

Haley's ambition puts DHEC between rock and hard place

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It's the seven-minute gap that is most telling. On Sept. 11 at 2:27 p.m., the state Department of Health and Environmental Control announced actions against three abortion clinics after an investigation pushed by Gov. Nikki Haley.

Seven minutes later, the governor, traveling overseas, released a seven-paragraph statement that had to take more than seven minutes to write, an indication of how our ambitious governor wanted to put the clinics under klieg lights. Recall how Haley recently told Washington reporters that she wouldn't turn down discussions of being a vice presidential candidate.

Bottom line: This brouhaha over abortion clinics is pure political theater with DHEC serving as the pawn for a governor who wanted to twist a national issue.

But that's not surprising when you consider how Haley needs to be viewed as more conservative by GOP presidential hopefuls. Her conservative credentials suffered after rightly dumping the Confederate flag from the Statehouse grounds. In fact, that pushed up her poll numbers among Democrats and African-Americans.

It's all about perception, not reality. And DHEC was caught between a rock, the law and a hard place — the governor.

During the summer, the continuing national debate over abortion flared again after actors hired by an anti-abortion group secretly taped videos with Planned Parenthood staff members involving possible purchase of tissue samples of aborted fetuses. The organization, which has denied wrongdoing, became a flash point, leading to congressional investigations and media frenzy.

On Aug. 18, Haley, obviously trying to keep the story alive



Andy Brack
Statehouse Report

in South Carolina, called on DHEC to investigate the state's abortion clinics, with special focus on two operated by Planned Parenthood.

Between Aug. 31 and Sept. 4, DHEC sent inspectors to clinics in Greenville, Columbia and Charleston that had passed inspections with flying colors in recent years. This time, though, inspectors were under the gun to find something. At the Columbia clinic, for example, they documented 21 minor violations, mostly involving paperwork. Only one of the cited violations carried a fine of \$1,000. Most were \$250 slaps on the wrist for things like failing to have proper employee background documentation, orientation records, job descriptions or training records. Our favorite: The water in three sinks was too hot (ever heard of the cold tap?)

On Sept. 9, according to DHEC spokesman Jim Beasley, the agency notified Haley's office of inspection results and the pending enforcement actions. Two days later, around 1:45 p.m., DHEC phoned people at the clinics as a courtesy to let them know emails were on the way about enforcement actions. All calls apparently weren't completed before the emails went out.

At 2:27 p.m., DHEC alerted the media, which soon started calling clinics. Some apparently had not opened emails and learned about actions from the press. At 2:34 p.m., Haley, traveling to Europe on busi-

ness, released a triumphant statement attempting to make the findings sound bigger than they were — all to feather her political nest.

Planned Parenthood South Atlantic this week said the organization, which focuses 97 percent of its work on women's health care (not abortions), took DHEC's findings seriously and was taking immediate actions to come into compliance with the law.

"These matters will be addressed, and it will be a blip on the screen, serving primarily not women's health but the political ambitions of the governor," said one longtime Statehouse player.

Yes, to get headlines, Haley used DHEC, whose board she appoints. But it didn't turn out exactly how she wanted. Instead of a big press conference about the findings, DHEC quietly released the information at one of the slowest times of the week for the media — Friday afternoon, when most reporters are finishing stories they've worked on for a week.

What's important to take away are three things:

None of the violations cited by DHEC directly put any women or their health at risk. But anything not up to snuff — even minor paperwork problems — need to be brought into compliance. The law is the law.

Thousands of dedicated DHEC employees have been embarrassed because the agency was dragged through the muck because of politics.

This incident is a prime example of how the passions of South Carolinians are being manipulated by a hyper-ambitious governor who wants to score points in a much larger political game.

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Company investing millions in Horry County operation

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Worksman Cycles, a manufacturer of heavy-duty bicycles and tricycles as well as food vending trucks and carts, is establishing operations in Horry County. The company is investing \$2.5 million in the facility, creating approximately 50 new jobs in Conway.

Established in 1898, the New York City-based Worksman Cycles has proudly manufactured made-in-America products for more than a century. After moving around to several different facilities in Brooklyn, the company established its headquarters and factory in Queens, where it's operated since 1979. Due to increasing customer demand, however, Worksman has outgrown its longtime factory, and has decided to expand its production by opening a second factory to augment the New York production facility, which will be located in the Palmetto State.

To establish its South Carolina operations, the company will move into an existing 100,000-square-foot facility at 2449 Bulk Plant Road in Conway where operations are expected to be underway in early 2016. This expansion marks the first time Worksman has added a new manufacturing facility outside of New York City.

