lessons from flag removal

The massacre of nine saints attending prayer service at the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston by an avowed racist, along with the non-vindictive and heartfelt



response of their family members, unified and moved South Carolina to a higher level of social justice. Twenty-three days after the tragic deaths, South Carolina began the process of separating itself from the vestiges of the divisive and racist symbol of the Confederate flag.

This symbol has perpetuated a mindset among some individuals of inequality and unfair treatment of minority citizens. In essence, it helped reduce the overall quality of life for many South Carolinians. The bold action by Gov. Nikki Haley and members of the General Assembly to remove the Confederate flag from State House grounds and place it in the Confederate Museum represents a new day for South Carolina.

The Columbia Urban League is drawing its inspiration from this journey for its Equal Opportunity Day Dinner and fundraiser on Nov. 3 at the Columbia

Metropolitan Convention Center, as we explore “One South Carolina: Moving Forward through Unity, Cooperation and Civility.” Gov. Haley will deliver our keynote address.

One South Carolina will only be realized through a strategic action plan to close the disparity gaps in education, economic opportunities, health care and criminal justice. It will take the collective action and commitment of people of goodwill to accomplish this mission. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. put it: “(P)rogress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to work to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use

time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.”

Once again, we saw South Carolina come together as one in the aftermath of the devastating flood in early October, compassionately reaching out in the spirit of oneness to help each other.

Our response to this catastrophe demonstrated to the world our capacity to come together as one South Carolina in addressing unprecedented challenges. As we move forward, we must enhance our commitment and determination to close the economic and social equality gaps that have hindered our ability to be one South Carolina.

– James T. McLawhorn Jr.  
 President and CEO  
 Columbia Urban League  
 Columbia

Title: **Arrest challenges us to remain calm, peaceful, again**  
 Author:  
 Size: 44.17 square inch  
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



## EDITORIAL

# *Arrest challenges us to remain calm, peaceful, again*

**S**OUTH CAROLINA is once again in the national spotlight. Video of a school resource officer throwing a Spring Valley High School student to the floor and arresting her is, as Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott put it, disturbing. The video and the arrest have rightfully captured the attention of our state and nation.

As federal, state and local authorities investigate the incident and the deputy's actions, the rest of us must react as we did after the Charleston shootings in April and June and the statewide floods in October. It is essential that we again show amazing peace, calm and togetherness.

We inspired ourselves and the nation before. We must do it again.

Understandably, parents, students, administrators and the public have questions about what happened in that Spring Valley classroom. All have the right to seek answers, offer opinions and express concerns. A public discussion is healthy.

We had similar discussions in April after a white North Charleston police officer shot an unarmed black man; in June after a young white man massacred nine parishioners at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston; and just a few weeks ago after widespread flooding damaged thousands of homes and left at least 19 dead statewide.

After the North Charleston shooting, fears about violence surfaced because of the unrest we had seen in Ferguson, Mo., Baltimore and

New York following the deaths of black men in police encounters.

"People mention Baltimore. People mention Ferguson. People mention New York," North Charleston City Attorney Brady Hair told The Associated Press earlier this month. "What's different here is there were no acts of violence. There were no buildings burned.

"None of us did anything to escalate this into an uncontrolled environment. It is a different template from what you have seen around the country."

The Mother Emanuel shootings sparked outrage among South Carolinians of all races and religious beliefs. Immediately, the people and churches of Charleston reached out to the congregation, providing food and other support. A *Toronto Star* reporter tweeted video of a mostly white crowd marching through Charleston chanting "black lives matter."

A few days after the shootings, a crowd estimated at more than 10,000 gathered at Charleston's Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge to honor the victims and to show those who would divide us that South Carolina really is different.

Next, our Legislature voted overwhelmingly to move the Confederate flag from the State House grounds.

Earlier this month, when hundreds of our neighbors lost their homes, an army of volunteers showed up to help, uninvited and unannounced.

Our responses this year have been praised



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by national media and by politicians across the political spectrum, from Gov. Nikki Haley to President Obama.

Thankfully, the Spring Valley High School encounter did not end in the loss of life. But it is disturbing, as Sheriff Lott said. South Carolinians should ask questions. If any laws were broken, we should expect justice.

But in our response, we should continue being who we are — a community that will not

be divided.

**Disturbing incident involving Spring Valley high school student demands answers**

**As we await those answers, we must again show amazing peace, calm and togetherness**

**We are a community that will not be divided, as we showed after three tragedies this year**

Title: **BUSINESS BRIEFLY**  
 Author:  
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## BUSINESS BRIEFLY

### COMPANY TO CREATE 300 JOBS IN CHESTER

Poly-America, one of America's largest polyethylene film manufacturers, is establishing South Carolina operations with Carolina Poly Inc. in Chester County, according to Gov. Nikki Haley's office. The company is investing \$100 million in the new facility, creating 300 jobs. Carolina Poly Inc. will operate a 475,000-square-foot manufacturing facility on 198 acres at 1580 Lancaster Highway in Chester. The facility is expected to be operational by mid-2017, and hiring is expected to begin in late 2016.

### ALSO ...

- Sutura USA, a firm specializing in semi-underground waste and recycling collection systems, is establishing operations at 55 Commerce Center in Greenville. The company is investing \$2 million in the facility, creating 20 jobs.

- The Charlotte Douglas International Airport wants to create a new master plan to guide development on land surrounding the airport. That's why Charlotte City Council voted Monday to spend \$900,000 worth of airport funds for a consultant to study the area and recommend best uses for the land. Charlotte Douglas is surrounded by large tracts of undeveloped land, especially to the west and north, and the city hopes to encourage more development in those tracts.

- The McClatchy Co. reported a smaller quarterly loss Tuesday despite continued slippage in revenue. McClatchy, which publishes The State and 28 other daily newspapers, said it lost \$1.1 million during the quarter, compared to a \$2.8 million loss the year before. The per-share loss came to 1 cent, vs. 3 cents a year ago. In terms of income from continuing operations, McClatchy said it earned a profit of \$3.2 million in the quarter, compared to a \$700,000 loss a year ago.

— FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Title: **\$144 million Florence road an example of cronyism, critics say**  
 Author: BY CASSIE COPE ccope@thestate.com  
 Size: 194.21 square inch  
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



# \$144 million Florence road an example of cronyism, critics say

**Pamplico Highway will be widened to five lanes from two for 24 miles**

**State Infrastructure Bank paying nearly 70 percent of cost of Florence County projects**

**Critics say bank is politically controlled and should be abolished**

BY CASSIE COPE

ccope@thestate.com

FLORENCE COUNTY, SC

The traffic on Pamplico Highway was so light on a Tuesday in August that two conservation activists could lie down in the middle of the two-lane highway during rush hour for about a minute before a vehicle appeared.

But the S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank wants to widen 24 miles of the highway to five lanes.

The busiest stretch of the highway carried 9,000 vehicles a day, on average, in 2014. In contrast, the busiest stretch of Richland County's three-lane Hardscrabble Road carried more than twice that number of vehicles - 23,900 a day.

"It's safe to take a nap in the middle of the road," activist Dana Beach said of Pamplico Highway. The Florence County road does not have enough traffic to justify spending the estimated \$144.4 million in state and local money that it will cost to widen it, he said.

So why widen it?

Politics, say critics of the state Infrastructure Bank, including Beach, who is head of the S.C. Coastal Conservation League, often critical of development.

Critics long have complained the Infrastructure Bank's state-financed, road-building efforts are driven by State House clout, not the state's road needs.

The recent flooding that devastated roads and bridges across South Carolina only increases the need to reform or abolish the Infrastructure Bank, making maintenance a priority over the bank's construction of new roads, says state Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort.

But Infrastructure Bank supporters say the money slated for widening the Pamplico Highway will be well spent.

"The (Infrastructure Bank) has really been good for improving the roads, (and) increasing the capacity of the highways in South

Carolina," said Senate President Pro Tempore Hugh Leatherman, R-Florence.

## 'FAILURE OF THE SYSTEM'

The part of Pamplico Highway that is set to be widened looks like most rural two-lane roads in South Carolina.

At least 13 churches line the highway. Farms, houses and cow pastures spread out along the road, its pavement graying with cracks zigzagging through it. Hannah-Pamplico Elementary/Middle School and Hannah-Pamplico High School - combined enrollment, 1,132 - sit along the road.