Worksman chose Horry

County following a comprehensive two-year search in which the company's executives visited more than 20 proposed sites in seven states. A key factor that contributed to the company's decision to move to Horry County was the close proximity to many of its key customers, which include: Michelin, Walmart, Ford, Exxon, GE, Home Depot, Boeing, and DuPont.

For more information on the Worksman Cycles, visit www.worksmancycles.com.

"The choice of Horry County was easy, as it stood head and shoulders above every other location we visit-

ed. In this instance, 'climate change' takes on a different meaning. It was the friendly business climate of South Carolina, with its great access to sea, rail, and highway transportation as well as low-cost energy, and the climate which will ease the strain that Northeast winters placed on our operation, and, finally the quality of life for our workers with affordable housing options, low cost of living and good schools," said Worksman Cycles President Wayne Sosin.

"It's a great day in South Carolina as we celebrate Worksman Cycles' decision to invest in South Carolina and her people," said Gov. Nikki Haley. "This \$2.5 mil-

lion investment that will create approximately 50 new jobs in Conway is a real reason to celebrate in Horry County and throughout the entire state."

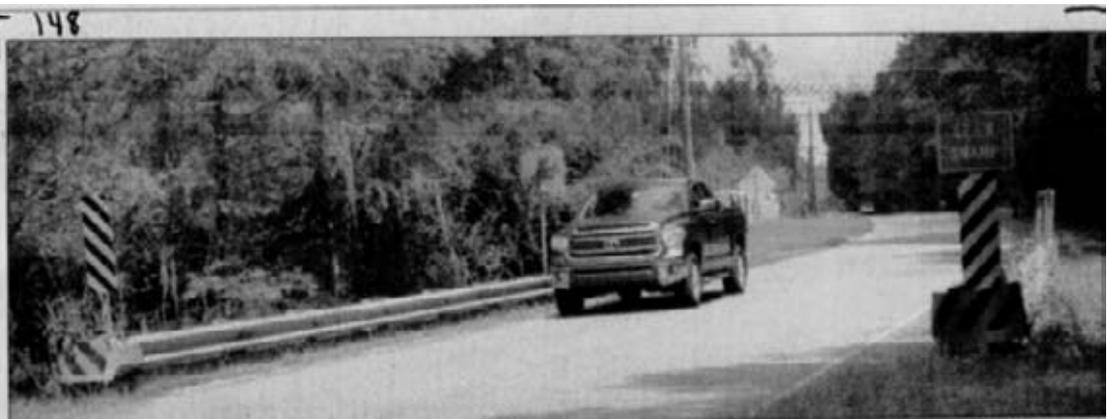
"From planes to cars to bicycles, it's been proven that, in South Carolina, we make things, and we make them well," said Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt. "I'm proud to welcome Worksman Cycles to our thriving manufacturing industry and look forward to watching our loyal, world-class workforce succeed in producing top-quality Worksman products in Horry County."

"Worksman Cycles will be a great addition to the manufacturing industry in the community, and we are proud that they have selected Horry County to expand their business," said Horry County Council Chairman Mark Lazarus.

"It's companies like Worksman Cycles that are helping us change and diversify industry in Horry County," said Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corporation Chairman Fred Richardson. "Fifty manufacturing jobs will have a big impact in our community, especially when they are full-time, well-paying jobs that offer benefits."



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KATHY ROPP / THE HORRY INDEPENDENT

Conway City Council has some concerns about how long this bridge over Grier Swamp will be closed while SCDOT replaces it.

Upgrades will require three bridge closings

BY KATHY ROPP
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Conway City Council is glad that the S.C. Department of Transportation is planning to replace and refurbish three bridges in the city, but its members want to have a face-to-face meeting to talk about how and when the work will be done.

City Public Works director Kevin Chestnut told council, as part of his request for road resurfacing money Monday night, that the S.C. Department of Transportation plans

soon to replace two Long Avenue bridges, one over Grier Swamp and one over Crabtree Swamp. The other project, set to begin in about 18 months is a total refurbishment of the

Main Street Memorial Bridge.

Chestnut said SCDOT is working all across the state to make its bridges safe.

"The bridges won't hold up much longer and they understand that," he said, adding that state officials are trying to work on the most critical ones first.

"What they're saying is these bridges are going to fail if

we don't do something," he said.