Today, like many other S.C. highways, part of Pamplico Highway is closed due to a washout from the flooding that hit the state three weeks ago. That washout is not expected to be repaired until after Thanksgiving.

In the future, however, congestion is expected to worsen on the portion of

the Pamplico Highway that is closest to the city of Florence. Traffic on that 6-mile stretch of highway, also called S.C. 51, has a stable flow now, the state Transportation Department says. But traffic is expected to increase to an unstable flow, the department's second-worst category for congestion, by 2030.

Already, during rush hours, traffic is horrible, said Leatherman, whose district includes the highway. "It's bumper to bumper."

Leatherman added the highway also is a major school bus route and used for evacuations during hurricanes, although the road is not listed as an evacuation route by the Transportation Department.

Widening the highway also would help attract "future economic development opportunities" to the area, the Transportation Department said in a study.

Nancy Cave - like Beach, a staffer with the S.C. Con-

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servation League – said that rationale is common in South Carolina: Build roads, and then businesses will come to an area. But too often, “the road sits there and no business comes.”

Beach agrees.

“It’s more of an example of the dysfunction and the failure of the system at a general level to allocate transportation dollars rationally,” Beach said.

### STATE BANK FOOTING MOST OF FLORENCE BILL

The Pamplico Highway widening project was approved by Florence County voters in 2006, when they OK’d a penny-on-the-dollar local sales tax for six road projects.

The Infrastructure Bank committed to paying up to \$340 million for the six projects. Up to \$148 million will come from the Florence sales tax, according to an August update from the state Transportation Department.

That means state taxpayers are footing the majority of the bill for roads that benefit only a few motorists in one lightly traveled portion of the state, says Beach.

Since its founding in 1997, the Infrastructure Bank has spent \$3.6 billion on roads.

Almost a third of that money – \$1.1 billion – has gone to the Charleston and Lowcountry areas, including money to extend Interstate 526, which Beach and the Conservation League strongly oppose.

Critics say Charleston projects benefited because the board that governs the Infrastructure Bank was controlled by the appoin-

tees of elected officials from the Holy City – then-Gov. Mark Sanford, then-Senate President Pro Tempore Glenn McConnell and then-House Speaker Bobby Harrell – for much of its history.

In 2005, Florence’s Leatherman was appointed by McConnell to the board that oversees the Infrastructure Bank. That year, the board approved the initial funding for the Florence County road projects.

Beach said Leatherman – today, arguably the state’s most powerful politician as head of the Senate and chairman of the Senate’s budget-writing Finance Committee – uses the Infrastructure Bank “as his own personal slush fund.”

Leatherman says the highways in the Florence County roads package justify state spending because they are state highways.

The Senate leader said Florence County residents also should be lauded for agreeing to tax themselves, via the local-option sales tax, as part of their bid to attract state money from the Infrastructure Bank. Residents of more counties should do the same, he said.

### SHOULD BANK BE ABOLISHED?

The Infrastructure Bank, which issues bonds to pay for roads, was created to help pay for the Ravenel Bridge in Charleston. It is charged with helping local governments pay for projects that cost more than \$100 million.

Former state Transportation Department Secretary Buck Limehouse said the Infrastructure Bank was his brainchild. His son, state Rep. Chip Limehouse, R-

Charleston, introduced legislation to create the bank.

“We built projects that we never would have had enough money to do and we’re using those projects now as we pay for them,” Buck Limehouse said, adding that the bank allows the state to benefit by selling bonds at today’s low interest rates.

However, opponents say the Infrastructure Bank should be abolished, to remove politics from decisions about roads.

This month’s flooding will increase the public pressure on lawmakers to repair the state’s roads and bridges, said Sen. Davis, who blocked a plan to raise taxes to pay for road repairs earlier this year, saying additional money was not needed because of state surpluses.

“It’s a different thing entirely when you’ve got a fire hose of water turned onto the Midlands and Lowcountry in South Carolina, and you actually see these roads and bridges crumbling,” said Davis.

Davis endorses getting rid of the Infrastructure Bank or making it accountable to the governor, saying the bank’s focus on building new roads – rather than maintenance – is wrong-headed.

The seven-member board that governs the Infrastructure Bank also is controlled by too few politicians, Davis said, noting the speaker of the S.C. House and Senate president pro tempore name four of the bank board’s seven members.