SCDOT officials plan to bid the Long Avenue bridge work in October and start both projects in 2016. Chestnut says it will take three to four months to redo each bridge and they can't be done at the same time.

Councilman Tom Anderson quickly jumped on the issue asking if the bridges can be raised a little so they won't be

so susceptible to flooding.

After he learned that there would be some problems with raising the road up to meet the higher bridges, Anderson said

council should invite Gov. Nikki Haley to a Conway council meeting so someone can explain to her how North Carolina does it.

Councilwoman Barbara Blain Bellamy sided with Anderson.

"I think it's terrible that we aren't in a position to bring that bridge up," she said.

Councilwoman Jean Timbes is also concerned about the height of the bridges, saying she realizes that there have been only a few cases of severe

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Bridges: DOT to replace, refurbish three bridges in the city

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flooding on the Long Avenue bridges, but added that frequently when she crosses Crabtree she notices that the water is almost up to the road.

The report also gave Councilman William Goldfinch some heartburn when he learned that Long Avenue will be impassable in certain areas for six to eight months. Crabtree won't be as much of a problem, he said, because people using that bridge can get where they want to be using Country Club and East Country Club Drive, but the work will create real problems for motorists who use the Grier Swamp bridge. He agrees the bridge needs to be replaced saying he holds his breath every time he drives over it.

Chestnut hopes he's found a solution to one problem associated with the bridge replacements and that's a \$200,000 cost to move water and sewer lines so the projects can progress. The city will be expected to foot that bill. Chestnut says he believes he will be successful when he petitions the County Transportation Committee for the relocation, saying it is eligible for some of the additional \$10.4 million the committee got as a one-time gift this year.

In a recent meeting with SCDOT officials, Chestnut also learned that the state hopes to add life to the Main Street Memorial Bridge with a complete refurbishment that could begin in about 18 months. That work will require the bridge to be completely closed for two to three weeks, and it can't be done in the dead of winter, he said.

Of course, he said, Conway doesn't want the work done in summer when the traffic is

greatest on the bridge.

The Main Street Bridge has more than once been included on a list of problem bridges in the state. Although it is determined to be structurally sound, it is what they call functionally deficient because it carries far more traffic than it was designed to handle.

The bridge got a complete review several years ago when chunks were falling from the bottom.

Chestnut said plans for the upcoming project include stripping the deck, sand blasting, painting and removing the expansion joints.

Chestnut said before the work can be done, all of the conduits for the lights will have to come off and they can't go back until all of the work is done. Light poles and plaques can stay, he said.

Goldfinch worries that two to three weeks can morph into much longer.

"We're concerned about it," Graham responded.

Goldfinch said he doesn't want a car to fall through the bridge, but there are problems that must be addressed first.

"It doesn't matter how much money you throw at it, it just has to be done in certain stages," Chestnut said.

Council agreed to ask SCDOT officials to come in as soon as possible and make a presentation about its plans for the bridges.

Road resurfacing

Chestnut plans to present about \$1.8 million of road resurfacing requests to the County Transportation Committee.

City streets that made this year's list are Palmetto Street from the dead end west to Bay-side Avenue; Parmley Drive from Smith Jones to the dead

end South; Taylor Square, at the end of Hemingway Street; Bell Street, Church Street to Ninth Avenue; Buck Street, Forest View to Ninth Avenue; Tenth Avenue, Hart Street to Main Street; Legion Street, Highland Avenue to Ninth Avenue; Laurel Street, Twelfth Avenue to Fifth Avenue; Lakeside Drive, Tenth Avenue to Twelfth Avenue; and Windmeadows Drive, off Graham Road.

State streets on the list are Rainwood Circle, Hwy. 813 to Long Avenue Ext; Temple Street, Fourth Avenue to Ninth Avenue; Lakeside Drive, Twelfth Avenue to Sixteenth Avenue; Ninth Avenue from U.S. 378 to Lakewood Avenue; Woodward Drive, Fourth Avenue to Fourth Avenue; Boundary Street, Oak Street to U.S. 701; Sixteenth Avenue, Sherwood Drive to Wright Boulevard; Sherwood Drive, 18th Avenue to Sixteenth Avenue; Pearl Street, Bayside Avenue to Fourth Avenue; Lakeland Drive, Long Avenue to Hart Street; McDermott Street, Main Street to Seventh Avenue; McKeithan Street, Sixteenth Avenue to Main Street; Grainger Road, Dillon Street to Leonard Avenue; Parkhill Drive, in the Park Hill subdivision; Colony Road, in the Park Hill subdivision; Jessamine Street, Woodland to Twelfth Avenue; Twelfth Avenue, Park Avenue to Lakeland; James Street, Fourth Avenue to Edgewood Circle; Edgewood Circle, off James Street; Rufus Street, Fourth Avenue to Ninth Avenue; Magrath Avenue, Lakeside Drive to Snowhill Drive; Winding Road, Twelfth Avenue to Lakeland Drive; Busbee Street, Sherwood to Lakeland Drive; Fulmer Street, Oak Street to Sessions Street; and Maulden Street, Fourth Avenue to Woodward Drive.

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Deadline set for school plan

BY JAMIE SELF
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COLUMBIA — S.C. lawmakers have until February to draft legislation to improve the state's rural schools.

That deadline was issued Thursday by the S.C. Supreme Court, less than a year after the state's highest court ruled that South Carolina is not meeting its constitutional obligation to provide a quality education to children in low-income schools.

In a 3-2 order issued Thursday, the court gave Republican Gov. Nikki Haley and the leaders of the GOP-controlled House and Senate a Feb. 1 deadline to develop a plan — including legislation — to improve those schools.

Last year, the court ordered the state and school districts to work together to come up with an improvement plan. However, Carl Epps, an attorney representing the school districts that sued the state in 1993, said the two sides needed a time-line from the court to help move along the process.

"If the (state's) proposed remedies are inadequate to meet the children's needs, the court will intervene," Epps said. "I'm always hopeful and optimistic that the General Assembly will do what it is required to do to uphold the Constitution."

House Speaker Jay Lucas, R-Darlington, called

the deadline in Thursday's court order arbitrary, adding it suggested the court's three-member majority had a "complete lack of understanding of the legislative process."

"Clearly legislation is not passed by proposal. It's passed by actual bills that have to go through the House, through the Senate and go through the veto process," said Lucas, an attorney. "Those are the rules that we have to play by."

Last November, the court ruled 3-2 that the state had violated its constitutional duty to provide a "minimally adequate education" to all S.C. public-school students.

Chief Justice Jean Toal and Associate Justices Don

rural schools.

Beatty and Kaye Hearn formed the majority in that ruling, while Associate Justices Costa Pleicones and John Kittridge dissented.

That ruling was long sought by 39 rural school districts that sued the state in 1993, alleging they did not have enough money to educate their students.

In response, House Speaker Lucas formed a task force of legislators, business and education professionals, including representatives of the school districts that sued the state, to propose how the state should address inequities between affluent schools and poor ones.

The House-appointed task force and its subcommittees have been meeting since the beginning of the year. It plans to produce a report in January with policy recommendations.

The process, Lucas said, "has been incredibly difficult for us, and I thought we were making tremendous progress."

The state Senate also named a committee, which has been meeting, to try to address the high court's school-equity ruling.

Lucas said the timing of Thursday's order could be politically motivated.

"To have this ruling come at this point in time certainly makes me wonder whether the court is worried about this issue or just creating a legacy of the chief justice prior to her

What's next?

Oct. 15: A three-member panel of experts, including the S.C. schools superintendent, starts reviewing the needs of poor rural schools.

Feb. 1: Governor, legislators must offer a plan to the Supreme Court and school districts to address inequities in schools.

March 1: School districts respond to the state plan.

March 15: Panel of experts produces a written report evaluating the state's plan.

Later: Supreme Court will review the state's plan and experts' evaluation, ruling whether the plan can improve

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term expiring.”

Toal, who retires at the end of this year, said Thursday it would be inappropriate for her, as a member of the court, to comment on Thursday’s order, adding that it speaks for itself.

However, she added, the order was the court’s reaction to a request by the rural school districts. In June, those districts asked the court to create a framework to guide the state and school districts as they sought a school-equity solution.

Toal’s retirement could create a power shift on the court that could affect its involvement with the school-funding lawsuit.

Earlier this year, legislators elected Associate Justice Pleicones to succeed Toal as chief justice. Pleicones, who dissented from the court’s 2014 school-equity ruling and Thursday’s order setting deadlines, will be presiding over the court when the school-reform proposal is scheduled to reach the court for review early next year.

On Thursday, the court ordered the formation of

a panel of three experts by Oct. 15 to identify the educational needs of students in the poor, rural districts that sued the state.

The General Assembly and school districts each will choose and pay for one expert on that three-member panel. State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman will be the third expert.

The governor, S.C. House and state Senate have until Feb. 1 to present the court and the school districts with a plan to address the needs of poor schools, including legislation and dates to put that plan into action.