(Leatherman, the Senate president pro tem, appointed himself as one member of the board. He said he did so because he always

has had in interest in the state’s highway system.)

State government “should never have that kind of money being allocated and spent with that much control given to two individuals,” said Davis, referring to Leatherman and S.C. House Speaker Jay Lucas, R-Darlington, who appoint a majority of the bank board’s seven members.

The result of that control is that road projects are selected on the basis of political influence, not need, critics say.

The Infrastructure Bank highlights “the manipulation of vast amounts of state dollars by powerful politicians,” Beach said.

But bank board member Joe Taylor of Columbia said that belief is a misconception. He said the board reacts to applications for roads money, not political clout.

“A lot of people think we go out and pick projects,” said Taylor, a former S.C. Commerce secretary. “We, typically, react to local governments who apply.”

Taylor said politics may have been at play in the past, but he has not seen it since he joined the board in 2013.

Infrastructure Bank opponent Beach isn’t buying that.

Pamplico Highway “is the most glaring example of the abuse in the system and the corruption in the system,” he said.

Reach Cope at (803) 771-8657.

“

IT’S MORE OF AN EXAMPLE OF THE

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## DYSFUNCTION AND THE FAILURE OF THE SYSTEM AT A GENERAL LEVEL TO ALLOCATE TRANSPORTATION DOLLARS RATIONALLY.”

*Dana Beach, S.C. Coastal Conservation League*

“

“WE BUILT PROJECTS THAT WE NEVER WOULD HAVE HAD ENOUGH MONEY TO DO AND WE’RE USING THOSE PROJECTS NOW AS WE PAY FOR THEM.”

*Buck Limehouse, former Transportation Department head*

“

“IT’S SAFE TO TAKE A NAP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD.”

*Dana Beach, S.C. Coastal Conservation League*

## The S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank

**What is it?** The S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank is a state entity that issues bonds to borrow money to help finance road projects that cost more than \$100 million. The bank was created in 1997 and is governed by a seven-member board.

**How much does it spend?** The Infrastructure Bank’s budget, approved by the General Assembly, has grown from \$80 million in 1998-99 fiscal year to \$225 million in the state’s

current fiscal year, which started July 1. The bank says it spent \$76 million in 1998-99 and \$123 million in 2014-15, which ended June 30.

**Where does the money come from?** Money for the Infrastructure Bank comes from truck registration fees, motor vehicle registration fees, one penny of the state’s 16.75-cent-a-gallon gas tax, \$50 million transferred from the Transportation Department and a portion of the electric power tax.

## S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank Board

*The board is made up of seven members who decide how to spend money on state road projects*

### GOV. NIKKI HALEY’S APPOINTEES

**Vincent Graham** of Charleston, chairman of the bank board, was appointed last month, replacing Don Leonard, who had been on the board since 2003. Graham is president of the l’On Group in Mount Pleasant, a real estate company. Graham graduated from the University of Virginia, where he studied economics.

**Ernest Duncan** of Aiken, a board member since 2004. Duncan first was appointed by former Gov. Mark Sanford. He is a retired colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve and chief executive officer of ELD Sustainment Group, a defense contracting group. He earned a bachelor’s degree in business from S.C. State University.

### S.C. HOUSE SPEAKER JAY LUCAS’ APPOINTEES

**Max Metcalf** of Greenville, a board member since 2003, first was appointed by then-House Speaker David Wilkins, R-Greenville. Metcalf is manager of communications for BMW. He received a bachelor’s degree in economics from Clemson University. He also oversaw intergovernmental relations/transportation under the late Gov. Carroll Campbell.

**Chip Limehouse** of Charleston, a board member since 2007 and S.C. House representative, introduced the legislation to create the Infrastructure Bank and first was appointed to its board by then-Speaker Bobby Harrell. Limehouse is a commercial real estate broker and executive with Limehouse Properties.

### SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE HUGH LEATHERMAN’S APPOINTEES

**Hugh Leatherman**, the Florence Republican and Senate leader, first was appointed to the board by then-Senate leader Glenn McConnell of Charleston in 2005. Leatherman reappointed himself when he took over leadership of the Senate in 2014, citing his interest in the state’s road needs. He earned his bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from N.C.

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State University.

Joe Taylor of Columbia first was appointed in 2014. Taylor is the former head of the S.C. Department of Commerce. Now a private investor, Taylor said he brings geographic diversity to the board because he is its only member from the Midlands.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBER

Jim Rozier of Berkeley County, chairman of the S.C. Department of Transportation. Rozier formerly was a Berkeley County supervisor and chairman of that County Council for 16 years. He attended Clemson University.

money, by region, since its start in 1997 through May 2015:

Lowcountry and Charleston areas: \$1.2 billion

Upstate: \$752 million

Horry County area: \$618 million

Midlands: \$465.6 million

Florence County: \$340 million

York County: \$176.8 million

Other projects across the state, including guard rails and bridges: \$48 million

Total: \$3.6 billion

SOURCE: S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank

Where does the money go?

Where the S.C. Transportation Infrastructure Bank has spent



MATT WALSH mwalsh@thestate.com

Hugh Leatherman says the Pamplico Highway is a major school bus route and used for evacuations during hurricanes. But the road is not listed as an evacuation route by the Transportation Department.

Title: **South Carolina marks solemn milestone of domestic violence**  
 Author: BY MEG KINNARD The Associated Press  
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 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



# South Carolina marks solemn milestone of domestic violence

BY MEG KINNARD

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA

As he has each year since taking office in 2011, Attorney General Alan Wilson is preparing to mark a solemn milestone.

On Thursday, the top prosecutor takes part in the 18th annual Silent Witness ceremony. On the steps of the Statehouse, relatives, friends and advocates hold up life-sized silhouettes representing each person killed in South Carolina during the previous year as a result of domestic violence. A bell rings once for each

victim.

“Everybody has to own the problem,” Wilson recently told The Associated Press. “It’s a societal problem, not just a government problem.”

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. In September, an annual report by the Violence Police Center again ranked South Carolina worst in the nation for deadly violence against women, with a rate of 2.32 women killed per 100,000 people in 2013. That’s more than twice the national aver-

age and represents 57 known deaths, compared with 50 a year earlier, according to the study, which uses the latest data available from the FBI for crimes involving one male killing one female.

It marked South Carolina’s fourth time atop the list, where the state ranked second last year and has been in the top 10 annually for the last 18 years.

Domestic violence and gun ownership were widely discussed this year by the South Carolina Legislature, which ultimately approved a

bill aimed at stemming the state’s persistently high rate. The bill signed into law by Gov. Nikki Haley increases penalties, gives prosecutors more options for punishment and also bans some batterers from having guns.

Wilson has said the legislation has helped the state make progress but that more advances are needed. A task force has recommended more changes, like training more 911 operators, improving documentation of the crime scene and adding

SEE WITNESS, 6A

FROM PAGE 3A

## WITNESS

more shelters.

Throughout South Carolina’s 46 counties, prosecutors like Barry Barnette, solicitor for Spartanburg and Cherokee counties, say the cases are among the most emotionally difficult to handle.

Last month, Michael Lee Larson was sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty to shooting his wife to death a day after her birthday in May 2014. Authorities say Larson called 911, confessing that he had killed Mitzi Yvonne Emery Larson. A witness reported seeing the couple

argue before the shooting, and a 12-gauge shotgun was found near the woman’s body.

In preparing for trial, Barnette met with the victim’s family, who told him of a grisly discovery. In Mitzi Larson’s Bible, her adult sons said they found their mother’s handwritten record detailing each time she’d been abused by her husband, a chilling keepsake Barnette says the likes of which are all too common in such cases.

“She basically stayed with him through the

abuse,” Barnette said of the couple that had been together nearly 30 years.

The cases are tricky, Barnette said, because those left behind – like the Larsons’ children – are related to both victim and defendant. Often longtime witnesses to the abuse, he said the children are dealing with conflicted emotions when it comes time for prosecution and, unless they get counseling, can unfortunately end up repeating the cycle of abuse in their own relationships.

“Kids learn from adults.

This is what they think is the norm, and we have to somehow break that cycle,” he said.

In the Larsons’ case, each son asked the judge to levy a harsh sentence against his father.

“The amazing thing about them was the love they shared for their mom,” Barnette said. “This was their dad, and they stood up and asked Judge Couch for the maximum sentence.”