School districts have until March 1 to respond to the state plan.

The panel of experts has until March 15 to produce a written report evaluating the state’s plan.

The Supreme Court then will review the plan and the experts’ report, and issue an order stating whether the plan is a “rational means of bringing the system of public education in South Carolina into constitutional compliance.”

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**Worksman
Cycles chooses
Horry County for
southeast
expansion**

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Worksman Cycles, a New York-based manufacturer of bicycles and commercial industrial tricycles has announced their decision to expand their operations to Horry County. The \$2.5 million investment will create approximately 50 new jobs, paying an average of \$15 per hour.

Worksman chose Horry County following a comprehensive two-year search in which the company's executives visited over twenty proposed sites in seven states.

"The choice of Horry County was easy, as it stood head and shoulders above every other location we visited," stated Wayne Sotin, President of Worksman Cycles. "It was the friendly business environment of South Carolina with its great access to sea, rail and highway transportation as well as low-cost energy, and

the climate which will ease the strain that Northeast winters placed on our operation. And finally the quality of life for our workers with affordable housing options, low cost of living and good schools."

Worksman Cycles will move into an existing 100,000 square foot facility in Conway, S.C. where operations are expected to be underway in early 2016.

This expansion marks the first time Worksman has added a new manufacturing facility outside of New York City.

"It's a great day in South Carolina as we celebrate Worksman Cycles' decision to invest in South Carolina and her people. This \$2.5 million investment, will create approximately 50 new jobs in Conway is a real reason to celebrate in Horry County and throughout the entire state," said Governor Nikki Haley.

Another factor that con-

tributed to the company's decision to move to Horry County was the close proximity to many of its key customers, which include: Walmart, Michelin, Ford, Exxon, GE, Home Depot, Boeing and DuPont.

"Worksman Cycles will be a great addition to the manufacturing industry in the community, and we are proud that they have selected Horry County to expand their business," said Mark Lazarus, Horry County Council Chairman.

Worksman executives are projecting that the company will be able to process and ship orders nearly 50 percent faster from the new, state-of-the-art Conway facility, which will translate to increased efficiency and greater value for its customers.

"The final factor was the efforts by Sandy Davis and her

team from the Myrtle Beach Economic Development Office," said Jeff Mishkin, Worksman's CEO. "We are a fourth-generation family-owned business and they treated us like family throughout the process. They have been an invaluable resource way beyond the selection process but through every step of the way - making introductions, opening doors, and generously giving advice. They made the difference."

"It's companies like Worksman Cycles that are helping us change and diversify industry in Horry County. Fifty manufacturing jobs will have a big impact in our community, especially when they are full-time, well-paying jobs that offer benefits," said Fred Richardson, MBREDC Chairman.

Worksman Cycles manufactures industrial and recreational bicycles and tricycles, as well as mobile food vending trailers, trucks and carts.

The company was founded in 1898 in the back of a retail store in lower Manhattan by Morris Worksman, who started developing specialty bicycles and tricycles for local merchants looking for an alternative to a horse and buggy. Over the years, the business grew and his children joined the business.

Today, Worksman Cycles is a fourth-generation family owned manufacturing business that prides in its employees, tradition and their quality, American made cycles.

For more information about Worksman Cycles, visit www.worksmancycles.com.

private partnership that work closely with new and existing industry, site selectors and economic development professionals to promote economic growth in Horry County. Since January of 2012, the EDC has announced over 1,200 new jobs including announcements in advanced manufacturing, aerospace, forest products, and technology. Serving on the MBREDC Executive Committee are: Fred Richardson, Doug Wendel, Jim Apple, Sam Bennett, Laura Crowther, Franklin Daniels, Dr. David DeCenzo, Sean Flynn, Gary Loftus, Ebbie Phillips, Dodd Smith, Neyle Wilson, and Jimmy Yannis. Additional members of the MBREDC Board of Directors include: Laurence Bochoz, Scott Brandon, Michae Chestnut, Tom Collins, Harold Cushman, Brad Dean LeGrande Dorman, Sam Frink Henrietta Golding, Mike Hagg, Mike Hill, Pat Howle, Marc Jordan, Mark Lazarus, Alys Lawson, Bryan Lenertz, Michael Mahaney, Ralph Pandure, Scott Plyler, Luke Rankin, Jerry Rexroad, Justin Roof, Richard Singleton, Sarah Smith, Julien Springs, Mike Wooten, and





Todd Woodard.
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