Title: **Haley: SC will rebuild, but costs are unknown**  
 Author: The Associated Press  
 Size: 27.43 square inch  
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



# Haley: SC will rebuild, but costs are unknown

**Political considerations are emerging after floods that ravaged the state earlier this month.**

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — As Gov. Nikki Haley seeks to rebuild her state after a history-making storm ravaged South Carolina earlier this month, she keeps returning to the memory of seeing raging floodwaters in the capital city.

In an interview, the governor said she had prayed to keep the people of her state safe amid the destruction.

“The idea the water was up that high was terrifying,” the governor said Wednesday, recalling the sight of roaring floodwaters more than 25 feet above normal on the Congaree River, reaching almost to the top of a Columbia bridge. “My thought was — how many people couldn’t get out.”

Now, as the recovery from



**Haley**

the floods that drowned 12 South Carolinians continues, political considerations are emerging.

Chief will be how to pay for repairs. There have been no official damage estimates, but the floods will likely be the costliest disaster since Hurricane Hugo in 1989, which did \$13.5 billion of damage to the U.S. in inflation-adjusted dollars, most of it in South Carolina.

Haley says she can’t know how it will be paid for until the damage estimate is in.

She insists she will keep her promise to repair everything that broke or washed away, but needs to know the bill and how much the Federal Emergency Management Agency will pay before figuring out how the state will find the money.

“We’re going to do the as-

sessments. We’re going to see what FEMA takes care of. We’re going to see what the state needs to do after that,” Haley said Wednesday.

Lawmakers have almost universally praised the governor for her handling of the floods. But some wonder if the infrastructure damage was made worse because roads and bridges aren’t being maintained.

Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter thinks the governor can extend the compassion she has for flood victims to the poor in South Carolina looking for health care. Under Haley, the state has refused to take federal money to expand Medicaid.

“I think the governor has shown tremendous leadership. I appreciate the fact she recognizes South Carolina can’t do this alone and there is a role for the federal government to play,” said Cobb-Hunter, D-Orangeburg.

Title: **Costs being tallied, but Haley says SC will rebuild**  
Author: TheAssociated Press  
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**THE FLOOD OF 2015**

# Costs being tallied, but Haley says SC will rebuild

*The Associated Press*

Gov. Nikki Haley says her state will rebuild from this month's floods, but she can't know how it will be paid for until the damage estimate is in.

She insists she will keep her promise to repair everything that broke or



washed away, but needs to know the cost and how much the Federal Emergency Management Agency

will pay before figuring out how the state will find the money.

"We're going to do the assessments. We're going to see what FEMA takes care of. We're going to see what the state needs to do after that. I'm not touching any of the reserve (funds) because we don't have to at this point and time. If that changes, we

will deal with that," Haley said Wednesday.

Lawmakers have almost universally praised the governor for her handling of the floods.

But some wonder if the infrastructure damage was made worse because roads and bridges aren't being maintained.

Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter thinks the governor can extend the compassion she has for flood victims or the people affected by the church shooting to the poor in South Carolina looking for health care. Under Haley, the state has refused to take federal money to expand Medicaid.

"I think the governor has shown tremendous leadership. I appreciate the fact she recognizes South Carolina can't do this alone and there is a role for the federal government to play," said Cobb-Hunter, D-Orange-

burg.

Haley, however, said that her positions on her core issues have not changed.

"We have gone through tragedies over this past year. But my philosophical ideas have not changed," Haley said. "Just my experiences have."

The floods will likely be the costliest disaster since Hurricane Hugo in 1989, which did \$13.5 billion of damage to the U.S. in inflation adjusted dollars, most of it in South Carolina. The floods caused the deaths of 10 people in the Midlands and others across the state.

**“ WE’RE GOING TO DO THE ASSESSMENTS.**

*Gov. Nikki Haley*

Haley



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**STATE**

# S.C. marks milestone of domestic violence

BY MEG KINNARD

Associated Press

**Silent Witness ceremony pays homage to those killed by domestic violence in the past year**

**October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

**S.C. again ranked worst in the nation for deadly violence against women**

**COLUMBIA**

As he has each year since taking office in 2011, Attorney General Alan Wilson is preparing to mark a solemn milestone.

On Thursday, the top prosecutor takes part in the 18th annual Silent Witness ceremony. On the steps of the Statehouse, relatives, friends and advocates hold up life-sized silhouettes representing

each person killed in South Carolina during the previous year as a result of domestic violence. A bell rings once for each victim.

“Everybody has to own the problem,” Wilson recently told The Associated Press. “It’s a societal problem, not just a government problem.”

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. In September, an annual report

by the Violence Police Center again ranked South Carolina worst in the nation for deadly violence against women, with a rate of 2.32 women killed per 100,000 people in 2013. That’s more than twice the national average and represents 57 known deaths, compared with 50 a year earlier,

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## VIOLENCE

according to the study, which uses the latest data available from the FBI for crimes involving one male killing one female.

It marked South Carolina’s fourth time atop the list, where the state ranked second last year and has been in the top 10 annually for the last 18 years.

Domestic violence and gun ownership were widely discussed this year by the South Carolina Legislature, which ultimately approved a bill aimed at stemming the state’s persistently high rate. The bill, signed into law Gov. Nikki Haley, increases penalties, gives prosecutors more options for punishment and bans some batterers from having guns.

Wilson has said the legis-

lation has helped the state make progress but more advances are needed. A taskforce has recommended more changes, like training more 911 operators, improving documentation of crime scenes and adding shelters.

Throughout South Carolina’s 46 counties, prosecutors like Barry Barnette, solicitor for Spartanburg and Cherokee counties, say the cases are among the most emotionally difficult to handle.

Last month, Michael Lee Larson was sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty to shooting his wife to death a day after her birthday in May 2014.

Authorities say Larson

called 911, confessing he had killed Mitzi Yvonne Emery Larson. A witness reported seeing the couple argue before the shooting, and a 12-gauge shotgun was found near the woman’s body.

In preparing for trial, Barnette met with the victim’s family, who told him of a grisly discovery. In Mitzi Larson’s Bible, her adult sons said they found their mother’s handwritten record detailing each time she’d been abused by her husband, a chilling keepsake Barnette says the likes of which are all too common in such cases.

“She basically stayed with him through the abuse,” Barnette said.

The cases are tricky,

Barnette said, because those left behind – like the Larsons’ children – are related to both victim and defendant.

Often longtime witnesses to the abuse, he said the children are dealing with conflicted emotions when it comes time for prosecution and, unless they get counseling, can unfortunately end up repeating the cycle of abuse in their own relationships.

“Kids learn from adults. This is what they think is the norm, and we have to somehow break that cycle,” he said.

In the Larsons’ case, though, each son asked the judge to levy a harsh sentence against his father.

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## OTHER VOICES

# Elected officials should represent will of constituents

I was greatly disappointed again today when I read an article on seismic testing and offshore drilling in The Sun News (Briarcliffe Acres votes against offshore drilling, Wednesday) only to learn that our elected officials are still ignoring their constituents.

I have listened to elected officials as they have told us that petitions and resolutions will not affect the decision-making process. That mindset is preposterous. Then, again today, I read a quote from U.S. Rep. Tom Rice: "My position has been let's do the seismic testing. Let's find out what's out there and then we can make rational decisions."

No, sir. You are wrong.

I voted for Rice to be my "Representative" – not a dictator. Tom Rice and his colleagues need to remember who elected them and let those people be heard

through their actions. We are now at a point where the governments of every coastal town in South Carolina (and the capital city of Columbia) have resolved against seismic testing and offshore drilling. What is it about the word "unanimous" that Rice and his colleagues don't understand?

Those resolutions should indicate to our elected officials that we don't care what is out there. We are against seismic testing. We do not need to do it. We do not want to do it. We do not believe oil industry claims that it is harmless.

We have indicated – loud and clear, that our "rational decision" has been made. We believe that every possible benefit to be derived from offshore drilling is not worth the risk to our existing economies and environment.

Rice, Gov. Nikki Haley and all our other elected officials should have a "no brainer" to deal with these issues. Instead, they persist in representing the interests of the oil companies instead of their constituents.

We the people were not responsible for these preposterous ideas of seismic testing and offshore drilling. We were not responsible for campaign donations and PAC dollars to benefit our elected officials. But we are responsible for the decisions expressed by the governments of every coastal town, village and port city in our state.

Now it is time for our officials to do what they were elected to do: represent us, not the oil companies.

*The writer lives in Murrells Inlet*